

Attendance Management Policy

Policy owner: Human Resource Services

Version: 1.0

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Next review date: August 2029

Approved by: UET on 21 July 2026

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The University is committed to supporting employee wellbeing while maintaining appropriate levels of attendance to ensure the effective delivery of services, teaching, learning and research.
- 1.2. This Policy provides a framework for reporting, managing and monitoring sickness absence fairly, consistently and reasonably. The primary objective is to support employees during periods of absence, facilitate a timely and sustainable return to work where appropriate, and promote a positive and healthy working environment.
- 1.3. The University recognises that employees may be absent from work because of illness, injury or other health-related reasons and will seek to provide appropriate support throughout the period of absence.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This Policy applies to all employees of Middlesex University and MU Services Limited based on a London campus. References to the University within this Policy include MU Services Limited unless expressly stated otherwise. Agency workers, contractors and consultants are not covered by this Policy.
- 2.2. This Policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and may be amended by the University from time to time.
- 2.3. Employees who are within their probationary period will normally be managed under the relevant probation procedure, although the principles contained within this Policy may be applied where appropriate.

3. Related Documents

3.1. This Policy should be read alongside:

- Attendance Management Guidelines
- Capability Policy
- Capability Management Guidelines
- Reasonable Adjustments Policy
- Occupational Health Policy
- Probation Policies and Procedures
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Grievance Procedure

4. Policy Application

- 4.1. The University reserves the right to apply this Policy in a manner appropriate to the circumstances of each case and will take account of the individual circumstances, medical evidence and applicable legal obligations.
- 4.2. The detailed arrangements for reporting sickness absence, attendance review meetings, Occupational Health referrals, long-term absence management and return-to-work discussions are set out in the Attendance Management Guidelines.

5. Policy Principles

- 5.1. The University will manage attendance matters in accordance with the following principles:
- Supporting employee health, wellbeing and attendance.
 - Early reporting and effective management of sickness absence.
 - Fairness, consistency and transparency.
 - Maintaining appropriate contact during periods of absence.
 - Respect, dignity and confidentiality.
 - Compliance with employment legislation and the Equality Act 2010.
 - Consideration of reasonable adjustments where appropriate.
 - Seeking Occupational Health advice where appropriate.
 - Accurate recording and monitoring of absence.
 - Supporting employees in achieving a sustainable return to work.
- 5.2. The University will have regard to relevant employment legislation and ACAS guidance when applying this Policy.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1. **Employees** are expected to:

- Report sickness absence promptly and in accordance with the Attendance Management Guidelines and any associated procedures.
- Maintain appropriate contact with their manager during periods of absence.
- Provide self-certification, fit notes or other medical evidence where required.
- Keep the University informed of any changes affecting their anticipated return to work.
- Cooperate with Occupational Health referrals or other medical assessments where reasonably required.
- Engage with support measures intended to facilitate attendance and wellbeing.

6.2. **Line Managers** are responsible for:

- Managing and documenting periods of sickness absence fairly, consistently and sensitively.
- Notify local absence administrators of the start and end dates for sickness absence, and providing fit notes or other supporting evidence.
- Maintaining appropriate contact with employees during periods of absence.
- Conducting return-to-work discussions where appropriate.
- Monitoring attendance levels.
- Identifying attendance concerns and seeking appropriate support.
- Considering reasonable adjustments where appropriate.
- Seeking advice from Human Resources where necessary.

6.3. **Absence Administrators** will:

- Record periods of sickness absence on PAFIS.
- Upload fit notes or supporting medical evidence.

6.4. **Human Resources** will:

- Provide advice and guidance on the application of this Policy.
- Support managers and employees in managing attendance concerns.
- Monitor the application of the Policy to ensure compliance, consistency and fairness across the University.
- Ensure compliance with employment legislation and other University policies.

6.5. **Occupational Health** may provide independent professional advice regarding:

- Fitness for work.
- Workplace adjustments.
- Rehabilitation and return-to-work arrangements.
- Health-related support measures.
- Long-term attendance concerns.

6.6. Occupational Health provides advice but does not make employment decisions.

7. Reporting Sickness Absence

- 7.1. Employees must report sickness absence as soon as reasonably practicable and in accordance with the Attendance Management Guidelines and any associated procedures.
- 7.2. Employees are expected to maintain appropriate contact with the University during periods of absence and provide any required medical certification or evidence.
- 7.3. Detailed reporting arrangements are set out within the Attendance Management Guidelines.

8. Managing Attendance

- 8.1. The University will monitor attendance levels and may review patterns or levels of absence where attendance causes concern.
- 8.2. Return-to-work discussions form an important part of attendance management and may be used to confirm fitness for work, identify any support requirements and facilitate a sustainable return to work. Where attendance levels cause concern, managers may hold attendance review meetings in accordance with the Attendance Management Guidelines to review attendance levels, identify any underlying issues and consider appropriate support measures.
- 8.3. The University will seek to address attendance concerns constructively and at the earliest opportunity.

9. Health and Wellbeing

- 9.1. The University is committed to promoting employee health and wellbeing and recognises the importance of early intervention and support.
- 9.2. Employees are encouraged to access appropriate support services where required. Support may include Occupational Health, the Employee Assistance Programme and other wellbeing initiatives made available by the University.

10. Support Measures

- 10.1. The University may provide support measures where attendance concerns arise or

where support, adjustments, rehabilitation arrangements or return-to-work planning may be required.

10.2. Support measures may include:

- Occupational Health referrals.
- Employee Assistance Programme support.
- Workplace adjustments.
- Phased return arrangements.
- Temporary adjustments to duties or working arrangements.
- Other appropriate wellbeing or support interventions.

10.3. The support provided will depend on the circumstances of each case.

11. Medical Evidence

11.1. Employees may be required to provide self-certification, fit notes or other medical evidence in accordance with the Attendance Management Guidelines.

11.2. Failure to provide required certification without reasonable explanation may affect the management of absence under this Policy.

12. Long-Term Absence

12.1. Where an employee experiences a prolonged period of sickness absence, the University will seek to maintain appropriate and reasonable contact and obtain relevant medical advice where appropriate.

12.2. The University will consider:

- Occupational Health advice.
- Medical evidence.
- Reasonable adjustments.
- Phased return arrangements.
- Temporary or permanent workplace adjustments.
- Redeployment opportunities where appropriate and reasonably practicable.

12.3. Where long-term absence results in concerns regarding an employee's ability to undertake the duties of their role, the matter may be managed under the Capability Policy and Capability Management Guidelines.

13. Sick Pay

- 13.1. Sick pay arrangements are governed by employees' terms and conditions of employment and any applicable contractual provisions.

14. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 14.1. The University is committed to equality of opportunity and will comply with the Equality Act 2010.
- 14.2. No employee will be disadvantaged because of a protected characteristic and the University will give particular consideration to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 when applying this Policy.
- 14.3. Where absence relates to a disability, long-term health condition, pregnancy-related condition or other protected circumstance, the University will consider reasonable adjustments and any other relevant measures before making decisions under this Policy.
- 14.4. The University may adjust attendance monitoring arrangements where absence relates to a disability, pregnancy-related condition or other protected circumstance.

15. Confidentiality

- 15.1. Information relating to sickness absence and health matters will be handled sensitively and confidentially and shared only with those who have a legitimate business need to know.
- 15.2. Records will be maintained in accordance with the UK GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018 and the University's records management requirements.

16. Monitoring and Review

- 16.1. Responsibility for monitoring the application of this Policy rests with Human Resources.
- 16.2. The Policy will be reviewed every three years, or earlier where required by changes in legislation, organisational requirements or operational experience.