

Policy Title:	Sickness Absence Policy & Procedure
Policy Owner:	HR
Audience:	All Staff
Policy Date:	January 2019
Policy Revision Date:	January 2022
Policy Location:	N Drive: HR/AllUsers/Policies and Procedures

1. Overview

- 1.1 The policy covers everything you should need to know in respect of sickness absence and explains what you need to do if you are off work sick.
- 1.2 "Sickness" is defined as an incapacity to carry out the duties and responsibilities which you are contractually obliged to do because of your own illness or accident.
- 1.3 This policy therefore applies to absence caused by personal illness or accident, not to the need to take time off work because of the illness or accident of others, e.g. children or partners. Please refer to our Leave Policy for all other types of authorised absence.
- 1.4 This policy applies to all staff but does not cover self-employed contractors.

2. Responsibilities

- 2.1 You are responsible for following notification procedures, completion of self-certification forms and provision of doctor's fit notes in a timely way in accordance with this policy and procedure.
- 2.2 Line Managers are responsible for adding sickness absence to PeopleHR for any member of their team and maintaining contact with the member of staff, ensuring completion of self-certification forms, and conducting return to work interviews where appropriate.
- 2.3 HR will provide guidance to line managers and staff on the implementation of this policy and will ensure appropriate administration of any sickness absence in monthly payroll processing.

3. Sick Leave and Pay

- 3.1 There are two elements to sick pay which you may be eligible to receive depending on both your length of service and the length of your sickness absence:
 - i. Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) is the government entitlement to sick pay and is usually paid from day four of an illness, at the current rate according to legislation. To qualify for SSP you must:
 - Have been ill for at least 4 days in a row (including non-working days)
 - Earn an average of at least £116 per week
 - Tell us that you're sick on the first day of illness

You will not qualify if you have received the maximum amount of SSP (28 weeks) or are receiving Statutory Maternity Pay.

- ii. Students' Union Sick Pay is over and above SSP and will be paid in accordance with the following criteria:

Length of Service	Students' Union Sick Pay [maximum per calendar year and inclusive of S.S.P. where applicable]
Less than 6 months service	Full pay for 1 – 3 days sick at any one time, SSP only from day 4 onwards.
6 months to 2 years' service	1 month at full pay + 1 month at half pay
2 years to 4 years' service	2 months at full pay + 2 months at half pay
4 years' plus service	3 months at full pay + 3 months at half pay

- 3.2 Students' Union Sick Pay is not contractual and is subject to management discretion. In cases of medically certified and serious illness, management discretion will be applied whenever possible when an employee reaches the maximum allowances for sick pay.
- 3.3 Should an employee be refused payment for sick leave then they are entitled to appeal against the decision by the use of the Grievance Procedure. The Students' Union reserves the right to require an employee to attend a medical examination by an appointed medical advisor and at the expense of the Students' Union.

4. Notification Procedure

- 4.1 You are required to advise your line manager of the nature and expected duration of your illness at the earliest possible time and not later than your normal start time. You should always try to do this via phone call, rather than a text message or email.
- 4.2 Where possible, you are also expected to remain in contact each day with your line manager and inform them of your condition.
- 4.3 For illnesses of 7 days or less, you are required to complete a self-certification form. This can be found on PeopleHR. Your line manager will need to sign the form and they will then be responsible for passing it to HR.
- 4.4 For illnesses of more than 7 days, you will be required to provide a Fit Note (or Statement of Fitness for Work). This should be provided by your doctor or hospital. You should provide this to your line manager who will be responsible for passing it on to HR.
- 4.5 If the Fit Note makes any recommendation for your return to work such as reduced hours or amended duties, where practicable, this will be accommodated following discussion with your line manager.

5. Regular short-term absence

- 5.1 If you have regular periods of short term sickness, we will discuss this with you and seek to identify any possible underlying reasons and any assistance we can give you in regularly coming to work.
- 5.2 Consistent, uncertified absences may be referred to the disciplinary procedure once all other avenues have been exhausted.

6. Long-term absence

- 6.1 If any absence exceeds 4 weeks we may ask for your consent for a GP report giving guidance on your continuing sickness absence.
- 6.2 We may also ask you to attend an independent occupational health doctor so that we can obtain a medical report on your condition, a prognosis and your likely date of return to work.
- 6.3 Where illness is prolonged and, after consultation with Occupational Health, it is clear that you are not able to continue in your current position as it stands, where practicable, consideration will be given to the following alternatives:
 - a) Redeployment, alternative duties or change in working practices if this is appropriate and practicable, according to the needs of the operation.

- b) Staged return to work e.g. part-time initially, subject to the considerations of (a) above.
- c) Retraining, rehabilitation or workplace adjustment. Your welfare will be considered throughout the process.

6.4 In circumstances where none of the above are either practicable or appropriate, the last resort will be for us to consider dismissal on the grounds of ill-health. A fair process would be followed, in accordance with our Disciplinary & Appeals Policy.