

## Higher Education Student Sickness Certificate Policy & Procedure

**Author:** Deputy Principal

**Equality Assessment:** Deputy Principal

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**Related policies or procedures or parent policy if applicable:**  
 Academic Appeals Procedure  
 Additional Learning Support Policy  
 Assessment Malpractice and Maladministration Policy  
 Assessment Board Operational Procedure  
 Higher Education Assessment Submission Policy  
 Exceptional Factors policy

**Groups/bodies consulted in the development of the policy:** n/a

**To be published on College Website:** Yes

**To be published on Student Hub:** Yes

## HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENT SICKNESS CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE

### Summary and Notes for Students

1. You are expected to read and comply with the procedure set out in this document for Student Attendance and Absence.
2. You must inform your course leader/tutor/ if you are absent due to illness and as soon as possible in accordance with the procedure set out below.
3. You should not ask your Doctor for a Medical Certificate or other signed statement unless you are:
  - a. absent due to illness for 7 or more days and/or
  - b. absent due to illness from an examination or assessment
4. Illnesses of one to six days duration should be reported to your course leader/tutor
5. The College is obliged in certain circumstances to inform official bodies (such as Local Education Authorities, the Student Loans Company and employers) of absences and in cases where this is done student financial support may be withheld by such bodies.
6. This sickness certification procedure requires you to register with a doctor as otherwise you will not be able to obtain a Medical Certificate. In any case you should register with a doctor in order to obtain primary health care.
7. If you suffer from any long-term or ongoing ailment or disability you should inform your course leader/tutor of this in writing so that it may be taken into account in relation to your performance on your programme and in its examinations and assessments. You should request your Doctor to address a confidential report on your condition to your course leader/tutor. If for any reason you are not sure what to do if you are ill or if you suffer from an ongoing medical condition then please seek the advice of your personal tutor or course leader. Advice is also available from the reception.
8. In addition to following the procedure set out below, you should observe any other sickness reporting requirements made of you by your course leader/tutor.

### **Absences from programme and related activities (other than examinations or assessments)**

1. If you are absent due to illness from your programme, classes, lectures, tutorials, practical's, work-experience, teaching practice, other placements, or any compulsory attendance requirements, you must:
  - a. inform your course leader/tutor, placement supervisor or other member of departmental staff as might be appropriate, of this as soon as possible on the first day of absence. This can be done by telephone or by a written message delivered by a third party.
  - b. your absence is for less than seven days duration (inclusive of any non- working days) you must, upon resumption of your programme related work, complete and submit a sickness record form to your course tutor/programme manager, see **Appendix 1**.

- c. if your absence is, or is expected to be, for seven or more days duration (inclusive of any non-working days) you should submit a Medical Certificate signed by your Doctor to your course leader/tutor. The Medical Certificate should be mailed or otherwise delivered to your course leader/tutor as soon as possible after you have obtained it from your Doctor. Upon resumption of your programme related work, you must still complete and submit a sickness record form (**Appendix 1**).
- d. if you are on any form of placement you must additionally comply with any sickness procedure required by your placement. Remember to telephone your placement as soon as possible on the first day of absence.

### **Absences from examinations or assessments**

1. The sickness record form is **not** acceptable to cover absences from examinations or assessments.
2. If you fail for reason of illness to attend or undertake any examination or assessment, you **must** submit a Medical Certificate or other acceptable statement (either of which must be signed by your Doctor) detailing the nature and extent of your illness to your course tutor/programme manager at the earliest opportunity.
3. The Medical Certificate, or other signed Doctor's statement, must be obtained within 24 hours of the start of the illness which prevented you from attending the examination or assessment concerned unless there is an exceptional reason acceptable to your course leader/tutor for not doing so.
4. Medical Certificates obtained and submitted retrospectively (i.e. after your illness) in respect of absences caused by illness, whether from examinations, assessments or any other programme related work, or for submission as evidence in cases where you appeal against an Assessment Board' decision, may be disallowed or be considered as less persuasive evidence. Doctors will not normally verify illness retrospectively.
5. Failure to comply with the above may result in you being deemed to have been absent without valid cause and consequently being failed in the examinations or assessments concerned.

### **Guidance Notes for Teaching and Administrative Staff**

1. The term 'Medical Certificate' refers to a doctors signed statement indicating the nature of the illness and whether any absence was required in connection therewith. A 'doctor's letter' is usually a fuller statement about the patient. Students are required to follow the specified sickness reporting procedure and staff should familiarise themselves with this. Except for instances where an examination or assessment is missed, student absences of less than seven days duration (inclusive of non-working days) due to illness should be covered by self- certification rather than a doctor's Medical Certificate.
2. Students should not be asked to seek Medical Certificates retrospectively (ie after the illness) as the onus is on them to provide these in good time where required.

## **Absences from Examinations/Assessments**

1. Students are required to produce a Medical Certificate or other documentary evidence deemed acceptable (e.g. a Doctor's letter) concerned in the following circumstances:
  - a. if they miss any stage examinations or assessments through illness;
  - b. if they have not submitted a sickness record or any other written medical evidence but have been materially ill (but not necessarily absent as a consequence) prior to or during their examination(s) or assessment(s) and wish this to be taken into account by the Exceptional Factors Panel; (see policy)
  - c. if they appeal against a decision of an Assessment Board on medical grounds which have not been previously disclosed.
  
2. If a student misses an examination or assessment through illness then the relevant Exceptional Factors Panel will need to be satisfied that the student was genuinely ill, that the illness was serious enough to preclude the student from taking the examination or assessment and that the illness was a material fact at the time of the examination or assessment. Unless valid and credible evidence in the form of either a Medical Certificate or a signed doctor's statement has been submitted in the required time, the Panel may deem the student to have missed the examination/assessment without valid cause and, subject to any other relevant programme regulations, fail him/her.

## HIGHER EDUCATION - STUDENT SELF CERTIFICATE SICKNESS RECORD

**A medical certificate is required from your GP (Doctor) if:**

The period of absence through illness extends beyond 7 consecutive days

The period of illness is to be considered as mitigation regarding performance in any formal assessment that counts towards final award or is a requirement for progression from one year or stage to the next or you are intending to claim **exceptional factors**.

Where, for disciplinary or probationary reasons, your personal tutor/course manager has formally required you to attend all teaching.

Discuss any concerns about the effect of your absence on your studies with your personal tutor/course leader.

<b>Name:</b>		<b>Date of Birth:</b>	
<b>Student Number</b>		<b>Year of Study:</b>	
<b>Tutor(s):</b>		<b>Programme/Course:</b>	
<b>Date your sickness began:</b>		<b>Date you returned to studies:</b>	
<b>Number of days sick – not including weekends (this absence):</b>			
<b>Brief details of sickness:</b>			
<b>I confirm that this information is accurate</b>			<b>Date:</b>
<b>Signed:</b>			