

GREENHEAD COLLEGE SICKNESS ABSENCE AND ILL HEALTH POLICY

Greenhead College values the contribution of its staff in the successful running of the college and the provision of education to its students. Whilst recognising that employees may be prevented from attending work through ill health, the college has a duty to maintain services and minimise disruption. The college is therefore committed to managing attendance and sickness absence and believes that it is the responsibility of the college's managers, trade union representatives and employees to work together to promote the management of sickness absence and ill health.

The college will achieve this through:

- Promoting the health, safety and well being of all employees, including use of risk assessments to identify and manage hazards impacting on health in the workplace
- Monitoring levels of sickness absence for individuals, teams and the college as a whole
- Implementing procedures to support and manage staff absences, whilst dealing with unjustified and/or high levels of sickness absence.

The following principles apply to the college's procedure for dealing with sickness absence:

- Good attendance is valued and all opportunities should be taken to acknowledge and recognise such attendance
- Matters raised relating to an employee's absence do 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 college's Equal Opportunities policy
- Employees will be dealt with consistently and the sickness absence procedures will be applied fairly across the college
- The college will aim to promote a positive and preventative rather than punitive approach
- 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 and Access to Medical Reports Acts
- Open communication between managers and staff will be encouraged and promoted
- The college will aim to distinguish between absence due to sickness and the abuse of the sickness absence system
- The sickness absence policy and procedure will be monitored and reviewed to ensure that it continues to meet the college's aims and complies with these principles.

Employees are expected to:

- Attend work unless unfit to do so
- Raise concerns with their Head of Department, Line Manager or the HR Manager if they believe that their job is making them ill or contributing to illness
- Report sickness absence promptly, in accordance with the sickness absence procedure
- Ensure that the appropriate certifications are completed, in accordance with this procedure
- Maintain contact with their manager or a member of the admin team during periods of sickness absence
- Communicate effectively with their manager or a member of the admin team about their sickness absence
- Co-operate fully with an occupational health doctor and/or other organisations that provide support to the college and its employees
- Ensure that medical advice and treatment, where appropriate, is received as quickly as possible in order to facilitate a return to work
- Not abuse the sickness absence procedures or sick pay scheme.

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

- The college is willing to pay for an occupational health service opinion, if necessary, to provide advice and guidance on the impact of ill health on work and what steps the college and/or employee can take
- Counselling Service – to provide a confidential service to employees in order to discuss concerns related to work or personal circumstances
- The Admin Team – to provide support and guidance to managers and employees in dealing with sickness absence and ill health and in the use of the college's related policies and procedures.

Approved by the Policy committee November 2009

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“This policy has been impact assessed to ensure it complies with all aspects of Equality and Diversity. Members are reassured that this policy is compliant with current equality legislation”.

Policy Owner: John Blake – College Business Manager