



SICKNESS ABSENCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

ORDINANCE 26

Rev	Date	Purpose of Issue/Description of Change		Review Date
1.				
2				
3.				
Policy officer		Senior Responsible Officer	Approved By and Date	Equality Impact Assessed and date
Deputy Chief People Officer		Chief People Officer	University Council 30.09.24	05.09.24

Contents

1	Introduction and Scope	3
2	Defining Sickness Absence	4
3	Responsibilities	4
4	Reporting Sickness Absence	6
5	Contact during Sickness Absence	7
6	Sickness Absence Certification.....	7
7	Sick Pay Entitlement.....	8
8	Return to Work Review.....	9
9	Short-term absence	9
10	Long Term Absence	10
11	Appeal	12
12	Occupational Health Advice.....	13
13	Ill Health Retirement	14
14	General Matters	14
14.1	University Support Services	14
14.2	Doctor /Dentist & Other Routine Appointments.....	15
14.3	Homeworking	15
14.4	Sickness Absence and Annual Leave.....	15
14.5	Conduct during Sickness Absence	15
14.6	Third Party Claims	16
14.7	Instruction to Leave Work on Health Grounds	16
15	Policy Review	16
16	Equality Impact Assessment.....	17

List of Appendices

Appendix 1	Frequently Asked Questions
Appendix 2	Occupational Health Referral Form
Appendix 3	OH Referral Form Guidance
Appendix 4	Types of Reasonable Adjustments

1 Introduction and Scope

- 1.1 This Policy and Procedure represents the relevant Ordinance in relation to the University's approach to sickness absence. This Policy and Procedure has been negotiated and agreed with the Unions, approved by the Council, and forms a term of all relevant employment contracts of staff members of the University.
- 1.2 Bangor University is committed to promoting the health, safety and wellbeing of all staff. This policy is designed to promote good practice, and to provide a framework for the effective management of sickness absence. Its objective is to minimise absence levels whilst maintaining a fair, sensitive, timely and consistent approach for handling staff sickness absence.
- 1.3 The University is committed to creating and maintaining a working environment in which the dignity of all employees is respected and to this end managers will ensure that they adopt a reasonable and supportive approach when implementing the requirements of this policy.
- 1.4 This Ordinance applies to all employees of Bangor University. Staff on secondment to the University will be required to observe the reporting / notification requirements of the supporting procedure as agreed locally.
- 1.5 Whilst it is accepted that employees may, from time to time, be absent from work due to sickness, the management of sickness absence is essential and in the application of this policy the University's core principles are:
 - To ensure a fair and consistent approach to the management of sickness absence across the University without discrimination.
 - To reduce the level of sickness absence through early intervention and support.
 - To limit the impact on staff and the University's activities when such absence does occur.
 - To make allowances for disability-related sickness absence and medical treatment
 - To support staff through periods of ill health with the aim of securing their early and sustained return to work.
 - To minimise the likelihood of sickness absence by identifying causes of absence and recommending, where practical, changes necessary in working practices, the environment, or lifestyle where appropriate.
 - To work toward effective coordination between all those involved in the return-to-work process.
 - Where an individual becomes incapable of performing the duties due to ill health, and where all other possible solutions have been duly considered and reasonable alternatives have been proactively explored to follow a fair and transparent process to end their employment with the right of appeal.
 - To meet the relevant legislative requirements.

2 Defining Sickness Absence

- 2.1 Sickness absence refers to an employee's absence from the workplace due to ill-health. In deciding whether the Sickness Absence Policy or the Capability and Supporting Performance Policy will initially apply, consideration should be given to how the ill-health is affecting the employee's ability to carry out their job to the required standard. If the issue is primarily that the individual has unacceptable levels of absence from work, then the Sickness Absence Policy will initially apply. If the individual is largely attending work but their performance of their work is affected due to ill-health, the Capability Policy will apply. Unauthorised absence which is an issue of conduct may fall within the scope of the University's relevant Disciplinary Policy.
- 2.2 Advice should be sought from Human Resources if managers are unsure which procedure is appropriate or they believe they may need to follow.

3 Responsibilities

3.1 Employees:

- Will alert managers to any problems/issues which may have an impact on their attendance/health or performance so that they can offer suitable support.
- Will follow correct notification/certification processes, ensuring their manager has as much information as possible about their absence to enable them to provide appropriate support and advice.
- Will maintain regular contact with their manager whilst off on sickness absence, (the frequency and means of contact should be agreed with the manager).
- Will update their sickness absence data within i Trent via ESS (Employee Self Service).
- Will engage in processes, which may include attendance/remote attendance at informal/formal meetings whilst off on sickness absence, e.g. sickness review and return to work discussions, attendance at Occupational Health.

3.2 Managers:

- Are responsible for ensuring that the Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure is applied fairly and consistently within their area of responsibility.
- Have a duty of care for the health, safety and welfare of their staff and will work supportively in conjunction with HR and Occupational Health to support staff who are absent from the workplace.
- Are responsible for ensuring that all sickness absence episodes are recorded (via MSS – Manager Self-Service) in the i Trent system.
- Are responsible for managing sickness effectively, ensuring absence is monitored and regularly reviewed to ensure that problems or patterns are identified and managed at an early stage.

- Are responsible for remaining in contact with absent employees throughout their period of sickness.
- Should discuss with the absent employee how they would like to be contacted in future, how frequently and by whom. If the line manager is not the most appropriate person to keep in touch, offer alternatives.
- Should be sensitive to the individual needs and circumstances of staff members.
- Should be aware that communication style and content could affect the wellbeing of the staff member and impact on their decision to return to work.
- Should ensure that they are aware that the purpose of keeping in touch is to provide support and help absent staff members return to the workplace when they feel ready.
- Should provide reassurance to the staff member that anything they share about their health will be kept confidential unless there are serious concerns for their or others' wellbeing or there is a need to obtain HR advice or Occupational Health advice.
- Are responsible for carrying out return to work discussions and other review meetings, promoting a positive working environment, motivating, and managing their team to maximise attendance.

3.3 Human Resources:

- Will oversee the introduction, operation and monitoring of the policy.
- Will ensure the provision of training, guidance, advice and support for managers on the operation of the policy.
- Will work with managers and staff to facilitate a return to work, including provision of advice, support and referrals to the Occupational Health Practitioner.
- Will assist and provide appropriate support and information to employees in relation to redeployment or for ill-health retirement.
- Will be present to provide support to the line managers and staff at formal sickness absence review meetings.
- Will advise employees who are off on a period of long-term absence of their sickness pay status.

3.4 Occupational Health Practitioners:

- Will provide independent, competent occupational health guidance to staff members to support their health and wellbeing, and assist managers to make informed decisions and take action as appropriate.
- Will facilitate case conferences should the complexity of the absence require this level of intervention.
- With the consent of the individual employee, seek medical reports from the GP / Health Practitioner, Specialist, or other appropriate practitioner.
- Will, in response to a referral provide a comprehensive management report with information and advice on the nature, extent and impact of any medical

condition in relation to a member of staff's contractual duties (with the member of staff's consent).

- Where staff do not give consent for the Occupational Health Practitioner to report back to their manager and human resources and/or are unable to attend for an appointment, the referring manager will be advised that the staff member does not consent to provision of a report. The Occupational Health Practitioner will ensure the staff member is aware that the employer is entitled to make decisions in the absence of occupational health guidance, and that this may affect their future employment.
- May be asked to provide advice and support to facilitate a member of staff's return to work, and may give advice on reasonable adjustments required.

**Section 12 below provides further detail about the Occupational Health service. Appendix 2 and 3 provide further detail about the Occupational Health referral process.*

4 Reporting Sickness Absence

- 4.1 Employees must follow the agreed procedure within their College / School / Department for the reporting of sickness absence.
- 4.2 An employee who is unable to attend work because of sickness must notify their line-manager, or nominee, of this fact as soon as possible so that any appropriate cover arrangements can be made. In normal circumstances this should be within half an hour of their normal start time, via telephone, unless there are exceptional circumstances, on the first day of absence. If they are incapable someone else may phone on their behalf, and inform their manager of the sickness.
- 4.3 The employee must inform their manager of:
- The nature of the illness.
 - Any steps they are undertaking to assist their recovery e.g. making an appointment with their GP / Health Practitioner.
 - When they will contact their manager again with an update.
 - Any important work which may need actioning by someone else or diary appointments that may need to be rescheduled.
 - When they envisage returning to work, if possible.
 - Depending on the reasons of absence and likely length of their absence, they may wish to request copies of any important information to be forwarded from their Line Manager, or request to have their pay-slips sent to their home address.
- 4.4 Should a staff member become unwell at work, they should make a reasonable attempt to inform their Line Manager, or an appointed Deputy, before leaving.
- 4.5 If employees are absent from work for less than 7 consecutive calendar days, they must complete a Self-Certificate Form). If employees are absent for 7 or more consecutive calendar days, a Fit Note (a Statement of Fitness for Work) is required from their doctor.

5 Contact during Sickness Absence

- 5.1 Employees should maintain regular contact with their Line Manager and/or HR where appropriate. Where possible the regularity of contact will be agreed during the initial call. If it is appropriate, their manager and/or HR may initiate contact to alleviate any work concerns and provide support where possible to facilitate a future supported return to work.
- 5.2 Where telephone contact/email is not possible alternative arrangements for continuing contact should be agreed e.g., text message, post, online meeting etc. These arrangements should be agreed in advance and employees should not wait until the first absence occurs.
- 5.3 Where members of staff fail to maintain regular contact, their Line Manager will make contact, including via their personal contact details or if appropriate, by way of a pre-arranged home visit, to ascertain the reason why and to receive an update or to arrange an absence review meeting to discuss issues associated with the absence and/or to discuss a return-to-work strategy. Contact in such circumstances should be reasonable to the situation, e.g. where there are welfare concerns.
- 5.6 Being signed off sick from work does not preclude employees from attending meetings with their manager, and/or HR or Occupational Health to discuss their prognosis, likely return and any adjustments that might need to be made, unless the Fit Note specifically says that they are not fit to attend such meetings. However, the University will make reasonable adjustments where necessary and appropriate.
- 5.7 The University reserves the right to progress matters by other means – including offers to deal with matters via telephone, online meeting, occupational health appointment, medical reports or meeting at a neutral location. Lack of engagement will result in the process being continued in the employee's absence based on the information held at the time.
- 5.8 Where staff members have not engaged or responded to repeated attempts at contact, the University may potentially withhold pay following careful consideration of the circumstances and following notification to the staff member in writing.

6 Sickness Absence Certification

- 6.1 Employees are required to submit relevant documentation to support the period of sickness absence as follows:

Absence 1-7 calendar days	A self-certificate must be completed on their return to Work
Absence of more than 7 calendar days	A Statement of Fitness for Work (Fit Note) is required from their doctor / Health Practitioner.

- 6.2 It is the employee's responsibility to ensure that all sickness absence documentation is submitted promptly to the Line Manager (or appointed deputy) who will enter the information into the i Trent system. Please note, in relation to the Fit Note, the employee should retain the original note, with it being scanned. Fit notes should be forwarded as soon as possible after they are received from the member of staff's doctor / health practitioner.

6.3 Unauthorised absence and pay

If employees do not notify their Line Manager that they are absent or fail to send in certificates on time, as outlined above, the absence may, depending on the circumstances, be regarded as unauthorised and they will be treated as being absent without pay. Where staff members have been unable to comply with these procedures, they should inform their Line Manager of the reasons why. The line manager should seek advice from Human Resources to decide whether or not payment should be reinstated. Any decision to stop pay will be reviewed at regular intervals and staff members will be notified if the decision to stop pay is taken.

Deliberate misrepresentation of reasons for absence or unauthorised absences without good reason may result in the use of the Disciplinary Procedure, which ultimately, may lead to dismissal.

7 Sick Pay Entitlement

- 7.1 The University is responsible for paying Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) in accordance with the legislation in existence at the time of the sickness absence.
- 7.2 Occupational Sick Pay, payable by the University, is related to their length of service with the University. This entitlement is as follows:

<u>Length of Service</u>	<u>Full Pay</u>	<u>Half Pay</u>
First year (after 3 months)	2 months	2 months
Second & third year	3 months	3 months
Fourth & fifth year	5 months	5 months
Five years plus	6 months	6 months

- 7.3 The calculation of sick pay is the responsibility of the Payroll Department. Human Resources (HR) will write to employees in advance of their pay being reduced to half or nil pay. Should absence continue, HR will give advice on where to claim incapacity benefit and the implications for those who are then unable to maintain their contributions to the University's pension schemes.
- 7.4 Employees do not have the right to exhaust their entitlement to sick pay if the relevant fit note regarding their fitness to resume work states they can return sooner.

8 Return to Work Review

The staff member's immediate line manager will ensure that a return-to-work discussion is carried out for all individuals following self-certified or certified absence from work.

9 Short-term absence

Short-term absence is defined as absence of up to 28 calendar days and may not relate to an underlying health condition.

9.1 The management of recurrent short-term absence

9.1.1 The absence of an employee due to sickness for 5 periods of absence in a rolling 12 month period, or 28 calendar days or more within the same period will trigger a review of their absence record (part day absences may count towards these triggers). This is what is meant by 'trigger point'.

9.1.2 Where this trigger point has been reached the employee's line manager will need to review the case as part of the return to work review and consider:

- a) Whether the absences relates to sickness arising from a disability/underlying health condition or other reason relating to a protected characteristic. The line manager should seek support from HR and/or Occupational Health in reaching this decision
- b) Whether there is a likelihood of a reoccurrence
- c) Whether the absence record indicated a trend/pattern of absence e.g. before or after holidays, following weekend or non-working days
- d) Whether there has been failure to follow the sickness notification procedure, especially if on repeated occasions reminders have been given

The above list is not exhaustive and other relevant information could be used in the review.

9.1.3 A review will allow a manager to decide, based on the individual case, how best to proceed. Depending on the circumstances the manager may decide to:

- a) Take no further action,
- b) Begin formal absence review arrangements (no underlying health reasons). Further information provided in section 9.2 below.
- c) Begin capability review meetings in accordance with the Capability and Supporting Performance Policy and Procedure (where disability/underlying health reasons are present). Further advice can be obtained from Human Resources in relation to the process to be followed.

9.2 Formal Absence Review arrangements

9.2.1 Formal absence review arrangements will take the form of an Absence Review meeting, at which the staff member may be accompanied by a colleague /

Trade Union representative and the line manager may be supported by a HR representative.

- 9.2.2 At the meeting the line manager will outline the sickness absence concerns that have led to the meeting and will review the circumstances of the case and the actions taken to date. The employee will be given the opportunity to state their case and raise any factors they wish to have considered.
- 9.2.3 The line manager should identify if there are measures, such as Occupational Health Referral or support which may be beneficial and will discuss any attendance targets for improvement and a timescale for review.
- 9.2.4 If as a result of the meeting and the evidence presented it is considered that no further action is required, this will be confirmed to the employee in writing.
- 9.2.5 Where as a result of the meeting and based on the evidence presented, the employee's attendance remains unsatisfactory, the manager will write to the employee issuing a formal improvement notice. The improvement notice will state:
- the improvement in attendance required,
 - the timescales for improvement,
 - any support to be provided,
 - any reasonable adjustments to be made,
 - the consequences of not meeting the attendance target within the review period making reference to the relevant disciplinary procedure.
- 9.2.6 If, upon completion of at least two absence review meetings over a reasonable time-scale¹, the staff member has not met the targets specified, and sustained the required level of attendance, this may, depending on the circumstances, be regarded as misconduct, or incapability, or possibly as some other substantial reason for dismissal, and a hearing would be convened in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure or the Capability Policy and Procedure.

10 Long Term Absence

10.1 Management of Long-Term absence

- 10.1.1 Long Term absence is defined as a continuous period of absence more than 4 weeks (over 28 calendar days or intermittent absences that together amount to over 28 calendar days where the reason for the absence is related to an underlying medical condition or disability). The management of an employee's absence should be carried out proactively with the priority aim of supporting the employee and facilitating a return to work as soon as possible. To manage the employee's absence from work, the manager should maintain

¹ usually one month per review meeting. However, what is deemed as a reasonable timescale will be determined on a case by case basis according to the specific circumstances of the staff member concerned and, where possible, by agreement with the staff member.

contact, establishing the facts surrounding their absence, prognosis and possible time scales for return to work.

10.1.2 In less complex cases, where the prognosis for absence is clear from an early stage and the employee is expected to be fit for work within a particular timeframe, the line manager and employee may be able to agree locally what contact and support is required in order to devise a plan to support the return to work. Normally however it is expected that absence review meetings would take place, after 28 days of absence and then every 8 – 12 weeks thereafter, or at more regular intervals where it is felt to be appropriate.

10.2 Absence Review meetings

10.2.1 Staff member may be accompanied to absence review meetings by a colleague / Trade Union representative and the Manager be supported by a HR representative. The purpose of an absence review meeting is to establish;

- a) Likely duration of absence
- b) State of health and readiness to return to work
- c) Need for support / further advice and what can be considered to facilitate a return to work

(See Appendix 4 for further details on types of reasonable adjustments)

10.2.2 Employees should engage fully with their line manager and other representatives during the arrangements put in place to review and manage long term absence, including attending arranged meetings during periods of absence.

10.2.3 Where it is considered that a phased return to work would be beneficial and appropriate, this will be discussed and would allow the staff member to return to work starting at reduced hours for a short period and building up hours gradually to their normal contracted hours. Normal pay would be received during the phased period, which would be for up to a maximum of four weeks.

10.2.4 If a staff member feels that they are not able to return to their normal contracted hours of work at the end of the phased return period, flexible working arrangements may be considered in accordance with the Flexible Working policy.

10.2.5 Where a staff member does not engage in reviews and does not work with their line manager, or other member of staff carrying out this function (see “Responsibilities of Management “ under Paragraph 3 above) to ensure that they are able understand the circumstances of their absence and to discuss different options for support which may facilitate a return to work, decisions will be made on the basis of the information available to the line manager at the time.

10.2.6 Where absences are likely to continue and a return to work plan cannot be facilitated during the initial attendance reviews, either after the first or second attendance review meeting, the matter will be dealt with in accordance with the Capability and Supporting Performance Policy and Procedure. In these circumstances, any steps undertaken to date within this policy and procedure will constitute the informal stages.

10.3 Dismissal on Grounds of Capability

10.3.1 Where absence review meetings that have taken place within this policy and meetings at Stages 1 and 2 of the Capability and Supporting Performance Policy and Procedure have not facilitated the employee's return to work, and where ill health retirement is not deemed appropriate, dismissal on the grounds of capability may be considered where the individual is unlikely to return to work within a reasonable amount of time.

10.3.2 A meeting will be convened in line with Stage 3 of the University's Capability and Supporting Performance Policy and Procedure to review the situation and decide on the appropriate outcome, which may include dismissal.

10.3.3 There will be occasions where all parties are in agreement that due to incapability, dismissal on the grounds of capability is appropriate and where this is the case the employment contract can be brought to an end through agreement without the need for a Stage 3 meeting.

10.4 Redeployment on Medical Grounds

If a GP /Health Practitioner or Occupational Health professional concludes that a staff member needs to be redeployed to another position in order to return to work and the University considers this to be reasonable and appropriate in the circumstances, the staff member will be invited to join the redeployment register. The staff member's skills and abilities, as well as information provided in the GP/Occupational Health report, will be considered in order to assess whether a suitable match can be found with any vacancies that arise at the University in accordance with the Redeployment Policy. If no suitable alternative position can be sought within a defined time period, the staff member may be dismissed with notice.

11 Appeal

11.1 Employees have the right to appeal against a decision to dismiss them.

11.2 The staff member's outcome letter will include details of the arrangements to follow should the staff member decide to appeal, e.g. to whom to appeal.

11.3 Staff intending to appeal against a decision taken under this policy, must do so promptly, within 10 working days of receipt of the outcome letter. Should the employee require additional time to submit an appeal, they may make a request for a reasonable extension of time. This request must be made within

the 10 day time-frame. Any such request for an extension of time will be granted at the discretion of the University.

- 11.4 The appeal must be communicated in writing, stating the grounds upon which the appeal is made.
- 11.5 The University will, as far as reasonably practical, seek to hear the appeal within 28 working days of receipt of the submitted appeal. The employee will be informed in writing of the date of and arrangements for the appeal hearing no later than 7 working days in advance of the appeal hearing.
- 11.6 The appeal chair will be a senior member of staff at the University with no previous involvement in the case, who is no less senior than the individual who reached the original decision and has been trained on matters of sickness absence management. A member of the Human Resources Department will support the meeting. The appeal chair will not have previous involvement in the case.
- 11.7 As the purpose of the appeal is not a reconsideration of all matters, it is the responsibility of the staff member to state their case and bring to the attention of the appeal chair all relevant documentary evidence that should be considered.
- 11.8 An appeal will not prevent or delay the termination of the staff member's appointment but if the outcome of the appeal overturns the termination then the employee will be reinstated and paid any back pay. Where an appeal against dismissal fails, the termination date will be as set out in the outcome letter.
- 11.9 The staff member will be informed in writing of the appeal outcome, usually within 10 working days of the appeal meeting. If the timescales are to be longer, this will be communicated to the employee. The decision is final within the procedures of the University and will conclude the process.

12 Occupational Health Advice

- 12.1 Medical information and guidance obtained through Occupational Health is key to informing the management of long term absence and ascertaining the medical position.
- 12.2 For the majority of long term absence cases it will be necessary to instigate a referral to Occupational Health at the earliest possible stage when it becomes known that the absence is likely to last for more than 28 days.
- 12.3 The employee must be made aware of the referral before it is issued and provided with a copy of the referral form. Employees must make every effort to attend an Occupational Health appointment and give at least 24 hours' notice of cancellation.
- 12.4 In most circumstances Occupational Health will be able to provide a medical report based upon the employee attending an appointment. For complex

absence cases consent may be requested of the employee for Occupational Health to seek a medical report from the employees GP or specialist.

- 12.5 Where information is not forthcoming or consent is not given, decisions will be made in the light of information available to the University.
- 12.6 A case conference approach may be recommended by Occupational Health or HR as part of an attendance review to support the employee back to work following sickness absence or to address work related issues (including disability) which require collective discussions.
- 12.7 Where a case conference approach is recommended attendance review meetings will typically include:
- Employee
 - Relevant line manager
 - HR representative
 - Occupational health representative
 - Employee Representative (if the staff member requests)
- 12.8 In some circumstances it may be necessary to include other individuals where specialist advice is required in considering and implementing workplace adjustments.

13 Ill Health Retirement

- 13.1 The criterion for ill health retirement is having a medical condition that is permanent or likely to last until 65 years of age where employees could be found to be permanently unable to carry out any regular employment of like duration.
- 13.2 Ill health retirement relates to members of the USS and BUPAS Pensions schemes, and will be considered where applicable, usually commencing when individuals begin their reduction to half pay and as part of the attendance review meetings and / or Capability Review meetings. Individuals will be supported to make an application by their HR Officer and the Pensions Manager.
- 13.3 A decision to grant ill health retirement is not made by the University, and is ultimately a decision for the pension trustees.

14 General Matters

14.1 University Support Services

The University provides a number of sources of confidential support/services which are available to employees:

Employee Assistance Programme: VivUp
<https://my.bangor.ac.uk/humanresources/eap/index.php.en>

Employee Support Policies:
<https://www.bangor.ac.uk/humanresources/family.php.en>

Health and Wellbeing (information on the welfare provision available):
<https://www.bangor.ac.uk/health-and-wellbeing>

14.2 Doctor /Dentist & Other Routine Appointments

14.2.1 Employees taking time off for appointments will normally receive their usual pay. Where treatment results in employees becoming unfit for work, this absence should be recorded as sickness absence in the normal manner.

14.2.2 Where the manager has genuine concern about the frequency of time off requested by an employee to attend medical appointments, the presentation of appointment cards, or equivalent, may be required.

14.3 Homeworking

An employee should not request to or decide to work from home instead of reporting sickness absence and should not be working at home when signed off sick unless there is advice and agreement for this from their line manager.

14.4 Sickness Absence and Annual Leave

14.4.1 An employee, who is sick during a period of annual leave or on a bank holiday, can have their leave reinstated when covered by a Fit note. If there is a charge made for the fit note this will be recovered by the employing College / School / Department.

14.4.2 During the first 12 months of sickness absence, annual leave accrues at the normal statutory rate. After 12 months, annual leave is accrued at the statutory rate of 203 hours pro rata (28 days including bank holidays).

14.4.3 Where it has not been possible to take annual leave and a staff member has had a period of long-term sickness absence (over 28 calendar days), they may carry over up to 145 hours pro rata (4 weeks) of annual leave. Staff members should continue to be encouraged to take their annual leave whenever possible. This carried over annual leave must be taken within 18 months of the end of the leave year in which it was accrued.

14.5 Conduct during Sickness Absence

14.5.1 The following guidelines concern an employee's conduct and/or activities during any period of sickness absence that are unacceptable and may be considered to be an abuse of the pay scheme and subsequently result in disciplinary action being taken. The University would not normally expect any employee who is absent from work due to sickness to:

- Participate in activities which are in any way contrary to the employee's certified illness.
- Undertake any other employment whether paid or unpaid, or undertake voluntary work which is incompatible with the nature of the illness.

14.5.2 The University recognises that participation in leisure activities may be compatible with, and even prescribed as therapy for, certain illnesses, e.g. mental health conditions (social prescribing).

14.6 Third Party Claims

If individuals are making a claim against a third party (e.g. following a car accident) included in the claim must be the cost of both Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) and Occupational Sick Pay received as a result of the injury or illness, details of which will be provided by Payroll. When such a claim is successful the individual must reimburse the University the appropriate costs of sick pay.

14.7 Instruction to Leave Work on Health Grounds

14.7.1 A manager, Occupational Health practitioner, or Human Resources may instruct an employee to leave work where they believe an employee is unwell or has a condition which causes concern and presents a risk to the employee and/or others. The employee must see their GP as soon as possible unless that is contrary to public health advice, in which case they must observe that advice.

14.7.2 Where the GP issues a Fit note, the absence will be recorded in the normal way. The absence is paid as sickness absence. Where a GP does not issue a Fit note, the employee is not required to record a period of sickness absence and instead continues to receive full pay for the duration of the instruction by the manager / Human Resources to remain at home.

14.7.3 In certain cases, an employee may be suspended from work on medical grounds. An example may include, but is not limited to, where a staff member's health condition impacts on their ability to maintain their own health and safety and/or the health and safety of others. Such suspension will be on full pay and shall be reviewed in line with any medical advice received. The decision to suspend will be taken by the Chief People Officer in consultation with the Occupational Health practitioner.

15 **Policy Review**

This Policy and Procedure will be reviewed 12 months after its implementation, and then at regular intervals of not less than three years and will at all times be read and applied subject to the general law. All reviews will be undertaken in consultation with the recognised campus Trade Unions and any changes agreed with them, prior to approval from the University Council.

16 Equality Impact Assessment

This Policy has been Equality Impact Assessed based on consultation and information available at the time of the Policy being developed. A further Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out in conjunction with any review of the Policy.