

M.C.73 Control and Management of Absence for Teachers

Teachers' Responsibilities

- Must notify absence on first day. Should also indicate the nature of the ill health and, if possible, indicate the date of return to work.
- If absence continues to fourth day, notification should be made to the relevant manager.
- Teacher will be required to contact the manager on the seventh day and maintain meaningful weekly contact thereafter.

Where the absence is up to 7 days the teacher will complete a Return to Work form on return.

Beyond 7 days teacher is required to submit a statement of fitness for work to cover absence beyond the 7 days.

In addition a RtW form must be completed for all sickness absences regardless of length.

Management Responsibilities

- Must ensure that teachers are aware of their responsibilities and ensure they meet them.
- All sickness / absence interviews must be recorded using the appropriate documentation.
- Senior managers must be aware of the types of support and policies which can assist teachers : Workplace Options, OHS, LNCT circular 13a : Bullying and Harassment, LNCT circular 22 : Worklife Balance and Flexible Working, H and S Advice (Stress Risk Assessments), Disabled Persons Policy
- Phased return to work, altered hours, amended duties or workplace adaptations
- Early Intervention – absence due to stress – work related or personal

Formal Meetings

- Long term sickness meetings (20 days or more). Face to face meeting required . Can take place in the workplace or teacher's home.
- Teacher can be accompanied by a TU rep or any person of their choice
- Manager can assess progress , offer support and advise how the absence will be managed.
- Throughout the duration of the absence it is essential to consult every 4 – 6 weeks on a personal basis with the teacher and consider the teacher's opinion on his / her condition.

Return to Work Process

- After every absence the manager will meet with the teacher to counter sign the self certificate. This will be retained in the teacher's personal record.

Formal Interviews

- 3 certified absences within 6 months or 5 within 12
- 6 working days within 6 months or 8 within 12 months
- Any period of unauthorised absence
- Where a referral has been made to OHS a further interview will be arranged to discuss the report.
- Teachers will always be advised of their right to be accompanied at all formal meetings throughout the absence management process