UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION AND SERVICES

UAS ABSENCE REPORTING

GUIDANCE FOR STAFF

The following procedures have been adopted by all departments within UAS in order to maintain a consistent approach to sickness absence recording and management.

1) On the first day of absence, you should contact your line-manager (or an agreed alternative contact) as soon as possible, and, if possible, give some indication of when you expect to return to work.

2) If you have a doctor's certificate, please inform your line-manager of the date this expires. You should not return to work until the period covered by the certificate has ended, unless declared fit for work by your doctor. Whether or not you have a doctor's certificate, if you are not able to return on the day previously indicated to your line-manager, you should contact him/her again to update them.

3) For every occurrence of absence a return to work form will need to be completed. When you return to work, you will need to complete and sign Section 1 of the Sickness Absence Record/Return to Work Discussion pro forma. Your line manager should then complete Section 2a and, if appropriate, section 2b. Section 2a invites your manager to record the reason for your absence by selecting from a list of codes. It is not compulsory for you to give a specific reason, although it is helpful if you do so, as this will assist in identifying any illnesses which may be work-related. If you do not want to give the reason for your absence, you should select code 'NS' (not specified).

4) Guidance from Personnel Services recommends that line managers conduct return to work interviews with employees after all absences. Topics covered could include action taken by the employee to remedy the illness, whether they have consulted their GP or other healthcare professional, whether the absence was related to work, and whether any action is required by the line manager as a consequence. (this list is not exhaustive). In some cases, it may be necessary to make a referral to the University Occupational Health Service for further advice, and in all cases the line manager should complete Section 3 after the interview and both parties should sign the form.

5) This form will be held centrally in the UAS Personnel offices (a copy will not be kept locally in your department) and will be treated with the strictest confidence. You should send the completed form to the UAS Personnel team (Level 4, University Offices) in a sealed envelope marked 'strictly confidential'. If you are absent from work for between four and seven days the notification of absence form acts as a self-certificate (in accordance with section 4 of the staff handbook).

6) If you are absent from work for more than seven calendar days you are required to supply a doctor’s certificate. Please send any medical certificates direct to the UAS Personnel team (Level 4, University Offices) in a sealed envelope marked 'strictly confidential'. For longer absences, you should keep your line-manager updated on your status and when you expect to return so that cover can be arranged.
7) Your department has a named absence administrator responsible for recording staff absence. Your line-manager will inform this person of any absences. The absence administrator will record each occurrence of absence but will not be informed of or record the reason for absence.

8) Full details of sick pay entitlements are available in the staff handbooks (section 4.1.2). Please note that sick pay entitlement under the University’s sick pay scheme is dependent on your length of service.

9) If you are concerned that you may be suffering from a work-related illness you should inform your line-manager as soon as possible. It is likely that you will then be referred to the University Occupational Health Service. More information on the services offered by the University Occupational Health Service is available at: [http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/uohs/](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/uohs/)

10) If you are taken ill during annual leave, your annual leave allowance can be credited and taken at a later date provided (a) the normal sickness absence reporting procedures (see above) have been followed and (b) you have provided a notification of absence form or doctor’s certificate (as appropriate) to the UAS Personnel team.

11) Please be aware that all absence recording will be conducted in line with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA). The relevant Code of Practice under the DPA states that where possible sickness records (i.e. the reason for absence) should be kept separate from absence records (i.e. the occurrence of absence). Sickness records of individual workers are classed as sensitive data and should not be made available to other workers unless it is necessary for them to do their jobs. Employees are not required to give a reason for their absence when they contact their line-manager. If they do so out of choice, the line-manager should not make a record of it and should not inform the absence administrator of the reason for absence – the absence administrator should only be made aware of the occurrence of absence. The reason for absence may be captured on the notification of absence form, should the employee choose to disclose it, or on any doctors’ certificates supplied. The line-manager will not see any doctors’ certificates.

12) All forms and guidance are also available on the UAS Personnel Team website: [http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personneluas/leaveabsence/index.shtml#_Toc179349912](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personneluas/leaveabsence/index.shtml#_Toc179349912).

If you have any questions relating to this guidance or about sickness absence in general, please contact your line-manager in the first instance.

More information about university policies and regulations relating to absence from work can be found in the relevant staff handbook: Support staff - [http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/ps/staff/handbooks/4/4sall.shtml](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/ps/staff/handbooks/4/4sall.shtml)
Academic-related staff - [http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/ps/staff/handbooks/4/4sall.shtml](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/ps/staff/handbooks/4/4sall.shtml)

The notification of absence form can be downloaded from [http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personneluas/forms/index.shtml](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personneluas/forms/index.shtml). Alternatively, a hard copy can be obtained from the UAS Personnel team.