EAST SCITT

DEVELOPING TEACHERS OF THE FUTURE

Sickness and Absence Policy

Approved by: Strategic Committee	**Date:** 04/07/2022
Author: Kerensa Carrick SCITT Director	
Last reviewed on: 8th May 2026	
Next review due by:	

SICKNESS AND ABSENCE POLICY

RESPONSIBILITIES:

a. All trainees are responsible for maintaining regular attendance and ensuring that any periods of absence, however short, are communicated, recorded and managed in accordance with the EAST SCITT policy.

b. The EAST SCITT team (EAST SCITT Director, EAST SCITT Phase Lead(s)) are responsible for overseeing trainee absence levels; and meeting with individual trainees to ensure that they are supported if necessary, and that issues with absence are raised and dealt with as soon as they arise, ideally informally.

c. The EAST SCITT Coordinator is responsible for maintaining accurate records of absence.

NOTIFYING PLANNED ABSENCES: MEDICAL AND DENTAL APPOINTMENTS

From time to time, EAST SCITT appreciates that trainees may need to attend medical, hospital, dental, optician and other similar appointments. Whenever it is possible to do so, trainees should endeavour to arrange such appointments in their own time or, if this is not possible, then at times that will cause the minimum amount of absence from training sessions or school placements, such as the beginning or end of the working day.

In the case of a planned absence for medical or dental appointments **EAST SCITT trainees should complete a Planned Absence Request (PAR form)**. This form can be found at the end of this document, on the EAST SCITT website or can be requested by emailing office@eastscitt.co.uk. Please note that for medical appointments and interviews trainees should attach proof of appointment/interview to their PAR form. Depending on the nature of the planned absence, trainees may need to make up days at the end of the training programme. QTS will not be awarded until days owed are made up.

NOTIFYING PLANNED ABSENCES: OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES

EAST SCITT also appreciates that from time to time trainees may have a planned absence for other reasons including but not limited to childcare or other caring commitments or job interviews. In the case of a planned absence for other circumstances **EAST SCITT trainees should complete a Planned Absence Request form (PAR form)**. This form can be found at the end of this document, on the EAST SCITT website or can be requested by emailing office@eastscitt.co.uk.

NOTIFYING SICKNESS OR OTHER UNPLANNED ABSENCES

All trainees, if unable to attend work due to sickness or for other unplanned reasons, should notify both their mentor at their placement school, the EAST SCITT Coordinator (office@eastscitt.co.uk) and their EAST SCITT Tutor. Trainees must notify their placement/employing school as soon as possible on the first day of sickness/unplanned absence. All trainees must repeat the above for every day of sickness/unplanned absence, unless a return date has been agreed.

RECORDING PLANNED, SICKNESS AND UNPLANNED ABSENCE

Accurate records are essential for ensuring that all trainees complete the requisite number of days in school to be awarded QTS. Trainees will be expected to retrospectively confirm their attendance on a weekly basis at training cohort sessions by signing an attendance register. Records of attendance are maintained for every EAST SCITT trainee, showing the dates of a trainee's absence, the reason for the absence and/or the nature of the sickness/illness. The absence information recorded is confidential and will be treated as such.

MEDICAL CERTIFICATION

Absences of fewer than seven calendar days (i.e. five school/working days) may be self-certifying. However, in cases of poor attendance due to multiple short-term absences, EAST SCITT may request medical evidence. Absences of more than seven calendar days (i.e. five school/working days) require a fit note signed by a registered medical practitioner. This must be supplied to EAST SCITT, who will attach a copy to the absence record.

RETURNING TO WORK AFTER SICKNESS OR UNPLANNED ABSENCE

When a trainee returns after a period of sickness absence or unplanned absence, the onus is on them to complete the Self-Certification & Return to Work Form available at the end of this document, website or can be requested by emailing office@eastscitt.co.uk.

When a trainee returns to work after a period of sickness absence, the SCITT Director, Phase Lead or EAST SCITT Tutor may conduct an informal return to work discussion. During this discussion, the employee's health issues will be discussed, ensuring that they are better and ascertain if there are any long-term health implications. In the case of most short-term absences (e.g. up to three days), this will be a brief and routine part of day-to-day management. In the case of longer absences, the SCITT Director or Phase Lead should arrange a short meeting with the trainee to discuss missed work or deadlines.

POOR ATTENDANCE

In order to be awarded QTS trainees must spend a requisite number of days in a placement school to be able to successfully meet the Teachers' Standards, including Part Two by the end of the programme. As such poor attendance is a real concern to the EAST SCITT Team. EAST SCITT Tutors should discuss attendance informally with a trainee on their return after any period of absence at the back to work meeting. If the EAST SCITT team have concerns about a trainee's absence the EAST SCITT Director, Primary Lead or a SCITT Tutor may conduct an exploratory interview.

Triggers for exploratory interviews:

The following levels are recommended, as illustrative examples, of the point at which an exploratory interview should take place (EAST SCITT Tutors should use their discretion, where appropriate):

a. Three or more separate occasions of sickness absence within any six-month period;
b. Three or more separate occasions where a trainee misses a toolkit or other relevant training activity;
c. Six or more days of sickness absence within any twelve-month rolling period;
d. A noticeable trend in sickness absences (e.g. Mondays, Fridays or immediately prior to or before periods of annual leave);
e. 3 or more weeks of continuous absence with no immediate or known prospects of return to work.

Conducting exploratory interviews:

The EAST SCITT Director or Phase Leads should arrange an exploratory interview with the trainee in which the frequency, reasons and amount of the trainee's absence will be discussed with them. The EAST SCITT Director or Phase Leads will complete an **Exploratory Interview Record**, and advise the trainee that their absence is causing concern, and ask questions to establish whether there are any mitigating circumstances such as personal or work-related problems. This meeting provides an opportunity for The EAST SCITT Director or Phase Leads to remind the trainee of the expected standards of attendance. During an exploratory interview, the need for a medical examination may arise because of health problems being experienced by a trainee, which are seriously affecting their capability to meet the attendance expectations of the EAST SCITT training programme. With the trainee's consent, EAST SCITT may refer the trainee for an Occupational Health assessment or request a report from the trainee's general practitioner. Any mitigating circumstances reported in the assessment/report will be taken into consideration by the EAST SCITT team.

Following an exploratory interview, a trainee will be supported to significantly improve and sustain their attendance record against the expected standards. This support will likely take the form of an **EAST SCITT Support Plan** drawn up by a trainee's EAST SCITT Tutor or Phase Lead. A monitoring period should be set, concluded by an agreed review date recorded in the support plan. As stated above, mitigating circumstances established through either the exploratory interview or Occupational Health assessment or report from the employee's general practitioner will be taken into account, and the EAST SCITT Director or Phase Leads will take reasonable steps to support the trainee to

improve their attendance. As with all Support Plans, trainees will move to a Cause for Concern if they fail to meet the targets set out in the Support Plan. Failure to meet targets set in a Cause for Concern Action Plan can result in a trainee being removed from or being asked to withdraw from the EAST SCITT training programme.

Equal opportunities statement: This policy must be applied fairly and consistently. Some sickness absence may relate to a disability, as defined under the Equality Act 2010. Where this is the case, EAST SCITT Tutors should consider seeking advice from HR and Occupational Health.

Publishing policy

This Policy will be available through the EAST SCITT website and our documentation. A copy is available from the SCITT office.

Review date for the policy

This Policy will be reviewed and agreed by the Strategic Committee on a biennual basis.

PLANNED ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

To be completed when you need to take time off from the EAST SCITT training programme (either a training session/day or during school placements) in an emergency/exceptional circumstance (e.g. medical appointment, funeral, childcare, interview, etc.) Please note that the SCITT Director may decide that time taken for a leave of absence must be made up at the end of the training programme.
Please Note: No leave should be taken prior to your leave of absence request being approved.

- **For planned absences, at least five working days' notice is required**
- **Emergencies, trainee to complete the form as soon as possible**

Process:
(1) Fill in trainee details
(2) Hand in to EAST SCITT Coordinator for authorisation
(3) Approval or Refusal confirmed and communication to trainee
(4) Trainee to notify school mentor, class teachers, and senior leader / professional tutor, following the school's absence procedures

TRAINEE DETAILS

TRAINEE DETAILS	**Name:**	**Subject**	**Name of EAST SCITT Tutor:**	**Date submitted:**
REASON FOR ABSENCE	**Reason for absence:**			
DATES OF ABSENCE	**From (Date & Time):**	**To (Date & Time):**	**Please ✓ number of periods / days requested:** **Period 1 2 3 4 5** **Total number of days requested:**	
RETURN DATE	**Date of return:**	**Time of return:**		
MORE INFO	**Details of supporting documents attached:** ***Please note that for a medical appointment or interview EAST SCITT expects to see proof of appointment/interview***			

APPROVAL	**Approved in line with EAST SCITT policy:** **Refused:**	☐ ☐ **Reason:**
NAME SIGNATURE DATE		
EAST SCITT ABSENCE TRACKER UPDATE	☐ **I can confirm that the absence history has been updated.**	

AUTHORISATION

Please note, you may be required to make up the time you are absent at the end of programme. Absence is monitored on an ongoing basis and where the decision to extend your training is made, you will be notified appropriately.

SELF-CERTIFICATION & RETURN TO WORK FORM

Part 1 - Personal details

Full Name:	EAST SCITT Tutor:

Part 2 - Period of absence

To be completed by the trainee. Please note that weekends bridged by a period of sick absence should be counted

First day of absence: Last day of absence: Date of return to work:

Absence is 7 days or less, treat as self-certified

Part 3 – Absence a result from an industrial injury?

(If you answer yes please complete the Accident/Ill Health/Dangerous Occurrence Report Form)

Part 4 - Reason for absence *(tick the most appropriate box below)*

Respiratory/coughs/colds			Cancer related		
Internal Organs/Circulatory/Heart/Blood			Eye/Ear/Nose/Throat/Dental		
Gastro/Diarrhoea/Vomiting			Post-operative/Recovery		
Muscular-Skeletal/Strain/Sprain			Skin Condition		
Emotional Health Related			Genito-Urinary related		
Disability Related			Allergy		
Injury at Work			Phased return		
Pregnancy Related			Headache/Migraine/Neurological		

Are you on any medication we need to be aware of? Yes/No

Are there any underlying health/welfare issues linking current and previous absences?

(If sickness absence is related to a disability, reasonable adjustments must be considered and detailed below)

Is there anything we should consider to support you at work? Yes/No

Part 5 – EAST SCITT Tutor

Did the trainee properly notify the EAST SCITT team of his / her absence? Yes /No

Is the trainee feeling better? Yes /No

Signature (trainee): Signature (Coordinator):

Date: Date: