

Sickness Absence Management Policy

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Vision

Loreto College is centred in God, rooted in Christ and animated by the spirit of Mary Ward, the founder of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Our vision is that it will be an educational community where each person has the experience of being loved and valued as a sacred individual created by a loving God. A community where students enjoy an enriching and liberating education that helps them grow into the fullness of life and empowers them to be men and women of courage who are alive to the needs of humanity and committed to making a better world.

Introduction

The College aims to be an educational community, which gives expression to the core values of Mary ward – freedom, justice, sincerity, truth, joy, excellence and internationality.

Loreto College has the highest expectations of personal, academic and professional excellence. This document sets out the College's policy and guidance on the procedures it will follow in relation to staff absence due to illness. In doing so, the College will be mindful of its Mission, core values and its duty of care to all its staff and students and the legal responsibilities associated with this. The College will endeavor to act at all times with justice, compassion and respect for the dignity and worth of each member of the College community.

Policy Statement

This policy and procedure is intended to give clear guidance to all concerned on issues relating to staff sickness absence. The procedure is published as part of the College's staffing policies and is designed to uphold and safeguard the high standards maintained by College staff.

The College recognises the value of its employees understands its duty of care and is committed to the promotion of health and wellbeing through a range of pro-active activities. It also recognises the importance of a positive approach to the management of absence to enable the College to deliver quality teaching and learning and ensure that staff are treated in a consistently fair manner. The Sickness Absence Management policy has been designed to help reduce levels of absence by assisting and encouraging all employees to maximise attendance. The College understands that there are times when sickness absence occurs and this policy outlines the College's approach to the management of such absence to ensure minimal disruption to the successful running of the College and provision of education to its students.

In order to support a positive culture of attendance, the College believes that it is the responsibility of College managers, trade union representatives and staff to work together to promote health, wellbeing and the management of absence.

The College will achieve this through:

- Promotion of the health, safety and well-being of all staff, including the use of risk assessments to identify and manage hazards impacting on health in the workplace.
- Monitoring the levels of sickness absence for individuals, teams and the College as a whole.
- Implementing procedures to support and manage staff sickness absence.

The following principles apply to the College's procedures for dealing with absence:

- Good attendance is valued and opportunities should be taken to acknowledge and recognise such attendance. However, presenteeism (when an individual attends work when too unwell) should not be encouraged as this can result in poor productivity as well as the spread of illnesses amongst teams.
- Consideration of a member of staff's sickness absence does not imply any distrust of staff or concerns regarding their conduct.
- Sickness absence will be dealt with in a way that is non-discriminatory and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010
- Staff will be dealt with consistently and the absence procedures will be applied fairly across the College.
- The College aims to promote a positive and preventative rather than punitive approach to the management of sickness absence.
- Occasions of sickness absence will be considered to be genuine unless compelling evidence suggests otherwise.
- The College will be sensitive and supportive to those suffering the effects of ill health.
- Sickness absence cases will be conducted with respect for confidentiality and in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act and Access to Medical Reports Act
- Open communication between managers and staff will be promoted
- This policy will be monitored and reviewed to ensure that it continues to meet the College's aims and mission and complies with these principles.

Statutory Guidance

- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Access to Medical Reports Act 1988

Scope and Purpose

The Governing Body recognises that staff will, from time to time, become too unwell to undertake their duties within the College. This policy has been established to ensure that staff are aware of the correct procedure to follow when reporting a period of sickness absence and the role and responsibilities of staff, line managers and Human Resources in the monitoring and management of sickness absence to ensure minimal impact on individual teams and the College overall.

This policy also outlines staff entitlements in terms of contractual and statutory sick pay in line with Sixth Form Colleges Association Teaching and Support Staff Handbooks, the College's expectations in terms of acceptable levels of sickness absence, the process involved in managing excessive short-term absences and the management of long-term sickness absence.

Retention and Data Protection

When managing a member of staff's sickness absence and sick pay under this policy, the College processes personal data collected in accordance with its Data Protection Policy. Data collected is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of managing the sickness absence and sick pay. We will comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Legislation (being (i) the General Data Protection Regulation ((EU) 2016/679) (unless and until the GDPR is no longer directly applicable in the UK) and any national implementing laws,

regulations and secondary legislation, as amended or updated from time to time, in the UK and then (ii) any successor legislation to the GDPR or the Data Protection Act 1998, including the Data Protection Act 2018).

Records will be kept in accordance with our Workforce Privacy Notice, our Retention and Destruction Policy and in line with the requirements of Data Protection Legislation.

Responsibilities

Human Resources

- The HR Manager will oversee the use and monitoring of the policy and will provide monthly reports the Senior Leadership Team on sickness absence levels within the College. Summary reports will be provided for the Finance and General Purposes Governors' Committee.
- The HR Manager will regularly undertake a review of staff sickness absence and identify where trigger points have been reached. They will liaise with Line Managers in instances where one of their direct reports has reached a trigger point and support them in taking appropriate action, ensuring that both individual circumstances are taken into consideration and that staff are treated in a consistent and fair manner.
- The successful management of sickness absence requires absences to be accurately monitored and recorded allowing for the early identification of possible issues.

Managers

- Managers will be responsible for the active implementation of this policy within their area of accountability, ensuring that their direct reports follow the correct sickness absence notification procedures and that, with the support of HR, return to work meetings are carried out with their direct reports following a period of sickness absence.
- Managers should be in attendance at any welfare meetings arranged by the HR Manager where required to support their direct reports who have long-term sickness or underlying health conditions.
- Managers should ensure that their direct reports have good working conditions and that health and safety standards are properly maintained.
- Managers should ensure that their direct reports understand what is expected of them with regards to attendance and are aware of the facilities available to support them.

All Staff

- Staff must take all reasonable steps to ensure that they keep themselves in a good state of general health and that they comply with the College's Health and Safety Policy.
- Staff must follow the correct notification procedure when reporting an instance of sickness absence and provide the required information.
- Staff must not report that they are sick when they are absent for another reason.
- Staff must raise concerns with their line manager, HR or the Principal if they believe that their job is making them unwell or is contributing to their illness.
- Staff must ensure the provision of the appropriate medical certification if required.
- Staff must maintain contact with their line manager and HR during periods of absence, communicating effectively in order that work commitments for each day of absence are identified.
- Staff must co-operate fully with the College Occupational Health provider.
- Staff must ensure that medical advice and treatment, where appropriate, are received as quickly as possible in order to facilitate a return to work.
- Staff must not abuse the Sickness Absence Management Policy or the College sick pay scheme.

In order to support this policy, the following services are available:

Occupational Health – to provide advice and guidance on the impact of an individual's ill health on their ability to carry out their role and to advise on how the College can support the individual back in to the workplace.

Human Resources (HR) – to provide support and guidance in dealing with sickness absence and ill health and in the use of the College's related policies and procedures.

College Counsellor – to provide well-being support and to support staff in their mental health, developing skills for coping with difficulties which may otherwise affect an individual's attendance and/or ability to carry out their duties.

Record Keeping

Effective monitoring of sickness absence is reliant on the accurate and comprehensive recording of information; therefore, all absence details must be recorded on the appropriate forms and signed by the relevant parties.

Where a member of staff reports for work but, due to becoming too unwell, is unable to complete their working day, this part-day absence will be recorded as sickness and will be used for monitoring purposes. For the purposes of self-certification, this part day absence will constitute the first of seven calendar days (Saturday and Sunday included).

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Procedure

The following procedure applies to all College staff:

Sickness Absence Notification

In order for the College business to be maintained, it is essential to know when staff are unable to attend work due to sickness. Failure to inform the College may lead to the absence from work being considered unauthorised, resulting in loss of pay and possible disciplinary action.

- To report an absence, staff should contact the College office by phone before 8:30am (if practical) on the first day of absence.
- Staff should endeavour to make contact themselves where reasonably practicable.
- Staff will then be transferred to the HR Manager to provide details of the reason for their absence and the anticipated length of absence. If the HR Manager is unavailable, the member of staff must provide a voicemail message including details of the best contact number and time to call them back.
- If appropriate, teaching staff should set work for all classes. In some circumstances, it is accepted that a member of staff may not be physically able to ensure that work is set for all classes.
- Support staff should ensure that their line manager is made aware of any work commitments that may need rearranging.
- If a member of staff believes that their absence may have been caused by something that happened at work, they should inform the HR Manager.

A list of all staff out of College, including those that are off site on College business, is posted daily on the staff intranet. Any inaccuracies should be reported immediately to a member of the HR team. No reference to a member of staff being absent due to sickness is given.

Sickness Certification

Every absence must be certified to ensure correct and prompt payment of contractual and statutory sick pay and to ensure that accurate records are maintained. Failure to comply with certification procedures may result in loss of sick pay. Misleading or false statements may be dealt with under the College's disciplinary procedure.

- A self-certificate is required from the first day of a period of sickness absence and will cover the absence up to and including the seventh day (Saturday and Sunday included). The self-certificate form available on My Loreto under HR Forms or in **Appendix A** will be completed on the member of staff's first day back at work following the period of sickness absence and emailed or handed to the HR Manager.
- Following the seventh day of absence (Saturday and Sunday included), staff must produce a Statement of Fitness for Work covering any further periods of sickness in the same absence and any continuing sickness absence must be covered by concurrent Statement of Fitness for Work. These certificates must be provided to the HR Manager within 1 week of issue.
- A Statement of Fitness for Work may, in some instances, advise that a member of staff is fit for work taking into account one or more of the following:
 - A phased return to work
 - Altered hours
 - Amended duties
 - Workplace adaptations

If a member of staff produces this, but believes they may be fit for work in some capacity, a welfare meeting will be scheduled with the member of staff, their line manager and the HR Manager to discuss any recommendations specified on the Statement of Fitness for Work and to look at how or if the College can accommodate them. This may involve a referral to Occupational Health for further advice on the individual's circumstances and their role and responsibilities. Any amendments to working put in place will

be made on the basis that they are only to remain in place until the end date specified on the Statement of Fitness for Work.

Maintaining Contact

The HR Manager will maintain contact during the period of absence and staff should inform the HR Manager of their return date. The HR Manager will provide any updates on sickness absence dates to the individual's line manager.

The College seeks to ensure that staff do not feel isolated, vulnerable or out of touch.

Where staff are absent from work due to illness, they must ensure that daily contact is maintained with the HR Manager unless otherwise agreed.

Returning to Work

Upon returning to work following a period of sickness absence, the member of staff must inform Human Resources either via email or in person before 9am that they are back in work.

Upon confirming their return to work, the member of staff will receive an email from HR requesting that they complete and return the self-certification form if they haven't done so already. The self-certification form must be completed and returned to HR on the member of staff's first day back following a period of sick leave.

HR will then email the individual's line manager to notify them of the requirement to complete a return to work meeting and advise them of any short-term absence trigger points.

An individual will remain on the staff absence list until confirmation has been received by HR of their return to work.

For absences of seven days or less, the member of staff must attend a return to work meeting with their line manager on their first day back at work where a return to work interview available on MyLoreto under HR Forms or in **Appendix B** will be completed. Any Statement of Fitness for Work (sick certificate) or additional relevant information must also be provided during this meeting. Once completed, the return to work form, statement of fitness for work and any other documents must be handed to the HR Manager.

In the instance that a return to work interview is unable to take place on the individual's first day back at work, the meeting must be completed within seven calendar days of the member of staff's return date.

For absences over seven days, the HR Manager will meet with the member of staff and their line manager usually prior to or on their first day back and will hold the return to work meeting. The return to work interview form and self-certification form will be completed as part of the meeting. A Statement/s of Fitness for Work covering the period of absence must be provided during this meeting if not done so previously along with any other relevant information.

The purpose of the return to work meeting is to:

- Welcome the member of staff back to work
- Ensure that the member of staff is fit to return to work
- Understand the reasons for the absence
- Discuss the impact of any medication that they employee may be taking on their ability to perform their job role
- Collect completed medical certification (as appropriate)
- Offer appropriate help and support to the member of staff
- Raise any concerns that there may be regarding sickness absence levels and ensure that staff are aware of the College Sickness Absence Management Policy including trigger levels
- Completion of a Return to Work Interview form

The completed Return to Work Interview form will be passed to the HR Manager along with any Statements of Fitness for Work and other relevant documentation. HR will pass the form to the Principal to review and sign before providing a copy to the member of staff and adding a copy to their personnel file.

Short Term Sickness Absence

Short-term absence trigger levels have been set by the College to assist in the management of absence and to ensure consistency in terms of the application of this policy. The purpose of the trigger points is not to punish individuals for being unwell and they have been set to take into consideration the number of occurrences that a relatively healthy person may become sick over a rolling 6-month period. It is therefore important that any underlying health concerns that may cause higher than average instances of short-term sickness are disclosed by a member of staff to their line manager or the HR Manager either during any Return to Work meeting or during a requested welfare meeting.

Trigger Levels

Short-term absence trigger levels will assist in the management of absence levels and will be reviewed periodically. The current trigger levels are as follows:

- Three or more separate instances of sickness absence in any rolling six-month period
- Recurring recognisable patterns in absence such as frequent absenteeism on a Monday

The trigger levels shall not preclude management action being taken earlier in respect of any unacceptable absences arising below the trigger levels. E.g. if a member of staff's absence level persistently approaches the trigger level but does not cross the trigger threshold there may be a case for action.

Any absences related to pregnancy will be excluded when considering trigger points. Any attendance and work related issues should still be discussed informally and any reasonable adjustments made where needed to support the member of staff.

Amendments may be made to absence trigger levels as a reasonable adjustment to support members of staff with a long-term underlying health condition or disability. This must be with the agreement of the Principal. Any amendments made to absence trigger levels will be documented and held on an individual's personnel file and will be reviewed on a 6 monthly basis to ensure that they remain relevant to the individual's health needs.

Management of Persistent Short Term Sickness Absence

Following each period of short-term sickness absence, the member of staff's absence will be reviewed by the HR Manager in line with the trigger levels.

The decision on whether the Attendance Management process should be initiated for a member of staff will be made following a review by the HR Manager of the reasons for the absences leading to the trigger point being reached. If any underlying health concerns are known or suspected, the member of staff may instead be invited to attend a welfare meeting with the HR Manager and the member of staff's line manager to discuss this.

Stage One – Informal Attendance Review Meeting

If the trigger point has been reached and the absences leading to this are not linked and there are no known underlying health issues, the member of staff will be asked to attend a Stage One Informal Attendance Review Meeting with the HR Manager and their line manager. If the absences are linked and there are known underlying health issues, a welfare meeting will be held with the individual and their line manager and the individual may be referred to Occupational Health for further assessment. The member of staff will be made aware of either outcome during their return to work interview.

The member of staff will be informed in writing of the details of the meeting and will be provided with copies of the relevant return to work interviews. The member of staff is entitled to be accompanied to the meeting by either a work colleague or their Trade Union representative.

The purpose of the Informal Attendance Review meeting is to:

- Review the periods of sickness absence that have led to the trigger points being reached
- Understand if the member of staff is seeking appropriate treatment if needed
- Understand if the absences are linked at all or if there are any underlying health conditions that the College is unaware of
- Seek to identify whether there is another underlying problem causing the absence
- Identify and agree appropriate help or support that can be provided to the member of staff to enable them to reduce their short-term absence. This could include a referral to Occupational Health or adjustments to working practices / working hours.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the member of staff will be informed that, if they have a further period of absence resulting in either the trigger point being hit again or the trigger point being exceeded this may result in Stage Two of the Attendance Management process being instigated.

The HR Manager will complete the Informal Attendance Review Meeting Form available in **Appendix C** with the details captured during the meeting. The form will be reviewed and signed by all parties. A copy will be provided to the Principal by HR for review following the meeting. A completed copy of the form will be provided to the employee and a copy will be placed on their personnel file.

Stage Two – Formal Attendance Review Meeting

Following the Stage One meeting, if a member of staff has a further period of short term sickness absence that results in either the short term absence trigger point being hit again or exceeded, the member of staff will be asked to attend a Stage Two – Formal Attendance Review Meeting with the Principal (or Designated Alternate) and the HR Manager.

The member of staff will be informed in writing of the details of the meeting a minimum of ten calendar days' in advance and will be provided with copies of the relevant return to work interviews and a copy of the Informal Attendance Review Meeting Form. The member of staff is entitled to be accompanied to the meeting by either a work colleague or their Trade Union representative. For guidance on the process and procedure required for the Formal Attendance Review Meeting, please see **Appendix D**.

The purpose of the Formal Attendance Review Meeting is to:

- Explore the reasons for the continued unacceptable attendance record
- Seek to identify whether there is an underlying problem causing the absence
- Review any help and support previously offered
- Identify and agree any additional appropriate help or support (this may include referral to occupational health) that can be provided to the member of staff to enable them to reduce their short-term absence.

The Formal Attendance Review Meeting may result in one of the following outcomes:

- No further action
- To issue a formal verbal warning for 6 months for unacceptable levels of sickness absence confirmed in writing
- To issue a written warning for 12 months for unacceptable levels of sickness absence confirmed in writing – this should be given if a verbal warning for unacceptable levels of sickness absence is still live.

- To issue a final written warning for 18 months for unacceptable levels of sickness absence confirmed in writing – this should be given if a written warning for unacceptable levels of sickness absence is still live.

A member of staff may be re-referred for a Formal Attendance Review Meeting if they continue to reach or exceed the short-term sickness absence trigger points.

Final Stage – Short Term Sickness Absence Case Review Hearing

Where a member of staff reaches or exceeds the short-term absence trigger points and has a live final written warning for unacceptable levels of sickness absence on their file, the member of staff will then be asked to attend a Short Term Sickness Absence Case Review Hearing.

The purpose of the Case Review is to consider whether there are any further actions that the College can take to assist the member of staff in continuing their employment, or whether their employment should be terminated due to their inability to undertake their duties effectively because of their continued short-term sickness absences.

The Case Review Hearing will be heard by the Principal or Designated Alternate who will be accompanied by the HR Manager.

The member of staff will be informed in writing of the details of the meeting and will be provided with copies of the relevant return to work interviews, Attendance Review Meeting form, Formal Attendance Review Meeting minutes, outcome letters and other relevant documentation at least ten working days prior to the meeting going ahead. The member of staff is entitled to be accompanied to the meeting by either a work colleague or their Trade Union representative.

Where decisions are made regarding sanctions or termination of employment, the member of staff will have the right of appeal against the decision.

For guidance on the process and procedure required for the Short Term Sickness Absence Case Review Hearing, please see **Appendix E**.

Long Term Sickness Absence

Long-term sickness absence is classed as a continued period of absence that has lasted for 28 days or more.

The HR Manager will make contact with the member of staff as early as possible to offer help and support as appropriate and to understand the reasons for the absence and possible duration. The HR Manager will also agree on the frequency and mode of contact required by the member of staff as appropriate.

The HR Manager will arrange a welfare meeting with the member of staff and their line manager either in College, at the member of staff's home address or at an alternative, mutually convenient location. This will generally take place once the period of sick leave is classed as 'long term' however a welfare meeting can be arranged beforehand if appropriate.

The purpose of the welfare meeting is to get an understanding of the member of staff's current health and wellbeing and to provide them with an opportunity to give an update on any medical support and treatment they are receiving. The member of staff may also be asked about their thoughts on returning to work, and given information on the options available to them in terms of rehabilitation including a phased return or amended duties. The HR Manager will also discuss referring the member of staff to Occupational Health.

The purpose of obtaining an Occupational Health report in cases of long-term sickness absence will be to provide an indication of the likely duration of the employee's absence and whether any steps can be taken to help the employee return to work.

Further welfare meetings will be schedule with the member of staff to coincide either with developments in their condition or treatment, receipt of the Occupational Health report, when the member of staff's Statement of Fitness for Work is due to expire or any other relevant reason.

Rehabilitation

In cases of long-term absence, staff will be expected to return to work via a rehabilitation programme which will ensure an incremental return to normal duties for an employee.

Rehabilitation will be discussed at the earliest opportunity and a range of options will be considered to support the member of staff back into the workplace. These include:

- Restricted work activities
- Reduced or amended working hours
- Temporary alternative employment with the option to return to normal duties
- Permanent alternative employment

Rehabilitation will be implemented in line with the guidance provided from the member of staff's GP via the Statement of Fitness for Work and support from Occupational Health.

Where a rehabilitation programme is agreed it will be confirmed in writing to the employee using the Phased Return Plan Agreement form available in **Appendix J** or under HR Forms on MyLoreto.

A rehabilitation programme will not financially disadvantage staff and staff who return on a rehabilitation programme will receive payment as follows:

- Staff who are receiving full sick pay will receive full pay irrespective of hours worked
- Staff who are receiving half sick pay will receive the greater of the following:
 - Half pay
 - Payment for the hours worked
- Staff who are not receiving sick pay will be paid for the actual hours worked, provided this amount is at least equal to or greater that Statutory Sick Pay

Periods spent on a rehabilitation programme will not be counted as sick leave for sick pay or sickness monitoring purposes.

Long Term Sickness Case Review Hearing

Where a long term period of absence is continuing, and options to enable the member of staff to remain in employment have been unsuccessful, the member of staff may be asked to attend a Case Review hearing.

The purpose of a Case Review Hearing is to consider whether there are any further actions that the College can take to assist the member of staff in continuing their employment or whether their employment should be terminated on the grounds of their inability to undertake their duties due to ill health.

The Long Term Sickness Case Review Hearing procedure is outlined in **Appendix F**.

Right of Appeal

If a member of staff wishes to appeal against the outcome of a Formal Attendance Review Meeting, Short Term Sickness Case Review Hearing or Long Term Sickness Case Review Hearing that has been issued them by the Principal, they must do so in writing to the Chair of the Governing Body within 10 working days of receipt of the letter informing the employee of the outcome. If the Principal has empowered another member of staff (Designated Alternate) e.g. the Assistant Principal to take formal action, then the appeal should be considered by the Principal.

The appeal should state the grounds on which the sanction should be reviewed. An appeal cannot result in a more severe outcome than that originally imposed.

The employee may be accompanied at the appeal hearing by a work colleague or Trade Union representative. The appeal hearing should be convened without undue delay. The procedure to be followed at the appeal hearing is outlined in **Appendix G**. The appeal hearing cannot be a re-run of the Formal Attendance Review Meeting or Short Term Sickness Case Review.

The Appeal Chair will communicate their decision in writing within ten working days of holding the appeal. The decision at appeal is final within the College's internal procedures.

Annual Leave and Sickness Absence (Support Staff)

Staff can accrue contractual annual leave during paid sick leave.

Where continued absence bridges an annual leave year, the member of staff will be entitled to carry over a maximum of five days of annual leave at the discretion of the Principal.

Illness during or before annual leave

If a member of support staff on a full year contract is incapacitated for work due to sickness or injury during any period of annual leave, whether in whole or part, the College will reinstate the period of annual leave lost due to incapacity. The member of support staff must contact the College in line with the absence reporting procedure to report their sickness on the first day that they fall ill. The member of staff must provide the appropriate medical certification covering any period of incapacity and attend a return to work interview with the HR Manager after their absence.

Work Related Ill Health or Injury

In instances where a member of staff sustains an injury that has been caused by their working environment, the accident/incident must be recorded in the accident book located in the First Aid Room or at College reception when the First Aid Room is closed for further information on the reporting of work-place accidents and incidents, please refer to the College Health & Safety Policy.

In instances when a case of sickness absence is due to an accident caused by a member of staff's working environment, full sick pay may be allowed up to a maximum of six months. In order to qualify, staff must fulfill all of the following conditions:

- An approved medical practitioner must confirm in writing that the absence is due to an accident which occurred during normal working duties and as a result of the member of staff's working environment or while the member of staff was on College duties.
- The accident must be reported through the College's accident reporting procedures.
- All sick pay is subject to the production of the correct certification documentation.

If an Accident Form has not been completed and a member of staff subsequently believes that their ill health or injury has been caused by their working environment, they should report this in writing to the Principal setting out the reason why they believe that work has contributed to or caused their ill health or injury.

Where an Accident Form has been completed, or where a member of staff subsequently claims that their ill health or injury is caused by their working environment, the Principal will appoint an Investigating Officer to carry out an investigation. The investigation may include liaising with the Facilities Manager for further information on the nature of the accident and seeking advice from the College Occupational Health Provider.

The Investigating Officer should collate the information into a report that will be sent to the Principal. The Principal will determine, based on the facts available. Whether or not the member of staff has sustained an injury or illness due to an accident caused by their working environment.

Written confirmation of the decision will be sent to the member of staff within five working days of the decision. In the event of the decision that the member of staff's ill health or injury is attributed to their working environment, the College does not accept liability.

Ill Health which does not lead to absence from work

There may be instances where a member of staff has an underlying health condition or is experiencing symptoms as a result of physical changes such as the menopause that is not preventing them from being in work, but they believe may be effecting their ability to carry out their role and responsibilities within the College.

If a member of staff has concerns of this nature, they must speak with their line manager in the first instance (if they feel comfortable to do so) before making the HR Manager aware.

The HR manager will arrange a welfare meeting either with the member of staff and their line manager or with just the member of staff (dependent on the circumstances and wishes of the member of staff). During the welfare meeting, the HR Manager will discuss the matter confidentially with the member of staff to gain a better understanding of the details of their condition and the implications that it may have on their role within the College.

Following the meeting an updated risk assessment of the member of staff's working environment may be carried out and the member of staff will be referred to the College Occupational Health provider for an assessment.

Upon receipt of the risk assessment and Occupational Health report, the HR Manager will discuss with relevant parties about support and reasonable adjustments that can be made to the member of staff's working environment, role and/or hours to enable them to carry out their role successfully. The HR Manager and line manager will continue to monitor the adjustments and will meet with the member of staff periodically to ensure that their needs continue to be met.

Occupational Health Referrals

The role of Occupational health is to provide advice and guidance to the College and its staff on the impact of a member of staff's ill health on their ability to undertake their duties and what measures can be put in place to support them where appropriate.

The HR Manager will discuss making a referral to Occupational Health with the member of staff before doing so. The HR Manager may obtain written consent from the member of staff using the consent form available on MyLoreto under HR Forms or in **Appendix H**, or this may be obtained by the Occupational health provider before the referral is processed.

The HR Manager will submit to the Occupational Health provider information around the reason for the referral, any sickness absence history or ill health history that the College is aware of in relation to the member of staff, the role and responsibilities of the member of staff and any adjustments / support that is currently in place. The HR Manager will ask for specific information from Occupational Health in order to support the OH clinician in completing their report. The member of staff will be asked to review the OH report and confirm their consent to release this to the HR Manager before it is sent.

Where a member of staff does not give consent to undergo an Occupational Health referral or give their consent to release the Occupational Health report, the implications of this will be discussed with them and confirmed in writing.

Work Related Stress

In the instance that a member of staff advises that they are experiencing undue stress due to their working environment they must speak to their line manager in the first instance (if they feel comfortable to do so) before making the HR Manager aware.

The HR manager will arrange a welfare meeting either with the member of staff and their line manager or with just the member of staff (dependent on the circumstances and wishes of the member of staff). During the welfare meeting, the HR Manager will discuss the matter confidentially with the member of staff to gain a better understanding of the details around the causes of their work related stress.

Following the welfare meeting, either the line manager or the HR Manager (depending on the circumstances and the wishes of the member of staff) will undertake a stress risk assessment with the member of staff. Guidance for completing the Stress Risk Assessment and the template form is available in **Appendix I** or from a member of the HR Team.

The member of staff will then be referred to the College Occupational Health provider for an assessment. The HR Manager will submit to the Occupational Health provider information around the reasons for the work related stress along with a copy of the Stress Risk Assessment form along with details of workplace adjustments put in place.

Upon receipt of the risk assessment and Occupational Health report, the HR Manager will discuss with relevant parties about support and reasonable adjustments that can be made to the member of staff's work and working environment, role and/or hours to support in reducing the causes of the work related stress. The member of staff may also benefit from Stress and Anxiety Management available through Occupational Health.

The HR Manager and line manager will continue to monitor the adjustments and will meet with the member of staff periodically to ensure that their needs continue to be met.

Occupational Sick Pay

Staff should be aware that, although the National Conditions of Service for Teachers and Support Staff provides for periods of sick leave on full pay and half-pay, these constitute maximum entitlements and do not preclude the College from taking action in the interests of the service before the expiry of these periods.

Failure to comply with the procedures as outlines in this policy could result in the non-payment of sick pay.

Teaching Staff

Provided the appropriate conditions are met, a teacher absent from duty because of illness (including injury or other disability) shall be entitled to receive in any one-year sick pay as follows:

During the first year of service	Full pay for 25 working days, and after completing four calendar months' service, half pay for 50 working days.
During the second year of service	Full pay for 50 working days, and half pay for 50 working days.
During the third year of service	Full pay for 75 working days, and half pay for 75 working days.
During fourth and subsequent years of service	Full pay for 100 working days, and half pay for 100 working days.

Support Staff

Provided the appropriate conditions are met, a member of staff absent from duty owing to illness (including injury or other disability) shall be entitled to receive an allowance in accordance with the following scale:

During the first year of service	1 month at full pay, and after completing 4 months of service, 2 months at half pay.
During the second year of service	2 months at full pay, and 2 months at half pay.
During the third year of service	4 months at full pay, and 4 months at half pay.
During the fourth and fifth years of service	5 months at full pay, and 5 months at half pay.
After 5 years of service	6 months at full pay, and 6 months at half pay.

For occupational sick pay entitlement record purposes [and without prejudice to the arrangements for self-certification days] “one month” shall be deemed to be equivalent to 26 working days, including Saturday.

Principal’s Discretion

The Principal alone will exercise discretion in the case of serious illness, where sick pay is exceeded.

The Terminally Ill

In cases of terminal illness, the College will provide the maximum benefits under the National Conditions of Service, so that the next of kin can benefit from a death-in-service payment.

Retirement on the Grounds of Ill Health

Ill health retirement benefits may be paid if a member of staff has to retire before their Normal Pension Age (NPA) because they are permanently incapable of continuing within their employment due to illness or injury. Certain criteria has to be satisfied before a person becomes entitled to benefits.

Prior to applying for ill-health retirement, the Long Term Sickness process must have been followed including a referral to Occupational Health and the consideration of options to support the member of staff remaining in work including change of role or change to working hours.

Ill health retirement should only be considered once it is clear that all other options have been exhausted.

There is no relationship between the length of time an employee received occupational sick pay and the commencement of this procedure. Delaying the commencement of this process is not acceptable as it may lead to prolonged periods of sickness absence and delays in the member of staff obtaining the release of their pension.

Ill Health Retirement Referral to Occupational Health

The purpose of the Occupational health referral in this instance is to obtain a report from an Independent Registered Medical Practitioner/ Specialist Consultant on the employee’s medical condition, any potential reasonable adjustments that can be made, their ability to undertake a full range of duties and a judgement on the employee’s eligibility for ill health retirement.

Consent will be obtained from the employee prior to any referral being made. The purpose of the proposed referral should be explained and the employee should be given an opportunity to express any view they may have and provide and additional information that may be helpful in assessing the situation. E.g., the employee’s GP may have given advice that may need to be taken into account.

Employees may also be requested to give consent for Occupational Health to be granted access to their relevant medical records. If consent is given, Occupational Health will request the relevant records and will advise the College based on any information they receive.

Consideration of the Occupational Health Report

The role of Occupational Health is to investigate and report to the employer on all cases referred to them. Normally this will involve interviewing/examining the member of staff, and as indicated above, it may include seeking consent to obtain a report on the employees' medical history from their GP and where appropriate their Consultant / Specialist.

A confidential report outlining the employees' medical condition and judgement on their eligibility for ill health retirement will be sent by Occupational Health to the HR Manager. This report will be shared with the Principal or designated alternate.

Support Staff

- If the occupational medical report returns an opinion that the employee is eligible for ill health retirement then the Principal will arrange a meeting with the member of staff and the HR Manager to discuss the report and explain the next steps.
- If the report returns an opinion that the employee is not eligible for ill-health retirement, the member of staff is required to return to the relevant stage of the Long Term Absence procedure.

Teaching Staff

- The occupational medical report and supporting medical evidence is forwarded to Teachers Pensions for consideration. The final decision is then made by the TP taking into account the observations of their medical advisors.
- If the employee is not deemed eligible for ill health retirement, the member of staff is required to return to the relevant stage of the Long Term Absence procedure.

Where it is deemed that a member of staff is eligible for ill health retirement, they will be asked to attend a meeting held in line with the procedure outlined in the Long Term Sickness Case Review Hearing.

Related Policies

- Data Protection Policy GDPR
- Health & Safety Policy
- Equality & Diversity Policy for Staff

Useful links

Teachers' Pensions Ill Health Retirement - <https://www.teacherspensions.co.uk/employers/member-retirement/ill-health.aspx>

GMPF Retiring on the Grounds of Ill Health - https://www.gmpf.org.uk/getmedia/5c505626-447f-4d6a-940c-595a12dd3c53/illhealth_booklet.pdf

Getting the Most out of the Fit Note - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/578032/fit-note-guidance-for-employers-and-line-managers.pdf

Appendix

Appendix A

Sickness Absence Self-Certification Form

To be completed and emailed / handed to HR on your first day back in work following a period of sickness absence.

Name	
Job Title	

Sickness Absence Details

First Day of Sickness Absence	
Last Day of Sickness Absence	
Return to Work Date	
Total Number of Days Absent	
Nature of illness	

I confirm that I am fit to return to work and the information I have provided above is correct.

Signature	
Date	

Please note you are required to attend a return to work meeting with your line manager in addition to completing this form.

For office use

Date Received	
HR Manager / HR Assistant Signature	

Appendix B – Return to Work Interview Form / Line Manager Guidance

To be completed by the line manager on the employees return from a period of sickness absence of under 1 week. Please refer to the Line Manager Guidance available in Appendix B of the Sickness Absence Management Policy ahead of the Return to Work Meeting.

Name:			
Job Title:			
Details of Sickness Absence:			
First day of Sickness Absence	Date:	Last day of Sickness Absence	Date:
Date Returned to Work	Date:	Total Days Absent	
Medical Certificate Provided? (required for absences of 7 days or more)		Did you consult your doctor?	
Did you attend hospital?		Name & Address of Doctor or Hospital Consultant:	
Have you been prescribed medication as a result of your illness? (If yes, detail the name of medication and any side effects that we need to be aware of)			
Are you due to receive any further treatment or have you any further scheduled appointments relating to your illness that are due to take place during your working hours? (If yes, detail the treatment and / or appointment dates if known)			
Are there any reasonable adjustments that are required to support you in returning to your role? (If yes, detail the adjustments needed)			
Occupational Health Referral Required? If yes complete Appendix H – Consent Form		Do you deem that you are fully fit to return to work?	
Details of previous short term sickness absences and trigger points (this information will be provided by HR prior to the meeting)			

I declare that the information provided is correct and that I am fully fit to return to work

Employee's Signature		Line Manager's Signature	
Date		Date	

Please provide a completed copy of this form to the HR Manager along with any Statements of Fitness for Work and other relevant documentation.

For office use:

Principal's Signature		HR Manager's Signature	
Date		Date	

HR will provide a copy of the completed form to the member of staff and a copy will be added to their personnel file.

Staff Return to Work following Sickness – Line Manager's Guidance

Loreto College has the highest expectations of personal, academic and professional excellence. It is important to be mindful of the College's Mission, core values and its duty of care to staff. The College will endeavor to act at all times with justice, compassion and respect for the dignity and worth of each member of the College community.

Key points of the College Attendance Management Policy are included below, however it is good practice to read and be familiar with the full policy, particularly the Staff Return to Work process prior to holding any Return to Work meeting.

It is important to be aware that the following principles apply to the College's procedures for dealing with absence:

- Ensure to look at each case with an objective view and take action based on the differing needs of the individual but in line with the policy
- Matters raised relating to a member of staff's absence do not imply any distrust of staff or concerns regarding their conduct
- Absence will be dealt with in a way that is non-discriminatory and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010
- Staff will be dealt with consistently and the absence procedure will be applied fairly across the College
- The College aims to promote a positive and preventative rather than punitive approach to Attendance Management
- The College will be sensitive and supportive to those suffering the effects of ill health
- Sickness absence cases will be conducted with respect for confidentiality and in accordance with the requirements for GDPR and Access to Medical Reports Act
- Open communication between managers and staff will be promoted

Line Managers should support their staff in achieving high standards by providing guidance on what is expected of them with regards to attendance and ensure they are aware of the facilities and services available to support them.

All staff have a responsibility to ensure the following:

- That they take all reasonable steps within their control to ensure that they keep themselves in a good state of general health and to comply with the College's Health & Safety policy
- They do not report sick when they are absent for another reason
- They raise concerns with their line manager or the HR Manager if they believe that their job is making them ill or contributing to their illness
- That all appropriate certifications are completed
- That they maintain contact with HR and their line manager during period of absence
- That they ensure medical advice and treatment, where appropriate, are received as quickly as possible to facilitate their return to work

Return to Work Meeting

Upon a member of staff's return to work following a period of sick leave, they are required to attend a return to work meeting with their line manager. You will be notified by HR via email of the requirement to complete a return to work meeting. HR will also advise you if the member of staff has reached a sickness absence trigger point.

This must take place on their first day back from sick leave. In the instance that a return to work interview is unable to take place on the individual's first day back at work, the meeting must be completed within seven calendar days of the member of staff's return date.

If you are unavailable to conduct this meeting on the employee's first day back, you must notify HR at your earliest opportunity and advise of the earliest date that this can be completed.

The purpose of the Return to Work meeting is to:

- Welcome the member of staff back to work
- Ensure that they are fit enough to return to work
- Understand the reasons for the absence
- Discuss the impact on the employee's ability to perform their job role in light of any medication they may be taking
- Collect completed medical certification (as appropriate)
- Offer any appropriate help and support
- Raise any concerns regarding absence and ensure that staff are aware of the College Sickness Absence Management Policy and trigger levels

If you have concerns about discussing any of the above points during a return to work meeting please seek further support for a member of the HR team.

Please ensure to complete all relevant sections of the Staff Return to Work form including as much detail as possible and making additional relevant notes if necessary.

Occupational Health Referrals

The role of occupational health (OH) is to provide advice and guidance to the College and its staff on the impact of a member of staff's ill health on their ability to undertake their duties and what measures can be put in place to support them where appropriate.

If you wish to refer a member of staff to Occupational Health, you must discuss the referral with them and obtain written consent for the referral to be made. The Occupational Health Consent form is available in HR Forms on MyLoreto or in Appendix H of the Sickness Absence Management Policy. All OH referrals must be made via the HR team.

Name	
Date	
Line Manager	
HR/Management Representative	
Absence Dates / Reasons: 1. 2. 3.	
Are there any underlying health concerns / other issues identified? Is the member of staff seeking appropriate treatment if needed?	
Consideration of the impact that absenteeism has on the College and the department	
Review of any support previously put in place / Consideration of any additional support required	
Agreed review period (if required)	

Appendix C – Informal Attendance Review Meeting Form

The member of staff has been made aware that, if they have a further period of absence resulting in either the trigger point being hit again or exceeded, their absences will be reviewed and this may result in Stage 2 of the Attendance Management process being instigated.

I confirm that the information provided above is correct

Employee's Signature		Line Manager's Signature	
Date		Date	

Principal's Signature		HR Manager's Signature	
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Date		Date	
------	--	------	--

HR will provide a copy of the completed form to the member of staff and a copy will be added to their personnel file.

Appendix D – Formal Attendance Review Meeting Procedure

The member of staff will be given a minimum of 10 working days' written notice of the meeting and will be provided with relevant documentation that will be considered as part of the meeting at least 5 working days prior to it taking place.

The member of staff is entitled to be accompanied to the meeting by either a work colleague or Trade Union representative and should advise the HR Manager if they will be accompanied at least four calendar days prior to the meeting taking place. It is the responsibility of the member of staff to ensure that their companion receives copies of all relevant documentation prior to the meeting.

The employee should forward to the HR Manager all additional paperwork that they wish to be considered at the meeting at least four working days prior to it taking place.

During the meeting, the HR Manager or appointed note taker will take written minutes to reflect the points of discussion. The minutes will be typed up following the meeting and will be provided to all parties to review and sign.

1. The Principal (or designated alternate) will introduce all parties present and confirm the order of the meeting.
2. The Principal (or designated alternate) will review the relevant return to work interviews in turn and discuss each absence with the member of staff. They will also review the contents of the Informal Attendance Review Meeting Form/s exploring the reasons for the continued unacceptable attendance record and seeking to identify whether there is an underlying problem causing the absence.
3. The Principal (or designated alternate) will review any help and support previously offered and will discuss any additional appropriate help or support that can be provided to the member of staff to enable them to reduce their short term absence. E.g. a referral to Occupational Health if deemed appropriate.
4. The member of staff will be given the opportunity to state their case.
5. The Principal (or designated alternate) will have the opportunity to ask any further questions of the member of staff.
6. The Principal (or designated alternate) should then call a period of adjournment. This time will be used to deliberate the case, or to establish if a decision can be made within a reasonable amount of time in order to call all parties back to the meeting to communicate an outcome. If, after a period of adjournment, the Principal (or designated alternate) have determined that it is not possible to reach a decision within a reasonable period of time, the member of staff will be informed that a decision will be communicated to them in writing within a period of 5 working days.
7. When reaching a decision about whether to issue a sanction, the Principal (or designated alternate) will consider issues such as:
 - The impact of the level of sickness absence on other colleagues and the College's business
 - Representations made by the member of staff
 - Any help and support measures previously put in place
 - Any medical advice received
8. The Formal Attendance Review Meeting may result in one of the following outcomes:
 - No further action
 - To issue a formal warning for 6 months for unacceptable levels of sickness absence confirmed in writing
 - To issue a written warning for 12 months for unacceptable levels of sickness absence confirmed in writing – this should be given if a verbal warning for unacceptable levels of sickness absence is still live

- To issue a final written warning for 18 months for unacceptable levels of sickness absence confirmed in writing – this should be given if a written warning for unacceptable levels of sickness absence is still live.

Where a warning is issued, the member of staff will be advised of their right to appeal. The procedure to be followed at the appeal hearing is outlined in Appendix H of the Attendance Management Policy.

Appendix E - Short Term Sickness Absence Case Review Hearing Procedure

The member of staff will be given a minimum of 10 working days' written notice of the meeting /hearing and will be provided with relevant documentation that will be considered as part of the hearing at least 5 working days prior to it taking place.

The member of staff is entitled to be accompanied to the meeting by either a work colleague or Trade Union representative and should advise the HR Manager if they will be accompanied at least four calendar days prior to the meeting taking place. It is the responsibility of the member of staff to ensure that their companion receives copies of all relevant documentation prior to the meeting.

The employee should forward to the HR Manager all additional paperwork that they wish to be considered at the hearing at least four working days prior to it taking place.

During the hearing, the HR Manager or appointed note taker will take written minutes to reflect the points of discussion. The minutes will be typed up following the hearing and will be provided to all parties to review and sign.

1. The Principal (or designated alternate) will introduce all parties present and confirm the order of the hearing.
2. The Principal (or designated alternate) will review the relevant return to work interviews and the most recent Occupational Health report. They will also review the contents of the Informal Attendance Review Meeting Form/s and the most recent Formal Attendance Review Meeting minutes with the member of staff exploring the reasons for the continued unacceptable attendance record.
3. The Principal (or designated alternate) will review any help and support previously offered.
4. The member of staff will be given the opportunity to state their case.
5. The Principal (or designated alternate) will have the opportunity to ask any further questions of the member of staff.
6. The Principal (or designated alternate) should then call a period of adjournment. This time will be used to deliberate the case, or to establish if a decision can be made within a reasonable amount of time in order to call all parties back to the meeting to communicate an outcome. If, after a period of adjournment, the Principal (or designated alternate) have determined that it is not possible to reach a decision within a reasonable period of time, the member of staff will be informed that a decision will be communicated to them in writing within a period of 5 working days.
7. When reaching a decision about whether or not to terminate employment, the Principal (or designated alternate) will consider issues such as:
 - The impact of the level of sickness absence on other colleagues and the College's business
 - Representations made by the member of staff
 - Any help and support measures previously put in place
 - Any medical advice received
8. The Short Term Sickness Case Review Hearing may result in one of the following outcomes:
 - No further action
 - Dismissal with notice (paid in lieu)
 - Alternatives to Dismissal – may be considered in some cases, usually accompanied by a final written warning. Examples include:
 - Redeployment to a suitable role which may include reduction in pay

Where a sanction is issued, the member of staff will be advised of their right to appeal. The procedure to be followed at the appeal hearing is outlined in Appendix H of the Attendance Management Policy.

Appendix F – Long Term Sickness Absence Case Review Hearing Procedure

Where a long-term period of absence is continuing, and options to enable the member of staff to remain in employment have been unsuccessful, the member of staff may be asked to attend a Case Review Hearing.

The member of staff will be given a minimum of 10 working days' written notice of the hearing and will be provided with relevant documentation that will be considered including Occupational Health Reports, rehabilitation plans, meeting minutes and other medical information. Others involved in the case, such as the line manager, may be asked to provide written information on what actions have been taken. This information will be provided to the member of staff at least 5 working days prior to the hearing taking place.

The member of staff is entitled to be accompanied to the meeting by either a work colleague or Trade Union representative and should advise the HR Manager if they will be accompanied at least four calendar days prior to the meeting taking place. It is the responsibility of the member of staff to ensure that their companion receives copies of all relevant documentation prior to the meeting.

The employee should forward to the HR Manager all additional paperwork that they wish to be considered at the hearing at least four calendar days prior to it taking place.

If a member of staff is too unwell to attend a Long Term Sickness case Review Hearing in person, they have the option to make written submissions that will be considered as part of the hearing.

During the hearing, the HR Manager or appointed note taker will take written minutes to reflect the points of discussion. The minutes will be typed up following the hearing and will be provided to all parties to review and sign.

1. The Principal (or designated alternate) will introduce all parties present and confirm the order of the meeting.
2. The Principal (or designated alternate) will review the most recent Occupational Health report and other documentation such as welfare meeting minutes and other medical reports with the member of staff and consider whether there is any further actions that the College can take to assist the member of staff in continuing their employment.
3. The member of staff will be given the opportunity to state their case / any written submissions will be considered by the Principal (or designated alternate).
4. The Principal (or designated alternate) will have the opportunity to ask any further questions of the member of staff (if they are present).
5. The Principal (or designated alternate) should then call a period of adjournment. This time will be used to deliberate the case, or to establish if a decision can be made within a reasonable amount of time in order to call all parties back to the meeting to communicate an outcome. If, after a period of adjournment, the Principal (or designated alternate) have determined that it is not possible to reach a decision within a reasonable period of time, the member of staff will be informed that a decision will be communicated to them in writing within a period of 5 working days.
6. When reaching a decision about whether or not to terminate employment, the Principal (or designated alternate) will consider issues such as:
 - The need for work to be undertaken
 - The impact of the absence / ill health on other colleagues and the College's business

- Representations made by the member of staff
- What actions have been taken to attempt to enable the member of staff to continue in employment
- Medical advice received

This list is not exhaustive and the weight attached to each will depend upon the circumstances of the case, whilst balancing the needs of the member of staff and the College.

7. The Long Term Sickness Case Review Hearing may result in one of the following outcomes:

- Implementation of further workplace adjustment to support the member of staff back into work
- Termination of employment on the grounds of the member of staff's inability to undertake their duties due to ill health
- Referral to the ill health retirement process (support staff only who are in the LGPS)

The member of staff will be advised of their right to appeal the outcome of the hearing. The procedure to be followed at the appeal hearing is outlined in Appendix H of the Attendance Management Policy.

Appendix G – Short Term Sickness Case Review / Formal Attendance Review / Long Term Sickness Case Review Appeal Procedure

If a member of staff wishes to appeal against the outcome of a Short Term Sickness Case Review, Formal Attendance Review or Long Term Sickness Review Hearing that has been issued to them by the Principal (or designated alternate), they must do so in writing to the Chair of the Governing body.

If the Principal has empowered another member of staff (Designated Alternate) e.g. the Assistant Principal to take formal action, then the appeal should be considered by the Principal, in all other cases the appeal will be heard by a panel of governors.

This must be done within 10 working days of receipt of the letter informing the employee of the outcome.

The appeal should state the grounds on which the sanction should be reviewed. An appeal cannot result in a more severe outcome than that originally imposed.

The member of staff will be given a minimum of 10 working days' notice of the meeting and will be provided with relevant documentation that will be considered as part of the meeting at least 5 working days prior to the meeting taking place.

The member of staff is entitled to be accompanied to the meeting by either a work colleague or Trade Union representative and should advise the HR Manager if they will be accompanied at least four calendar days prior to the meeting taking place.

During the meeting, the HR Manager or appointed note taker will take written minutes to reflect the points of discussion. The minutes will be typed up following the meeting and will be provided to all parties to review and sign.

1. The meeting Chair will introduce all parties present and confirm the order of the meeting.
2. The meeting Chair will review the information considered at the previous hearing along with the meeting minutes, outcome letter and letter of appeal.
3. The member of staff will be given the opportunity to present their case.
4. The meeting Chair will have the opportunity to ask any further questions of the member of staff.
5. The meeting Chair will then conclude the meeting. The member of staff will be informed that a decision on the outcome will be communicated to them in writing within a period of 5 working days.
6. The meeting Chair will deliberate the case including the points of appeal made by the member of staff.
7. The Appeal hearing may result in one of the following outcomes:
 - The appeal is not upheld – the outcome previously issued remains the same
 - The appeal is upheld – a lesser sanction / outcome is issued
8. The outcome will be communicated in writing to the member of staff.

The member of staff has no further right of appeal following this outcome.

Consent form Guidance note and consent

In compliance with data protection law, we would like to explain the occupational health assessment process to obtain your consent to proceed.

What is an occupational health assessment? The purpose of an occupational health assessment is to provide your employer with advice regarding your health in relation to work with the aim to support you to return and stay in work.

Why am I being referred for an occupational health assessment? Your employer will have already spoken with you about your referral for an occupational health assessment and they have sent us a referral form telling us about your role with a summary of your health concerns. If you have any questions related to this, please contact your employer.

Who is my appointment with? If you agree to proceed with the assessment, you will be contacted by email to arrange an appointment with a health professional from APL Health. We are an independent occupational health company, with a team of occupational health and wellbeing experts.

What type of appointment is it? This appointment may be conducted by telephone or video call and in some instances, we may recommend a face to face appointment at a clinic. As part of the assessment the health professional will discuss the following with you:

- Details of your current health or injury, any care, medication or treatment
- Past health with any relevant illness, trauma or referral for specialist advice or treatment

About confidentiality? Anything you tell us will be treated with the strictest confidence unless it relates to any effect of your health on work or vice versa; or where it may have an impact on your safety or the safety of others.

What happens after the appointment? A report will be prepared for your employer with relevant health history, addressing any referral questions. In some instances, the health professional may recommend further assessment and/or support, and this can be discussed and arranged with you at the time of your appointment.

Who is the report sent to? We will send a copy of the report to you first, to view before it is released, and your consent will be obtained at that time, to release the report to the agreed recipients.

What if I don't agree with the report? If you think any part of the report is incorrect or misleading, you can ask the health professional to amend it before release and/or provide a statement outlining your views to accompany the report.

What if I refuse to attend the appointment or release the report? You have the option to decline or withdraw consent at any time. Please be aware that your employer might proceed in this instance with the information available.

How is my information stored? To provide the highest level of customer service possible, we need to keep accurate personal data about you. Personal data provided via telephone, email, video conferencing and via our online system is used to confirm your identity to maintain confidentiality. Telephone conversations and video conferencing are recorded for training and audit purposes. Health information provided by you is used to form the basis of our occupational health assessment and advice to you and your employer. We will take steps to ensure the accuracy of personal data or sensitive information we obtain, and this will be stored securely on our system. If you have questions or queries regarding this, please contact our Data Protection Officer on dpo@aplhealth.com

Authorisation to proceed. I understand the process for occupational health assessment and I consent to proceed with the assessment arranged by APL Health which includes release of a report to my employer.

Full name		Date of birth	
Email address		Tel. number	
Home address			
Place of work		Job role / title	
GP name and surgery address			
Signature		Date	

Appendix I – Work Related Stress

What is Work Related Stress?

The UK Health and Safety Executive (HSE) definition of work related stress is: ‘The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them at work’. People can become stressed when they feel they don’t have the resources they need (whether physical, financial or emotional) to cope with these demands.

Pressure and Stress

There is sometimes confusion between the terms ‘pressure’ and ‘stress’. It is healthy and essential that people experience challenges within their lives that cause levels of pressure, for example the need to make decisions quickly when faced with a critical situation. Up to a certain point, an increase in pressure can improve performance, such as feeling motivated to meet a deadline. However, if pressure becomes excessive, and/or continues for an extended period of time, it can become harmful to health. It is also important to remember that every individual is different and their experience of pressure, and when that can tip into stress, will vary.

Handling Stress at Work

The HSE provides guidance for employers on how to identify and manage the causes of work-related stress. The HSE lists six main areas of work designed which can affect stress levels which need to be managed properly. They are:

- **Demands:** e.g. workload and working environment
- **Control:** e.g. how much say someone has over their job
- **Support:** e.g. level of supervision and resources available to do the job
- **Relationships:** e.g. promoting positive working to help prevent conflict
- **Role:** e.g. making sure people understand their role and how it fits within the College
- **Change:** e.g. how change is managed and communicated

Early Intervention

Spotting and addressing early signs of an issue can prevent it escalating. If an employee raises an issue and managers feel confident and capable of taking action, then early intervention is preferable. Managers can seek support with this from the HR Manager.

Stress Risk Assessments

Carrying out a stress risk assessment is a good way of tackling workplace stress before it becomes a more substantial issue. The below provides guidance on the hazards and control measures to consider when undertaking a stress risk assessment with a member of Teaching Staff.

Staff Stress Risk Assessment Guidance

Existing Workplace Hazards	Nature of risk	Control measures to consider
Work Demands	How much work is there? Are staff comfortable with the amount of work? Are there set timescales for workload – are these too much/too little time to achieve what is required? Is the intensity of the workload too great for individuals? Is there consistency and clarity in the job role?	The rescheduling of other activities, e.g. report writing at times of peak activity A limit to after-college meetings Bringing in additional resources to relieve workload at peak times of the year The opportunity for teachers to take a genuine break at lunch time No expectation of an immediate response to emails

		Consideration of the workload impact of each new initiative before it is introduced
	Understanding their role Do staff understand their role within the College?	Do individuals have a clear picture about their work objectives, your expectations of them and the responsibilities of their job? If a job changes, this should be reflected in a revised job description.
	Communication Do employees feel comfortable in raising concerns? Do employees feel that they are kept informed about developments to their department / the College that will affect their role	Encourage staff to talk at an early stage if they feel that they are unable to cope Take time to talk to the team regularly and update them on departmental developments Take time to understand the challenges staff are facing Discuss ways of sharing work sensibly and agree a way forward Gain understanding and commitment to unplanned tight deadlines
	Feedback Do staff feel that good work is praised and effort acknowledged?	Ensure the achievements of staff are recognised at regular intervals in addition to the appraisal process
	Environment Are there any issues regarding the work environment that is affecting how effectively employees can do their role?	Ensure workplace risk assessments are up to date Consider environmental factors that may affect the efficiency of work demands.
Control	Are staff able to have their say? Do staff feel that they are involved in deciding what work they do, and when and how they do it?	Can you consider giving staff more control by enabling them to plan their own work and make decision on how their work should be completed?
	Skills and abilities? Do staff feel that their skills are being used appropriately? Is there room for employees to develop within their role and then use the new skills acquired?	Employees may feel more enriched if they are able to use a variety of skills to get tasks completed Are employee's skills being used to their full potential? Can staff access CPD on a fair and equitable basis? Can staff access mentoring and coaching where necessary?
	Supervision Is work regularly monitored? Do employees feel this is too much / too little? Do managers meet with staff to see how work is going?	Only monitor employees output if essential Encourage employees to share with managers how their work is going and raise any concerns at an early stage

Support & Relationships	<p>How supportive are you? Do staff feel they are being offered adequate managerial support with new work issues, recurring work issues or personal issues if needed?</p> <p>Do staff feel that they are well supported by their colleagues?</p>	<p>Give support and encouragement to staff even when things go wrong</p> <p>Encourage staff to share any concerns with you</p> <p>Hold regular team meeting to discuss any pressures or issues</p> <p>Hold one to one meetings to talk about any emerging issues or pressures</p> <p>Ensure induction programmes are undertaken for any new members of staff</p> <p>Review the on-going training needs of staff</p> <p>Guide staff if they have conflicting priorities or inter-team issues</p>
	<p>Work Life balance Do staff feel that you support a healthy work/life balance?</p>	<p>Ensure staff are aware of the College Work Life Balance policy</p> <p>Encourage support staff to take their annual leave at regular intervals</p>
	<p>Listening How well do you listen to your staff and do they feel that they are listened to?</p>	<p>Ensure you listen and agree a plan of action when staff are discussing issues with you.</p> <p>Identify if there are any supportive measures available through the College if an individual is experiencing personal issues</p>
Role	<p>Role ambiguity Are staff clear about what is expected of them?</p> <p>Do staff have a clear plan of work which is agreed with their line manager?</p> <p>Are staff encouraged to talk to managers at an early stage if they are unclear of their priorities of tasks to be undertaken?</p> <p>Are staff struggling with multiple / conflicting roles?</p> <p>Do staff understand how their role fits into the overall College priorities?</p>	<p>Ensure staff have a clear job description and clear job plans with enable them to understand exactly what their role is</p> <p>Encourage staff to communicate at an early stage if unsure about aspects of their role or nature of a task</p> <p>Meet with staff regularly so they are clear about what is expected of them</p>
	<p>New staff members</p>	<p>Ensure new staff members receive a comprehensive induction to their role</p> <p>Make sure other staff understand the role and responsibilities of the new recruit</p>
Change	Change Management	Change of whatever sort should be communicated to staff where appropriate

	Do staff feel that they are engaged with during any period of change within the College and / or their department?	Changes to ways of working should be accompanied by relevant training to enable staff to cope with any new systems, initiatives or equipment Change should be accompanied by suitable resources
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Individual Stress Risk Assessment Form

Employee Name:	
Employee Job Title:	
Risk Assessment Completed by:	
Date Risk Assessment Completed:	
Risk Assessment Review Date:	

Stress Categories	Specific causes of workplace stress identified within each category	Existing workplace precautions already in place	Additional workplace precautions to be implemented for the employee	Will the precautions implemented avoid workplace stress or reduce the causes of stress?
Demand				
Control				
Support				
Relationships				
Role				
Change				
Additional Comments				

Employee's signature:	
Assessor's signature:	
HR Manager's signature:	
Principal's signature:	

Appendix J

Phased Return Plan Agreement

In cases of long-term absence, staff will be expected to return to work via a rehabilitation programme which will ensure an incremental return to normal duties for an employee.

Rehabilitation should be discussed at the earliest opportunity and a range of options will be considered to support the member of staff back into the workplace. These include:

- Restricted work activities
- Reduced or amended working hours

This form can be used to support in documenting the agreed amendments to work activities and/or amended working hours as part of a phased return to full duties/hours. Please refer to the Attendance Management Policy for more information.

It is important to ensure that this agreed arrangement is reviewed on a regular basis, not just after the 4-week period. This is to ensure that it is fit for purpose and supportive in the member of staff's rehabilitation back into work.

Week Commencing	
Outline of Duties	
Working Hours	

Week Commencing	
Outline of Duties	
Working Hours	

Week Commencing	
Outline of Duties	
Working Hours	

Week Commencing	
Outline of Duties	
Working Hours	

Phased Return Review Meeting Date	
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I confirm that I agree with above temporary working hours/duties.

Employee' Signature	
Line Manager' Signature	
HR Manager's Signature	
Principal's Signature	