

Staff Absence and Substitution Policy and Procedures

INTRODUCTION

In the unfortunate circumstance where staff are absent, the UK College of English (UKCE) is committed to act on non-attendance and provide adequate substitution for absent staff members to ensure the effective provision of education at the Colleges. In achieving the College's commitment, the Staff Absence and Substitution Policy has been developed to provide a framework for college staff on the procedures when absence and an approach to addressing substitution.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Policy is to provide clarity for college staff on matters relating to staff absence and substitution procedures to ensure that all staff take full responsibility for communicating their absences and managing substitution lessons appropriately.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Policy are to ensure that all College staff have appropriate knowledge about the procedures to be followed in the event of absence.

PRINCIPLES

The principles of this Policy are as follows:

- To encourage, guide and support staff to help them achieve and maintain acceptable attendance standards.
- To ensure that all staff at the College have effective guidance about what to do in the event of illness, which may result in absence from the College or affect an employee's ability to perform their professional duties.
- All staff are required to know and understand the guidelines relating to ill-health which might affect their ability to attend work and/or perform their professional duties.
- Staff will be treated fairly and with dignity and the principal aim is to seek an effective return to work.
- Managing attendance issues in a timely, fair, and effective manner.
- Ensuring that there is clear communication between managers and staff concerning the application of these procedures.

Please be advised that failure to comply with any of the requirements and obligations outlined might result in action according to the Disciplinary Policy and Procedures which might result in loss of earnings.

ABSENTEEISM PROCEDURE

UKCE policy procedures concerning employee absenteeism are as follows:

*Certain circumstances will result in an excused absence. These include both **foreseen** and **unforeseen** absence.*

Foreseen absence

In circumstances of foreseen absence, employees on full time contracts, are required to inform the College well in advance of his/her absence by way of the online integrated human resource (HR) system providing reasons for leave of absence and to determine possible alternate arrangements. At present, staff on an hourly contract, teaching staff have to book holidays or time off through the Head of Academic Delivery. Approval of foreseen absence is required by the Head of Academic Delivery well in advance to ensure an adequate substitute is available.

Unforeseen absence

In circumstances of unforeseen absence, employees are required to inform the College as soon as possible by way of a telephone call to either the Head of Academic Delivery or the Deputy Head of Academic Delivery.

In cases of absence due to illness the following reporting procedures apply:

- Office staff are required to email line manager before the start of their shift.
- Where teachers have morning classes, he/she is required to inform the Academic team by way of a telephone call, where possible, by 7:00 am.
- When teachers have afternoon classes, he/she is required to inform the College by way of a telephone call at least three hours before the start of the class.
- If, at this time, it is possible to give an expected date of return, staff are encouraged to do so.
- Teachers also have to give a full handover of their class (es) so that the substitute teacher knows what to cover in the lesson.
- In any event, staff are encouraged to phone the College during the day prior to return to give notification of intention to return to work.
- If absence is going to be longer than three days, staff are to notify the College as soon as this becomes apparent.

Upon receiving communication from an absent teacher, the Deputy Head of Academic Delivery will inform the Head of Academic Delivery of the teachers' absence to make alternative arrangements. In addition, the Deputy Head of Academic Delivery is also required to reflect the teacher's absence in the staff leave calendar and timetable.

Prolonged Absence

Where an employee has been absent for more than three consecutive days and has subsequently failed to inform the College providing justified reasons for their absence, the Head of Academic Delivery / Chief Executive will then personally contact the employee by way of a telephone call. In circumstances where an employee has continued to fail to inform the College and the Head of Academic Delivery cannot contact them via telephone, the Chief Executive will be informed of the employee's absence and the employee's continued unauthorised absence will be noted in the absent employee's staff profile. Prolonged unauthorised staff absence will be dealt with according to the procedures provided in the Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.

Should an employee be absent for more than seven consecutive days, they are required to inform the College by way of a medical certificate to justify their absence.

Certification Procedures for Excused Absence

An absence of up to seven days does not require any form of certification.

For absences due to illness of longer than seven calendar days, a medical certificate is required. This includes days the employee does not normally work, such as weekends or Bank Holidays.

Should absence continue after the seventh calendar day, the absent staff member is required to provide a doctor's certificate to the College not later than the eighth calendar day of absence. Subsequent doctors' certificates must be submitted to cover the entire period of absence if it extends beyond the period covered by the initial statement.

Upon receipt of medical certificates, the Head of Studies will record the details in the staff member's file and will return the doctor's certificate to the staff member.

Reasons for time off

Time off for medical appointments

It is expected that non-urgent medical appointments should be arranged outside of an employee's directed time.

If there is a large number of appointments over a period of time, consideration may need to be given for time to be made up. Please be aware that verification of the appointment might be requested.

Maternity/Paternity/Adoption leave and pay

Staff are entitled to maternity/paternity/adoption leave and pay in accordance with current statutory provisions. Should a staff member or a staff member's partner become pregnant or are notified of a match date for adoption purposes, the staff member is expected to notify the Chief Executive at an early stage so that entitlements and obligations can be explained, and arrangements made for substitution. For further details, see the Staff Handbook.

Parental Leave

If a staff member is entitled to take parental leave in respect of current statutory provisions, the staff member is encouraged to discuss his/her needs with the Head of Studies or Chief Executive, as soon as possible, who will identify entitlements and look at the proposed leave periods dependent upon the child's/children's particular circumstances and the operational aspects of the College.

Time off for dependants

Staff members may be entitled to take a reasonable amount of unpaid time off during working hours to take action that is necessary to provide help to their dependants. Should this be necessary, staff are encouraged to discuss their situation with the Head of Studies or Chief Executive who, where appropriate, will agree to the necessary time off.

Bereavement Leave

Reactions to bereavement may vary greatly according to individual circumstances and the setting of fixed rules for time off is, therefore, inappropriate. Staff are encouraged to discuss their circumstances with their line manager to agree appropriate time off.

Unauthorised Absence

The unauthorised absence of college staff includes:

- late arrival
- attending interviews without approval
- prolonged breaks
- taking annual leave without approval
- taking sick leave without following the notification procedure

Individual instances of unauthorised absence will be dealt with by the Head of Studies or Chief Executive according to the Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.

SUBSTITUTION

Responsibility for substitutes

It is the responsibility of the Head of Academic Delivery to maintain a list of suitable teachers who are available for cover at short notice. Criteria for suitability are identical to those for contracted teachers. In the event that they are unavailable, the Head of Academic Delivery or their Deputy will cover classes. Full-time teachers are also required to cover any classes outside of their normal teaching hours.

Schedule of substitute teachers

Substitute teachers are expected to fulfil the same responsibilities, perform the same duties, and carry out the same teaching assignments as the teachers whom they are replacing. This handover is provided by the absent teacher to the substitute teacher.

Substitution Procedure

Substitute teachers are required to adhere to the following when covering for an absent teacher:

- Substitute teachers are required to have knowledge of the course content for the lesson he/she is covering.
- If possible, substitute teachers are to continue the weekly lesson plan and complete the same teaching assignments as the teachers for whom they are covering. Any changes should be noted in the record of work.
- Any resources used are to be returned to the Teachers Room for whom the substitute is covering.
- A handover should be submitted back to the absent teacher form the substitute, so they know exactly what was covered in their class.

Below is set out who will ask to cover a class in the event of an absence:

Absent teacher	Cover teacher
AM teacher absence	PM teacher
PM teacher absence	AM teacher
Mid class teacher absence	AM/PM teacher
Evening teacher absence	AM/PM teacher not doing evenings
If AM/PM teachers are not available	Cover teachers (zero-hour contracts) or Academic management team

Substitution procedures for other staff members

Absent Staff Member	Key Duties	Cover
Head of Academic Delivery (HAD)	To maintain accurate teachers' records Teachers' induction, payroll, admin, etc	Deputy Head of Academic Delivery
	Observations and teachers' feedback Teachers' support: lesson plan, class structure, etc	Deputy Head of Academic Delivery and/or Academic Manager
Deputy Head of Academic Delivery	Counselling students on courses, how to apply for university, internships, etc	Academic Manager

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(DHAD)	To monitor learning resources and groups, etc	Head of Academic Delivery, Academic Registrar
Academic Manager (AM)	Social Programme	Deputy Head of Academic Delivery
	To monitor absence, progress, and satisfaction (end of week 1 survey)	Deputy Head of Academic Delivery and/or Head of Academic Delivery
Academic Registrar (AR)	Timetabling	Head of Academic Delivery/ Deputy Head of Academic Delivery
	Student queries	Deputy Head of Academic/ Academic Registrar
Head of Business Development (HBD)	Current and prospective sales and agency agreements	Recruitment Coordinator
	Social Media duties	Marketing Officer
Chief Executive (CE)	Finance and operational duties: reporting to the board, product quality checks and budgets	Head of Operations and Systems
	Marketing Duties	Head of Business Development
Head of Operations and Systems (HOS)	Overseeing the centre's finance, including credit control Digital Marketing duties	Chief Executive
	Feedback and Systems – implementation of new systems and managing current systems	Chief Executive with Recruitment Coordinator's support
Marketing Executive (ME)	Website	Head of Operations and Systems
	Marketing materials design and videos	UKCBC Marketing department
Recruitment Coordinator (RC)	Group bookings	Head of Business Development
	Admin duties	Head of Business Development

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Designated Safeguarding Lead	To manage all aspects of safeguarding in the school	Deputy DSL
Designated Safeguarding Staff	Assisting DSL Monitoring under-18s	Deputy DSL and other DSS
Welfare Officers	To provide support to new and current students	Welfare Lead (DSL), Academic Counsellor and other Welfare Officers

Reviewed: 3rd July 2023

Reviewed annually or more often if required