



Absence from Work - Ill Health Policy and Procedure

NEWBATTLE ABBEY COLLEGE

POLICY ON ABSENCE FROM WORK - ILL HEALTH

1 Policy Statement

- 1.1 Newbattle Abbey College is committed to improving the health, well being and attendance of all employees. We value the contribution our employees make to our success. When any employee is unable to be at work for any reason we miss that contribution. The policy is designed to enable managers to proactively manage sickness absences in order to promote an organisational culture which facilitates the health and well-being of staff and helps to reduce sickness absence and its effects.
- 1.2 Regular attendance is an implied term of every employee’s contract of employment. We ask each employee to take responsibility for achieving and maintaining good attendance.

2 Statutory Sick Pay

- 2.1 The College has an obligation to pay Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) on behalf of the Benefits Agency, to all employees who are eligible to receive it. This policy explains regulations affecting entitlement to Occupational Sickness benefits and the effects of SSP upon these benefits.

3 Entitlement to Paid Sick Leave

- 3.1 This policy will apply to all employees of the College. The entitlement to occupational sick pay increases according to the length of the employee’s continuous service (see 3.2 below). The date from which continuous service will be calculated is as stated in the employee’s contract of employment.
- 3.2 Subject to the provisions of this scheme, employees will be entitled to the following periods of Sick Leave:

Service	Sick Pay
During 1 st year of service	1 month’s full pay after 4 months’ service and 1 months’ half pay
During 2 nd year of service	2 months’ full pay and 2 months’ half pay
During 3 rd year of service	4 months’ full pay and 4 months’ half pay
During 4 th and 5 th years of service	5 months’ full pay and 5 months’ half pay
After 5 years’ service	6 months’ full pay and 6 months’ half pay

Note: For the purposes of calculating entitlement to Occupational Sick Pay, ‘one month’ is equivalent to a calendar month

- 3.3 For the purposes of this scheme, sick pay entitlement is based on service completed as at the *first* day of sickness. When determining payment for sickness, account is taken of all periods of sickness during the preceding 12 months as at the first day of sickness.
- 3.4 The Planning and Resource Committee of the Board of Directors has the discretion to extend an employee's entitlement to paid sick leave (on either full or half pay) in exceptional circumstances.
- In exercising this discretion, the Planning and Resource Committee will take into account the seriousness of the case and the likely beneficial effect of such action in relieving anxiety and, therefore, speeding recovery.
- 3.5 If the employee is entitled to receive SSP, or is in receipt of any other allowances or benefits (see Appendix 1), these will be offset against any entitlement to full pay.
- 3.6 Where the employee is entitled to receive half pay, the total sum of pay plus SSP, if appropriate, and any other benefits or allowances, must not exceed full pay. If necessary, the half pay allowance will be reduced.
- 3.7 Exceptional provisions apply to any employee who is injured as a result of a crime or violence in the course of their work for the College. These are detailed in Section 3 of Appendix 1.
- 3.8 A period of absence due to injury sustained by the employee in the actual discharge of his/her duties, and which is not attributable to any fault of his/her own, will not be recorded for the purposes of this scheme.

4 Notification and Certification of Sickness Absence

- 4.1 An employee who is unable to attend work because of sickness should notify their line manager as soon as they can, prior to their start time on the first day of absence, indicating if possible when they expect to return to work. In normal circumstances employees should also inform their line manager of any important work which requires to be covered, deadlines etc. In circumstances where a manager is not available, employees should inform an appropriate person in their team of their absence. If possible, an employee should call back and speak directly to their manager later in the day. Only in exceptional circumstances should someone else contact the college on the employee's behalf e.g. family, friend. It is important that all employees who are off sick maintain regular contact with their line manager. An employee may be asked to attend meetings with their manager on work premises, for the purpose of providing information and facilitating an effective return to work. If an employee is too unwell or physically unwell to come into the College, we will ask to visit the employee at their home.

- 4.2 All absences due to illness must be certificated. An absence from work form is required for absences due to illness of up to seven days, giving the reasons for absence up to and including the first seven calendar days. This will be completed by your line manager and on your return to work you will be required to sign the appropriate documentation confirming your last day of illness.
- 4.3 A medical certificate, completed by a qualified medical practitioner, must be submitted to the Administration Manager for any absence which exceeds seven days. Subsequent certificates must be submitted if the absence continues beyond the period covered by the initial statement. The length of absence covered by each certificate will normally be determined by the medical practitioner. Exceptionally, the College may require certificates at more frequent intervals.
- 4.4 Where the first medical certificate covered a period of more than fourteen days, or where more than one certificate has been necessary, the employee may be required by the College to obtain a final certificate indicating his/her fitness to resume duties before returning to work.
- 4.5 An employee who goes into hospital or other similar institutions is required to submit a doctor's statement on admission and on discharge.
- 4.6 When a member of staff is ill immediately before a period of planned leave, a medical certificate is to be produced certifying fitness to return before the leave period can commence.
- 4.7 Where the College requires an employee to obtain a doctor's statement solely for the purpose of qualifying for sick pay under this scheme (e.g. as in paragraph 3.3), the College will normally refund any charge made for such a statement.
- 4.8 The College may require an employee who is unable to work as a consequence of illness to submit to an examination by a medical practitioner nominated by the College. In such cases, the provisions of the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988 will apply. Any costs incurred in connection with such an examination will be met by the College.

5 Absences Due to Injuries Caused by Accidents

- 5.1 No occupational sick pay will be payable in the case of accidents due to active participation in sport as a profession, or where the absence arises from, or is attributable to, the employee's own misconduct.
- 5.2 An employee who is absent as the result of an accident, will not be eligible to receive occupational sick pay if damages might be receivable from a third party. However, the College may pay the employee in advance the amount of which will not exceed any entitlement under this scheme, subject to the employee signing an undertaking that the total amount of the advance will be refunded, or, if the damages paid are less than this total, the actual

amount of the damages received. Where such an advance is refunded in full, the absence will not be recorded for the purposes of this scheme. Where only part of the advance is refunded, the College will decide the length of the period of absence which should be recorded after consultation with the employee.

6 Termination or Suspension of Allowances

- 6.1 The provisions of occupational sick pay will cease to apply from the date on which an employee retires, whether by reason of permanent ill-health, infirmity of body or mind, or by reason of age.
- 6.2 If the College becomes aware that an employee may have failed to comply with any requirement under this scheme, or that he/she is guilty of conduct which might prejudice recovery, the payment of occupational sick pay may be suspended. In such circumstances, the College will invite him/her to make any observations. The employee will be given the opportunity to put his/her case before any appropriate committee of the College. If College management decides that the employee has failed, without reasonable excuse, to fulfil the requirements of the scheme, or that he/she has been guilty of conduct prejudicial to recovery, then no further payments will be made in respect of that period of absence. The employee has the right to be assisted by a representative.

7 Medical Examinations

- 7.1 The College reserves the right to require an employee to visit our Occupational Health Provider at any stage of their employment. It is expected that there will be full co-operation between the employee's own doctor and the Occupational Health practitioner. The purpose of this appointment will be to help identify the nature of the employee's illness and advise the employee and their manager on the best way to facilitate the employees return to work.

8 Sickness during Annual Leave

- 8.1 An employee who falls sick during annual leave should be regarded as being on sick leave from the date of the medical certificate and further annual leave suspended from that date. Where an employee is absent, due to sickness, annual leave will accrue in the normal way.
- 8.2 For the purposes of this clause, planned leave entitlement commences 1 September each year and concludes 31 August the following year.

9 Employees Who Fall Sick Abroad

- 9.1 The following outlines the procedure for managing situations where employees are taken ill whilst abroad.

- The employee must give to their supervisor a contactable address or e-mail address through which communications can be direct.
- Statements to verify a certifiable period of illness should be obtained from a recognised medical practitioner or hospital consultant in the country in which the illness has occurred and this should be sent to the appropriate supervisor by the eighth day of absence and at regular intervals thereafter. A statement of fitness to work on the termination of the illness should also be obtained if the employee is still abroad at the time.
- If an employee returns to this country whilst still ill, he/she should immediately see his/her GP or hospital consultant for treatment and obtain another statement to verify the illness.
- In both cases mentioned above, the College requires any medical reports made by the medical personnel in the country concerned, for inspection by the GP or hospital consultant.
- Where leave without pay is taken for holidays abroad, with or without the addition of paid annual leave, contracts of employment will be suspended. Any illness occurring during the period of unpaid absence will not come within the statutory sick pay scheme.
- Employees are advised that (particularly with regard to the last item above), arrangements have been made by the Department of Social Security for claimants to be paid sick pay when taken ill in EC countries but this does not apply anywhere else and they should ensure their holiday insurance covers them for such eventualities.
- The College will ensure that the statutory sick pay procedure is carried out in full, as those who do not demonstrate every reasonable effort to comply with the requirements, will not be paid in accordance with sick pay provisions.

10. Returning to work

- 10.1 A return to work discussion between employee and their Line Manager will take place as a matter of routine and as soon as possible after every absence, regardless of duration or cause. The meeting will be held in private and will establish
- The reason for, and cause of absence
 - Anything the Manager or the College can do to help
 - That the employee is fit to return to work
- 10.2 Phased Returns - temporary adjustments to an employees working conditions (e.g. hours of work/duties) will be considered to help support a return to work and will be accommodated wherever possible and if organisational circumstances permit.

Employees will be expected to build up to normal working hours and duties over an agreed period, depending on medical advice and where appropriate on any issues arising under the Disability Discrimination Act. If an employee is unable to undertake their normal hours and duties by the end of the phased return advice will be sought from the College's Occupational Health Provider.

11. Frequent Short-Term Absence Procedure

- 11.1 Although each absence is considered on its own merits, review indicators have been devised in order to ensure a consistent and fair approach is adopted across the College.
- 11.2 The formula adopted by the College is known as the "Bradford Factor". This is a simple equation which allows the College to measure one employee's series of short absences against another employee who takes fewer but longer absences - see Appendix I.
- 11.3 A review will be triggered by frequent absences. The review will look at any action required to improve the employee's attendance and well-being - Guidelines are available from the Administration Manager.
- 11.4 If an employee's absence level continues at an unacceptable level it may be necessary to invoke the College's Disciplinary procedure.
- 11.5 The trigger points have been set by the College's Senior Management Team - see Appendix I.

12. Long Term Sickness

- 12.1 The College may, after four weeks of continuous absence, require the employee to visit the College's Occupational Health Advisor.
- 12.2 When the Administration Manager receives the GP/Occupational Health Report a review meeting will take place with the employee to look at the nature of their illness and ways to help improve the employee's health and wellbeing and facilitate the employees return to work.

13. Counselling

- 13.1 Counselling support is available to all employees to help them deal with any problems they may be having. Contact the Administration Manager who will refer the employee for counselling. The use of this service is completely confidential.

14. Disability

Please refer to the College's Equalities and Inclusiveness Scheme and the Single Equality Policy.

15. Stress Management

Please refer to the College's Stress Management Policy.

16. Records

16.1 The College respects the confidentiality of all information relating to an employees sickness. The policy will be implemented in line with all data protection legislation and the Access to Medical Records Act 1988.

17. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed in July 2012 or whenever changes affect it.

Newbattle Abbey College	POLICY/PROCEDURE
Title: Absence from work - Ill Health	File ref: Employment
Prepared by: J Robertson	No of pages:11
Approved by: Board	Revision date: July 2014
Date approved: Oct 02	Date last modified: July 2011

Bradford Factor Formula

The 'Bradford Factor' is a simple equation which allows an organisation to measure one employee's series of short term absences against another employee who takes fewer but longer absences.

How it works:

The Bradford Factor formula is 'SxSxD'

'S' equals the number of spells of absence within the last 52 weeks and 'D' equals the total number of days of absence within the same period.

Note: The spells of absence figure(s) is used twice to allow for the creation of large scores. This makes it easier to compare different types of absence between staff and set scores.

A single spell of absence of ten days = 10 points

(Calculated as: $1 \times 1 \times 10 = 10$)

Five spells of absence each of two days = 250 points

(Calculated as: $5 \times 5 \times 10 = 250$)

Ten spells of absence from work of one day each = 1,000 points

(Calculated as: $10 \times 10 \times 10 = 1,000$)

An absence from work review will be triggered at 45 points.