



## Exeter College

# Sickness Absence Reporting and Sick Pay policy

### 1. Introduction

We will endeavour to be sympathetic to genuine cases of illness or other problems which might make absence unavoidable. However, excessive or unauthorised absence causes disruption to the business, lowers the morale of other staff and makes us less able to accommodate genuine cases of long-term illness. Therefore, all absences are taken seriously and unacceptable levels of sickness absence are likely to lead to disciplinary action.

This policy is not contractual but sets out the approach that the College will normally use to deal with absence from work. The College reserves the right to vary the procedures as appropriate, and to amend any benefits that may be mentioned.

### 2. Scope of this policy

This policy applies to all non-academic employees (including heads of department). It does not apply to casual workers, agency workers or contractors.

The policy also only applies to absence caused by personal illness or accident, and not to the need to take time off because of the illness or accident of others (e.g. child, parent). Such absences will instead normally be covered by the provisions of the separate policies relating to parental leave, or time off to care for dependants.

### 3. Aims of this policy

This policy aims to minimise the disruption caused by employee absence by setting clear guidelines on absence notification, by encouraging regular communication to assist employees to return to work as soon and as safely as possible, and by assisting managers to handle absences due to illness or injury in a fair, consistent and effective way.

### 4. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of our managers to perform return to work interviews with the employees who report to them, and to support individuals whilst they are off sick and also upon their return. In addition, managers are required to complete the correct paperwork and ensure that records are kept up to date in order to manage absence efficiently (whilst bearing in mind the requirements to comply with relevant data protection legislation when handling confidential sensitive personal data). Managers are not expected to be medical professionals and if specialist advice or guidance is required to manage a case of absence, consent and permission to obtain this should be sought.

Our employees are responsible for following our absence notification procedures, and for informing us of any medical condition that may affect their ability to perform their role safely with us. We only encourage employees to return to work when they are fit to do so, for their own health benefits and also for those with whom they work. Absence should only occur, however, when an employee is genuinely ill and not for

---

This policy is non-contractual – it does not form part of your terms and conditions of employment.

Page 1 of 12	Version 3.0	Effective from 18 February 2020	Last reviewed December 2019
--------------	-------------	------------------------------------	--------------------------------

any reason other than the employee's own sickness. Other related policies cover different absence situations (please see below).

## 5. Illness during the working day

An employee who is unable to complete a shift due to illness, or for any other reason, must notify their supervisor/manager prior to leaving site. This should normally be done in person, wherever possible. The individual must also sign out of the College premises using the appropriate method for their work area (e.g. attendance log). If the employee is unable to return to work the following day, they must follow the absence notification procedure set out below.

## 6. Sickness Absence notification

An employee who is unable to attend work for any reason must:

- contact their manager as soon as possible, but in any event within one hour of their normal start time on their first day of absence. This notification should be by phone, and the employee should personally speak to their manager. Please note that we do not consider text messages to be an acceptable form of contact.

An employee who is unable to notify us personally should ensure that a relative, neighbour or friend contacts us. If the manager is unavailable, the employee or their nominated representative should instead notify the HR Officer or another senior member of staff.

Wherever possible, employees who regularly use email as part of their daily work should set their email account to 'Out of Office', using Outlook Web Access (<https://nexus.ox.ac.uk>). Full instructions are available from the IT Department.

- give as much notice of their absence as practically possible. In addition, the reason for the absence and an indication of its likely duration should be provided. The reason for the absence will, as far as is practicable, be kept confidential if this is requested.
- if appropriate, give details of any outstanding work that needs to be dealt with during their absence.
- confirm details of how they can be contacted during their absence (particularly if they will be away from home).
- remain in regular contact with their manager during their absence, in accordance with reporting timescales set by the manager (and up to daily, for short-term absences). If they are away from home at any time during their absence, they should provide us with full contact details.
- immediately upon return to work after any period of sickness absence all employees are required to complete a self-certification of absence form covering the complete period of absence, irrespective of whether a Statement of Fitness for Work was submitted. The Head of Department will discuss the details with the employee, will counter-sign the form (provided that the information provided is satisfactory), and will indicate whether or not payment is to be made for the period of absence. This form will then be retained on the employee's personnel file, and a copy sent to the Accounts Department if there are payment implications.
- if absent through sickness or injury for more than seven calendar days, obtain a Statement of Fitness for Work from a doctor and forward it to their manager. The name of the doctor, the surgery and its contact information should be clearly stated. Sick pay will not normally be paid for any absences that are due to reasons other than the employee's own illness.

---

This policy is non-contractual – it does not form part of your terms and conditions of employment.

Page 2 of 12	Version 3.0	Effective from 18 February 2020	Last reviewed December 2019
--------------	-------------	------------------------------------	--------------------------------

If a period of medically certified absence is extended by a further Statement, the employee's manager must be informed on the same day and advised of the extension of the absence. Statements of Fitness for Work should then continue to be sent on a regular basis until such time as the employee is able to return to work. This applies even where any entitlement to sick pay is exhausted.

If a Statement of Fitness for Work indicates that the employee is unable to undertake the full duties of their normal job, but that they may be able to do some work (either on reduced hours, or with revised duties), we will discuss this with them and consider any recommendations or suggestions made by the GP which may facilitate an earlier return to work.

If therapeutic work is recommended, we should be informed and we will take any appropriate steps to provide this ourselves, if practicable. However, if appropriate measures cannot be taken for any reason, the employee will remain on sick leave until such time as they are able to return to their full duties. Employees shall not normally return to work during the period covered by a Statement of Fitness for Work, unless the doctor has recommended a phased return and the College will set a date to review the situation further.

Whilst absent from work due to illness or injury, employees must not take on any other work, either paid or unpaid, without our consent, and irrespective of whether sick pay is still being paid. Employees remain bound by all of the terms and conditions of their contracts of employment.

Whilst absent from work due to illness or injury, employees are expected to remain resting at home, unless specifically advised otherwise by their GP or other qualified medical advisor, and to refrain from any strenuous activity or activity that a reasonable person or healthcare professional would consider to be inconsistent with the reason for their absence. They are also expected to comply with the advice given by their GP or healthcare professional.

Failure to comply with the above procedures could affect any entitlement to sick pay and, in some instances, could warrant disciplinary action.

## **7. Accidents whilst at work**

The details of any absence that is related in any way to an accident at work must be recorded in our accident book, and the Health, Safety and Maintenance Administrator notified.

## **8. Fitness to return to work**

Employees shall not normally return to work during the period covered by a doctor's certificate, unless the doctor has recommended a phased return to work on the Statement of Fitness for Work.

Where an employee wishes to return to work but the College has concerns about their fitness to do so, we reserve the right to send them home from work and/ or require them to remain on sick leave. The College also reserves the right to ask an employee to get an amended Statement of Fitness for Work document from their GP, confirming an earlier return to work date.

If a phased return to work has been agreed, payment will depend on the circumstances and the duration of the part-time working arrangement. If contractual sick pay is exhausted, the employee will normally be paid for any actual hours worked, at their normal basic hourly rate, during a phased return (subject to earning at least the rate of SSP where there is an entitlement to this).

---

This policy is non-contractual – it does not form part of your terms and conditions of employment.

Page 3 of 12	Version 3.0	Effective from 18 February 2020	Last reviewed December 2019
--------------	-------------	------------------------------------	--------------------------------

If contractual sick pay is not exhausted, this will continue to be paid and the shortfall between worked hours and normal working hours will be deducted from the sick pay entitlement.

If the employee is being paid SSP only, this will be the minimum rate of pay whilst on a phased return to work programme, unless SSP is exhausted, in which case payment will only be made for the actual hours worked.

Hours worked as part of a phased return to work will be paid at the appropriate rate, but hours not worked will be counted as sickness absence.

An employee who wishes to continue with the reduced or revised hours indefinitely should ask their line manager to consider a permanent change to the contract of employment (e.g. via a Flexible Working request) and we will discuss the implications of this with them.

## **9. Return to work interviews**

It is our policy that, as far as is practicable, all employees are seen informally by their line manager, as soon as possible after their return to work. The reasons for the absence will be discussed in appropriate detail depending on the nature and frequency of the absence(s).

The meeting may, as appropriate, also provide an opportunity to brief the employee on any developments in their area of work which occurred during the absence. The manager will discuss the workload and how best to minimise any disruption that may have been caused by the absence. They will also need to know whether the employee is fully fit to return or should refrain from any tasks for health reasons.

An employee who, for whatever reason, finds it difficult to discuss the reasons for absence with their Head of Department, or who prefers to speak to another Head of Department of the same sex, should ask for this and we will make every effort to accommodate the request.

## **10. Unauthorised absence**

If an employee is absent from work without prior notification, we will attempt to contact that person to establish the reason for absence. If we are unable to contact the employee, the following procedure will normally apply:

- A letter will be sent to the last known postal address (or to the last known email address), requesting the employee to contact us immediately to provide an explanation of their absence and the date of likely return;
- If the individual fails to contact us, pay will be stopped with effect from the first day of absence from work;
- Failure to provide an explanation for absence may result in disciplinary action, which could ultimately end in dismissal.

## **11. Medical reports**

We reserve the right, at any time during employment, to require an employee to attend an independent medical examination, or to ask permission to contact their doctor or consultant for a report.

Prior written consent will be requested before we approach any doctor or consultant who is treating the employee, and full details will be provided of the employee's rights and obligations under the Access to Medical Reports Act.

We would normally request such a report in the following circumstances:

---

This policy is non-contractual – it does not form part of your terms and conditions of employment.

Page 4 of 12	Version 3.0	Effective from 18 February 2020	Last reviewed December 2019
--------------	-------------	------------------------------------	--------------------------------

- where an employee complains of an ongoing health problem which is affecting their ability to do their job;
- where an employee claims that any aspect of their job is creating a health problem;
- where the levels of absence give us cause for concern;
- where an employee has been absent for some time and there is doubt about when they may be able to return to work;
- where an employee is absent during disciplinary or grievance proceedings, and we wish to understand whether they are fit to attend meetings held under those procedures;
- where we are considering dismissal for either a long-term health problem or unsatisfactory attendance made up of repeated short absences;
- where an employee has any health condition that could be considered a disability, in which case we would normally wish to seek a report in order to obtain guidance about what, if any, reasonable adjustments should be made to enable the employee to perform their duties satisfactorily.

Employees are required to co-operate with our procedures, including providing medical advice and ensuring we are kept informed of any developments in their treatment or condition.

In addition to the above, the University of Oxford has contracted occupational health advisors whom we may ask to advise us generally, and to assist with the rehabilitation of those returning after lengthy absences or following serious illness or injury.

Our standard employment contracts contain a clause requiring that employees co-operate with us by attending any occupational health assessments organised for them. Failure or refusal to do so would be a breach of contract and could also lead to any contractual sick pay being withdrawn, and/ or disciplinary action being taken.

## 12. Sick pay and benefits

College Sick Pay will normally be paid for absences owing to illness or accident, up to a maximum period as follows:

Service (as at first day of absence)	Full pay	Half pay
First 3 months of service	2 weeks	2 weeks
Remaining 9 months of first year	2 months	2 months
During 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> years of service	3 months	3 months
During 4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> year of service	5 months	5 months
During 6 <sup>th</sup> year of service and beyond	6 months	6 months

In exceptional circumstances, Staff Committee may recommend to Governing Body that these periods be extended. This maximum entitlement will normally apply irrespective of the reason for the illness or accident (including if the absence is due to any injury caused by an accident at work or is related to the type of work done by the employee).

Any College Sick Pay will include any Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) payable for that period, as appropriate.

The maximum period of entitlement (which may be made up of one or more periods of absence) will be calculated on a rolling 12-month basis. The entitlement to sick pay will be calculated as at the first date of

absence in the current absence period, less any sick pay paid in the twelve month period prior to that date. For clarification, once the total maximum entitlement has been exhausted, it will not be recalculated during the current absence, irrespective of its duration or irrespective of any increased length of service

Employees who exhaust their entitlement to College Sick Pay may still be entitled to receive SSP (see below).

Sick pay for part-time or fixed-term employees will be applied on a pro-rata basis.

The Governing Body reserves the right to discontinue, reduce or re-claim the discretionary element of payments made under the College Sick Pay scheme if:

- following a disciplinary investigation, it is found that the terms of the scheme have been abused;
- we have good reason to believe that sickness is not genuine;
- notification of absence is provided later than the end of the first qualifying day of absence.
- the employee fails to report the reason for their absence;
- the employee fails to maintain regular contact;
- there are repeated instances of short-term absence (where there appears to be no underlying medical reason for these);
- the employee fails to attend an occupational health appointment, if this is requested;
- the illness or injury was sustained as a result of sporting or leisure activities, or is due to sunburn, or to alcohol/ drug consumption;
- the time off is to undertake surgical or non-surgical procedures that are concerned solely with the enhancement of physical appearance or any illness resulting from complications following this.

College Sick Pay will not normally be paid during any notice period (irrespective of whether the notice is given by the employee or by us) nor during any absence due to sickness during the course of disciplinary proceedings against the employee or during investigations into alleged breaches by the employee of our rules, procedures or contractual obligations.

The entitlement to College Sick Pay may also be affected if notification of absence is later than the end of the first qualifying day of absence.

In the event of the self-certification of absence form not being countersigned by a Head of Department, line manager or another senior member of staff, the absence will be treated as unauthorised and payment of College Sick Pay will be withheld. An employee who feels that their payment has been unfairly withheld should use our grievance procedure.

Any benefits under the contract of employment will normally continue to be provided during any period of absence lasting less than 13 weeks. Where these are benefits in kind offered while you are on duty (e.g. meals), you will not be entitled to receive any financial compensation for the loss while you are absent from work and unable to avail yourself of them.

Statutory leave will continue to accrue during periods of long-term sick. Contractual leave in excess of this will cease to accrue after 8 weeks' absence and will only start to accrue again on return to work.

If the employee's absence from work is (or appears to have been) caused by the negligence of a third party in respect of which damages are (or may be) recoverable, they should use all reasonable endeavours to

recover damages from the third party. Should the damages exceed the cost of recovery, the employee will be required to refund to us the part of any damages recovered which relates to sick pay paid during that period of absence.

### 13. Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)

Employees are entitled to SSP provided they meet the eligibility criteria. Full eligibility criteria can be found online at: <https://www.gov.uk/statutory-sick-pay/eligibility>

Unless otherwise specified in the employee's contract of employment, the days on which they would normally have worked had they not fallen sick will be identified as their qualifying days for SSP.

### 14. Maternity and sickness

Any sickness absence related to pregnancy will be recorded in the same way as any other sickness absence; however, it will not normally be counted when reviewing absence rates as part of a disciplinary procedure.

Employees should be aware that their maternity leave will start automatically if they are absent from work, due to a pregnancy-related illness, during the four weeks before the start of their expected week of childbirth, regardless of when they have said that they actually want their maternity leave to start. Further information is available from the HR Officer about this.

### 15. Absence whilst on holiday

An employee who falls sick (such that they would be unfit for work) either prior to commencing planned holiday absence, or during a period of paid holiday, may request that the period of illness during the authorised holiday is converted to sick leave and the holiday taken at a later date, **but only if** they have followed the correct reporting procedures outlined in this policy.

As a minimum, the employee is required to contact their Head of Department by telephone on each day of the illness (even if they are overseas) to confirm that they are ill and, if entitled to College Sick Pay during this period, provide a medical certificate covering the total period of the absence.

Employees should note that self-certification may suffice for SSP (if eligible), but it is not normally regarded as sufficient for the payment of College Sick Pay whilst absent on pre-authorised holiday (for which a medical certificate from a GP must normally be provided).

An employee who falls sick on a working day directly before or after a bank or public holiday, or directly following absence for authorised holiday may be required to produce a medical certificate in order to qualify for College Sick Pay.

If an employee is unable to take their statutory entitlement to annual leave in a particular year due to illness, they may carry any unused statutory leave forward to the next holiday year. However, if the employee has taken four weeks' basic statutory annual leave entitlement, any unused contractual entitlement above the statutory minimum of four weeks' basic leave will not normally be carried forward into the next holiday year (unless otherwise detailed in the Employee Handbook).

### 16. Time off for medical and dental appointments (excluding hospital appointments)

Wherever possible, and in order to minimise disruption, employees are asked to make medical and dental appointments either outside of normal working hours, or at the beginning or end of the working day, or on a day of the week when their workload tends to be quieter. However, we do realise that this may not always be possible, particularly with hospital appointments.

Employees who need to take time off to attend a medical or dental appointment should notify their Head of Department, giving as much notice as possible. Such time off will normally be paid, provided that it is reasonable; however, we may, in some cases, request that the time is made up. The manager may, at their discretion, require the employee to produce an appointment card. We reserve the right to ask an employee to reschedule a routine appointment if its timing would cause disruption to the running of the particular department, or the completion of vital or urgent work.

Employees who have an appointment which is not at the end of the working day will normally be expected to return to work following the appointment.

Any employee may be subjected to disciplinary action under our Disciplinary procedure if they:

- request or take time off work for a medical or similar appointment when such an appointment has not in fact been made;
- deliberately arrange appointments at times that are clearly inconvenient for us to accommodate; or
- fail to give reasonable notice of a pre-scheduled appointment.

Please note that different rules apply to time off for ante-natal appointments – see our maternity, adoption, paternity and shared parental leave policy, a copy of which is available from the HR Officer.

## **17. Hospital appointments**

Where it is necessary for a member of staff to visit a hospital for a one-off consultation, and it is not possible to do so outside working hours, this may be authorised as time off with pay (i.e. not as sickness absence). Evidence of the appointment may be required. If the employee is required to visit hospital for a course of treatment or therapy, this will normally be counted as sickness absence.

Where a stay in hospital is necessary, or where an employee needs to attend hospital on a regular basis for ongoing treatment, this will be recorded as sickness absence.

## **18. Sickness absence management**

Managers, in conjunction with HR, will regularly review sickness absence to check for patterns that give cause for concern or indicate the possibility of health problems that may be exacerbated by an individual's working environment or arrangements. Where there is cause for concern it may be decided that further action is required.

The procedures outlined below, and the triggers for them, explain the College's normal approach to managing sickness absence. However, as each case of sickness absence will vary, the College will adopt such triggers and follow such procedures as it considers to be reasonable, taking into account the specific facts of the case, and the College reserves the right to depart from the triggers and procedures outlined below where, in its absolute discretion, it considers it appropriate to do so. This may particularly be the case with employees who have less than two years' service with the College.

In cases where it appears that an alternative procedure may be relevant (for example, because there are concerns about performance or conduct and not just attendance), it would be for the College to decide on the appropriate procedure to be followed. In each case we will notify an employee of the steps we consider to be appropriate.



**Informal process**

Employees who have a number of short absences that together comprise an unacceptable overall level of absence will be seen by their manager to discuss the frequency and reasons for these absences. This will normally be done on an informal basis initially, and will apply irrespective of whether the absences are believed to be genuine or not.

At the informal sickness review meeting, the manager will explain what the College considers to be an "acceptable" level of attendance. What is "acceptable" may be different depending on the nature of the work, the ability of the department to provide cover, the employee's length of service, previous absence history, the reasons given for the absences, and the treatment of other employees in similar situations.

The HR Officer may be present at this meeting, as appropriate.

Following the meeting, the manager may confirm the outcome in writing, including any improvement that is required and over what time period. Each case will be reviewed on its individual circumstances and the outcome of the informal sickness absence review meeting and any sanctions or requirements will be decided at the discretion of the College.

**Formal process**

If, following an informal sickness absence review meeting, an improvement in an employee's attendance is required but not achieved, a formal sickness absence review meeting may be held. This will be done in accordance with our disciplinary procedure, on grounds of unsatisfactory attendance.

Following each formal meeting, the employee will be informed of the manager's decision, including any warning issued and any further requirements for improvement going forwards. The employee will also normally be informed of the potential consequences of a failure to improve.

If, despite warnings, attendance remains unsatisfactory, this may result in dismissal. Prior to dismissal, the employee will be invited to attend a formal meeting to discuss their attendance. They may be accompanied at this meeting by a colleague or a trade union representative. The reasons for the absence, and the individual's overall level of attendance, will be fully discussed. If a decision is taken to give a warning or to dismiss, this will be confirmed in writing, together with details of any right of appeal and our appeals procedure. For further details, please refer to the disciplinary procedure.

**20. Long-term sickness**

We will normally make arrangements to informally see employees who are absent from work for a period in excess of 8 weeks. This may be either at work or at their home, to update ourselves on their progress and to ask for permission to obtain a doctor's or consultant's report. Employees may refuse their permission, but it should be emphasised that the request is made to help us manage the situation and it will usually be to their advantage to enable us to get further information about their likely date of return to work, whether any medical restrictions should be placed on their activities, and whether they have any condition which may be classed as a disability.

We will aim to inform an employee who is about to exhaust their entitlement to either SSP or College Sick Pay. An employee who has exhausted their sick pay is still required to comply with our absence notification procedure and to send in Statements of Fitness for Work to cover their absence.

Employees may, if they choose, request to take some annual leave during periods of sickness absence, or prior to returning to work. An employee who is on sick leave may also choose to cancel any pre-arranged

holiday that would otherwise coincide with their sick leave, but should notify their manager as soon as possible of any such request.<sup>0055.01</sup>

Employees who are unable to take at least their statutory holiday entitlement during our holiday year (including any bank/public holidays taken as paid leave) may carry the shortfall forward into the next holiday year; however, any contractual entitlement in excess of the statutory minimums may be lost.

If the absence continues at a level that we deem unacceptable, or if it becomes evident that there is little likelihood of a return to work, we will reassess the situation and may take a decision to dismiss on grounds of ill-health.

If dismissal is being considered, we will write to the employee, giving advance notice of a formal meeting to discuss the situation. The employee may, if they wish, be accompanied at this meeting by a colleague or a trade union representative.

Before reaching a decision, we will take into account the nature of the illness, any advice we have received from a doctor, consultant or occupational health professional as to likely return to work and future capabilities, length of service, previous absence history and performance. If the absence is due to a reason related to a disability, we will also wish to explore any ways of accommodating this.

If a decision is taken to dismiss, this will be confirmed to you in writing, together with the details of any right of appeal and our appeals procedure.

## **21. Health checks, concerns and contact with infectious and contagious diseases**

All new employees are required to complete a pre-employment health questionnaire on accepting our offer of employment and prior to starting work for us. This is aimed at identifying any areas of concern, medical conditions, etc.

If, at any time during employment an employee suspects that they may be suffering from, or who is diagnosed as suffering from, any condition which may affect their ability to do their job is required to notify their Head of Department in order that we may take all reasonable steps to ensure their well-being at work. This includes notifying us of any medication that the employee is taking which may affect their ability to work safely, or may cause drowsiness or fatigue, especially if their job involves working with machinery or driving.

Any employee who has been in contact with an infectious or contagious disease (including diphtheria, typhoid, paratyphoid, polio or tuberculosis), should report the fact immediately to their Head of Department and then obtain advice as to whether it is necessary to remain away from work. Such absence will be treated as paid sick leave.

An employee who has been in contact with measles, mumps, whooping cough, German measles (rubella) or chicken pox need not normally remain away from work.

## **22. Elective surgery**

For the purposes of this policy, elective surgery is surgery that is not considered to be medically necessary, or is for non-medical reasons. Examples might include vasectomies, the removal of bunions or moles, or surgical or non-surgical procedures that are concerned solely with the enhancement of physical appearance (e.g. face lifts, breast enlargements, facial peels, teeth whitening, dental veneers etc). Time away from work for such procedures should be taken from holiday entitlement, or as time off in lieu.

We accept that there may be circumstances where a manager wishes to exercise their discretion to allow time off for elective surgery, depending on the individual circumstances. The employee making the request

should discuss the reason for the time off and the underlying circumstances with their manager who (at the College's sole discretion) may authorise up to one day's paid leave in any one year for an employee to undergo cosmetic interventions.

Alternatively, a manager may permit time off to be taken as annual leave, time off in lieu (TOIL) or unpaid leave.

An employee who wishes to take time off for elective surgery is required to:

- inform their manager as soon as the plans have been confirmed;
- provide a statement from a qualified medical practitioner that the elective surgery has been approved, and giving the likely duration of recovery;
- where possible, arrange for the elective surgery to take place at a time that will cause the minimum amount of inconvenience to the College; and
- provide as much notice as possible of the day(s) on which the elective surgery will take place.

Any information provided to the manager will be maintained in strict confidence. The reason for the employee's absence will be disclosed only on a "need-to-know" basis and in consultation with the employee.

Where the outcome of the elective surgery is unexpected and the employee suffers an injury or illness, our standard sick pay provisions will apply, following receipt of the relevant sickness certificate.

### **23. Fertility treatment**

Any employee who may need time off work to undergo fertility treatment, or because their partner is undergoing fertility treatment, should discuss this with their manager. Time off can be taken as annual leave or, alternatively, unpaid leave may be authorised or a form of temporary flexible working may be approved, subject to the needs of the College.

Any employee who may need such time off work should:

- inform their manager as soon as the plans have been confirmed;
- provide a statement from a qualified medical practitioner that fertility treatment has been recommended and approved; and
- if requested, produce an appointment card for each occasion on which time off is required.

Where possible, appointments should be made for times that will cause the minimum disruption to the working day, and we do ask that the employee provides as much notice as possible of the days and times on which time off is required.

Any information provided to the manager will be maintained in strict confidence.

### **24. Absence records and monitoring**

Details of an employee's health, either physical or mental, are categorised as "sensitive personal data" under current data protection legislation. Health records are therefore kept in a locked filing cabinet in the HR Office.

A record for each employee is kept, detailing the number of days absent, dates and reasons given. These records are kept by the HR Officer. The employee and Head of Department or their manager may request

to see the individual details at any time. The HR Officer should be given reasonable notice of their requirement, so that they can collate the records.

Our overall absence figures and the reasons for these will be reviewed and analysed by the HR Officer and Heads of Department on a regular basis to identify any trends or any areas of concern. Where areas of concern are highlighted, action will be taken to try to identify the causes and take appropriate action.

**25. Monitoring and review of this policy**

The Governing Body of the College has overall responsibility for implementing and monitoring this policy, which will be reviewed on a regular basis following its implementation and may be changed from time to time.

Any queries or comments about this policy should be addressed to the HR Officer.

**26. Related policies**

We also have the following related policies:

- Maternity, adoption and paternity leave, and shared parental leave
- Disciplinary policy
- Flexible working policy
- Parental leave policy
- Time Off to Care for Dependents policy