

Absence Management – Launching the Absence Management Procedure in your Department

Introducing the absence Management process to your staff is the first key step in the absence management procedure.

Staff need to know that absence is being taken seriously by the College and that absence will be closely monitored. How successful the process is in your area largely depends on how well you communicate this to your team. In order to assist you in a successful implementation we have outlined the key areas that you should cover when launching the absence management procedure.

When addressing your team you will need to distribute the following handouts: (Please Click on the below Handouts to download)

1. [Copy of your local sickness reporting procedure](#)
2. [3 Stage Approach Flowchart](#)
3. [Bradford Factor information sheet](#)
4. [Employee Responsibilities](#)

1. Explain the purpose of the Colleges Absence Management Procedure.

The Absence Management Procedure provides a consistent, fair and supportive approach to managing absence.

The College is committed to improving the health, wellbeing and attendance of all staff and values the contribution of every individual. However absences are a great financial cost to the College some examples of these costs are as follow:

- The hiring of temporary replacement staff
- Missed project deadlines due to a lack of trained staff in certain areas
- Reduced client satisfaction levels
- Low morale among colleagues taking on additional responsibilities
- Diminished reputation with internal and external customers

It is therefore essential that we all work together to reduce absences. Regular, punctual attendance is an implied term in everyone's contract of employment and the College expects all staff to take responsibility for achieving and maintaining good attendance.

2. Introduce the 3 Stage Approach Flowchart

ensure all staff receive a copy of the flowchart

The 3 Stage Approach Flowchart forms the basis for the departmental absence procedure. As your line manager I will be using this approach to manage all absences in the dept/team/section etc. The simple 3 stage approach uses the colours green, amber and red as the basis by which a member of staff moves through each of the 3 stages each time they hit a Bradford Factor trigger point.

3. What is the Bradford Factor

Short-term absences are the most disruptive to the operational running of the business. The College has decided to adopt the Bradford Factor calculation as it identifies persistent short-term absences for individuals by measuring the number of spells of absence. Examples of how the Bradford Factor is calculated are shown on your hand out. *You may wish to have a general discussion about the examples to ensure that everyone understand how it works.*

Every time you are absent your Bradford Factor score will be calculated, taking account of all absences within a 12 month period. This score will be communicated to you at your Return to Work Interview. The College has set the initial trigger point score at 99 as this reflects the average absence levels in the College. If your Bradford Factor score generates a figure higher than the 99 trigger point (and therefore higher than the College average) you will be referred to OH and invited to attend a review meeting with your line manager. *See 3 Stage Approach Handout*

The Bradford Factor is a useful guide for managers on when to review attendance. It is not used to determine levels of disciplinary action.

4. Introduce Return to Work Interviews, Occupational Health Referrals and Review Meetings

Every time you are absent due to sickness, without exception, you will need to attend a Return To Work Interview on your return. The Return To Work Interview will be conducted in a private environment, will be confidential, informal and essentially designed to not only welcome you back to work but to explore if there is any support that you may require from the College. At your return to work interview you will also need to submit your sickness self certificate or doctors certificate if your absences was greater than 7 days. At your return to work interview you will also be informed of your Bradford factor score.

If your score has hit the Bradford trigger point you will be referred to Occupational Health for assessment. Occupational Health will explore any reasonable adjustments that could be made to help you improve your health and well being at work. You have a responsibility to participate in any Occupational Health referrals and attend appointments when required.

Occupational Health will submit a report to your manager based on their assessment. Your manager will then conduct a review meeting with you, discussing issues raised in the Occupational Health report and exploring any underlying reasons for your absence. Hitting the trigger point a second time will initiate a further Occupational Health referral and second review meeting, and hitting a trigger point a third time will initiate the consideration of alternate options

which may include, Disciplinary action, ill Health Retirement, re-deployment or incapacity Hearing.

Make reference to the Employee Responsibilities handout and make sure they are clear about its content.

Ask staff if they have any questions. Refer them to HR if they have any further queries.