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|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Committee</b>             | Board                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                  |            |
| <b>Date paper prepared</b>   | 18/02/2026                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>Date of committee meeting</b> | 18/03/2026 |
| <b>Subject</b>               | UHI North, West and Hebrides Attendance Management Policy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                  |            |
| <b>Author</b>                | Vicky Ferguson, Director of People and Culture                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                  |            |
| <b>Action requested</b>      | I. Endorsement sought                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                  |            |
| <b>Purpose of the paper</b>  | To seek Board endorsement of the UHI North, West and Hebrides Attendance Management Policy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                  |            |
| <b>Summary of the paper</b>  | <p>The College is committed to creating a safe and healthy environment for all its employees and fostering a culture that encourages high attendance while maintaining a healthy workforce. Where attendance falls below expected standards, the College will take fair, transparent, and supportive action.</p> <p>The policy introduces a clear, consistent framework for managing attendance across the College, including defined trigger points, a supportive capability-based approach, and strengthened alignment with employment and equality legislation.</p> <p>All management interventions aim to support employees in meeting attendance requirements. This policy addresses attendance through a capability process and is not disciplinary, although the College's Disciplinary Policy may apply in cases of misuse of absence reporting procedures.</p> |                                  |            |
| <b>Consultation</b>          | This policy will be consulted with recognised Trade Unions, the Senior Management Team (SMT), and the HR Committee. Final implementation will be subject to completion of this consultation process.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                  |            |
| <b>Resource implications</b> | No direct financial implications have been identified. However, implementation will require management time, HR support, and potential Occupational Health engagement.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                  |            |

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|------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Risk implications</b>                                         | Non-compliance or inconsistent application of the Attendance Management Policy may result in operational disruption, increased staffing costs, reduced organisational performance, and potential legal and reputational risk, including employment tribunal claims.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Link with strategy</b>                                        | This policy supports delivery of the UHI North, West and Hebrides People & Culture Strategy, particularly in relation to employee wellbeing, workforce sustainability, and performance management.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b><u><a href="#">Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion</a></u></b> | Ensuring our documents can be read and understood by everyone, including people with disabilities or impairments, is a legal requirement under the Equality Act 2010.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Island Community Impact</b>                                   | Not required in this instance.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Paper status</b>                                              | <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Open</b> – The paper may be circulated to non-members of the committee and published online without restriction.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Restricted</b> – The paper must not be circulated to non-members or published online until after the committee meeting.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Confidential</b> - The paper must not be circulated beyond the committee members and should not be published online. Some information is considered commercially sensitive. [Please note papers may still be subject to Freedom of Information requests – see below].</p> |
| <b><u><a href="#">Freedom of information</a></u></b>             | <p>Choose an item. <a href="#">FOISA exemptions</a>   <a href="#">Scottish Information Commissioner (itspublicknowledge.info)</a></p> <p>If closed/ withheld, select date this will become 'open': Enter a date.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |



# Attendance Management Policy

POL-NWH-00x

|                                                      |                                                                                                                  |
|------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Lead Officer (Post):                                 | Director of People and Culture                                                                                   |
| Responsible Office/ Department:                      | Human Resources Department                                                                                       |
| Responsible Committee:                               | HR Committee                                                                                                     |
| Review Officer (Post):                               | Director of People and Culture                                                                                   |
| Date policy approved:                                |                                                                                                                  |
| Date policy last reviewed and updated:               | New UHI North, West and Hebrides Policy                                                                          |
| Date policy due for review:                          | February 2029                                                                                                    |
| UHI Single Policy / UHI NWH Policy:                  | UHI NWH Policy                                                                                                   |
| Public face / College internal facing only           | College internal facing only                                                                                     |
| Date of Equality Impact Assessment:                  |                                                                                                                  |
| Has a Data Privacy Impact Assessment been completed: | Will be completed by Compliance Team – Completed / Data Protection Officer has approved that no DPIA is required |

Accessible versions of this policy are available upon request. Please contact UHI North, West and Hebrides for more information.

## Policy Summary

|                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Overview                      | The College is committed to creating a safe and healthy environment for all its employees and fostering a culture that encourages high attendance while maintaining a healthy workforce. Where attendance falls below the expected standards, the College will take fair, transparent, and supportive action.                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Purpose                       | All management interventions aim to support employees in meeting attendance requirements. This policy addresses attendance through a capability process and is not disciplinary, although the College's Disciplinary Policy may apply in cases of misuse of absence reporting procedures.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Scope                         | <p>This policy applies to all employees of UHI North, West and Hebrides except employees on probation who are subject to a separate procedure (see Probation Policy).</p> <p>It covers both short-term and long-term sickness absence, unauthorised absences, and timekeeping.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Consultation                  | This policy will be consulted with the Trade Union, SMT and HR Committee                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Implementation and Monitoring | The implementation and monitoring of the policy is the responsibility of the Human Resource department.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Risk Implications             | Non-compliance or inconsistent application of the Attendance Management Policy may result in operational disruption, increased staffing costs, and reduced organisational performance. There is potential legal and reputational risk arising from failure to follow fair and equitable procedures, particularly in relation to employment and equality legislation. Clear management responsibilities and HR oversight are designed to mitigate these risks and ensure consistency, fairness, and regulatory compliance. |

|                    |                                                                                 |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Link with Strategy | This policy aligns with UHI North, West and Hebrides People & Culture Strategy. |
| Impact Assessment  | Equality Impact Assessment:                                                     |
|                    | Privacy Impact Assessment:                                                      |

## 1. Policy Statement

The College is committed to creating a safe and healthy environment for all its employees and fostering a culture that encourages high attendance while maintaining a healthy workforce. Where attendance falls below expected standards, the College will take fair, transparent, and supportive action.

All management interventions aim to support employees in meeting attendance requirements. This policy addresses attendance through a capability process and is not disciplinary, however the College's Disciplinary Policy may apply in cases of misuse of absence reporting procedures.

## 2. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

**Rolling Year** – A rolling year is calculated by reference to the most recent date of absence and looking back 12 months from that date.

**Short Term Absence**

An absence lasting less than 28 calendar days

**Long Term Absence**

An absence lasting 28 calendar days or more.

Before any decisions in relation to long-term absence are made, the College will obtain up-to-date medical evidence, consult with the employee and consider reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010. Dismissal due to capability arising from ill health will only be considered as a last resort following full consultation.

**Occupational Sick Pay (OSP)**

Employees who are absent due to sickness or injury will, within any rolling 12-month period, be entitled to Occupational Sick Pay at either full or half pay (pro-rata), subject to their contractual entitlement and satisfactory compliance with the College's reporting procedures.

Payment of Occupational Sick Pay is conditional upon compliance with absence reporting requirements and, where requested, engagement with Occupational Health processes.

Nothing in this policy affects an employee's statutory entitlement to Statutory Sick Pay under the Statutory Sick Pay (General) Regulations 1982.

| Service at Commencement absence from duty | Full Allowance for | Half Allowance for |
|-------------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Less than 1 year                          | 5 weeks            | 5 weeks            |
| 1 year but less than 2 years              | 9 weeks            | 9 weeks            |
| 2 years but less than 3 years             | 18 weeks           | 18 weeks           |
| 3 years but less than 5 years             | 22 weeks           | 22 weeks           |
| 5 years or more                           | 26 weeks           | 26 weeks           |

### Attendance Standards

For short term absence, the trigger point for formal intervention is normally eight (8) days of absence within a rolling year.

This standard is applied on a pro-rata basis for part-time employees, based on the number of days upon which they work each week, as shown below:

| Days Worked (weekly) | Trigger Point |
|----------------------|---------------|
| 5                    | 8             |
| 4                    | 7             |
| 3                    | 5             |
| 2                    | 3             |
| 1                    | 2             |

The College reserves the right to take formal action where a discernible pattern or frequency of absence gives cause for concern, even if the trigger point has not been reached. However, the College will not count or rely upon absences which are protected by law, including:

- Pregnancy-related sickness absence;
- Absence related to disability where reasonable adjustments require discounting such absence;
- Other statutory protected absences.

### Review Period

Following the successful completion of any six (6) month attendance review period, employees will enter a one-year review period. During this period, if an employee's attendance falls to an unsatisfactory level at any point, the Line Manager may progress the matter directly to a higher stage of the Attendance Management Procedure.

Progression during a review period will only occur following a formal review meeting, at which the employee will have the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or workplace colleague.

In deciding whether to progress to a higher stage, the Line Manager, with advice from Human Resources, will consider:

- The reasons for the further absence;
- Any updated medical evidence;
- Whether the absence is linked to a disability;
- Whether reasonable adjustments are required; and
- Whether progression is reasonable and proportionate in all the circumstances.

If the employee maintains an acceptable standard of attendance throughout the full one-year review period, the attendance management process will conclude and the employees record will be reset.

### **Occupational Health Services (OHS)**

The College's Occupational Health Service is currently provided by NHS Highland.

Referrals to Occupational Health will be made in accordance with the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988 and the Data Protection Act 2018. Employees will be informed of the purpose of any referral and their rights in relation to medical reports.

Medical information will be treated as special category data and processed in accordance with UK GDPR and the College's Data Protection Policy. Access will be restricted to those with a legitimate business need.

### **Phased Return to Work**

A phased return to work is a formal, time-limited arrangement designed to support an employee's gradual return to work following a period of long-term sickness absence. Phased returns will normally last between 4 and 6 weeks, although this may be adjusted or extended where appropriate based on medical advice and individual circumstances.

Any pay arrangements during a phased return will be confirmed in writing in advance.

## **3. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Enable Line Managers to make fair, consistent, and informed decisions in the management of sickness absence.
- Support the provision of accurate Management Information (MI) concerning sickness absence levels and associated costs.
- Establish and apply effective procedures to assist Line Managers in managing attendance issues promptly and appropriately



- Define College standards for attendance and ensure consistent and supportive action when attendance falls below these standards.
- Provide guidance and support for employees during periods of absence and upon their return to work.
- Reinforce existing procedures for reporting absence and for keeping in touch during absences.
- Promote awareness of the Disability provisions of the Equality Act 2010 to all staff and to support Line Managers in managing staff within the scope of the Act.
- Clarify the role and use of Occupational Health (OH) services in supporting improved attendance and employee wellbeing.
- Acknowledge that employees may experience personal or health-related challenges requiring time away from work and ensure appropriate support and understanding in these circumstances.
- Recognise and make specific provision for absences arising from work-related stress and related conditions.
- Ensure compliance with the Employment Rights Act 1996 and relevant equality and data protection legislation.

Other authorised absences, such as special leave, annual leave, maternity, paternity, or parental leave, are covered under separate UHI North, West and Hebrides policies and procedures.

## 4 Scope

This policy applies to all employees of UHI North, West and Hebrides except employees on probation who are subject to a separate procedure (see Probation Policy).

## 5 Exceptions

Absences related to a disability may be discounted where appropriate.

In determining whether absence should be discounted, the College will consider medical advice and whether discounting absence constitutes a reasonable adjustment under the Equality Act 2010.

Employees are encouraged to disclose any disability or long-term health condition so that appropriate support can be considered; however, disclosure is voluntary.

## 6 Right to be Accompanied

At any formal stage of the Attendance Management Procedure, employees have the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or workplace colleague, in accordance with the Employment Relations Act 1999.

## 7 Notification

This policy will be available on the College's website.

All individuals with responsibilities outlined in Section 8 will be notified of changes.

## 8 Roles and Responsibilities

The Executive Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring that this policy is fully implemented throughout the College.

The College Senior Management Team and all line managers have a duty to ensure that the College's policies including this policy are implemented within their sphere of activities and responsibility.

The Director of People and Culture is responsible for reviewing and updating this policy.

All Staff are responsible for adhering to this policy.

## 9 Legislative Framework

- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Working Time Regulations 1998
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Statutory Sick Pay (General) Regulations 1982
- ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures
- Access to Medical Reports Act 1988
- Employment Relations Act 1999

## 10 Related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Other Resources

- Probation Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Flexible Working Procedure
- Special Leave Policy

## 11 Version Control and Change History

| Version | Date    | Approved by  | Amendment(s)                            | Author                         |
|---------|---------|--------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1       | 17.2.26 | HR Committee | New UHI North, West and Hebrides policy | Director of People and Culture |
|         |         |              |                                         |                                |
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