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strengthening communities through excellent education.

Ted
Wragg TRUST



Attendance and Engagement Policy

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1.0 Policy Statement

- 1.1 Our Mission: We prepare teachers who will be equipped to join our school communities and make the world a better place for our young people.
- 1.2 Our Commitment: Our training prepares teachers to be resilient, inspiring professionals equipped to have a long-term impact on the children in the diverse communities we serve.
- 1.3 How we do it: We integrate school-based deliberate practice with evidence-informed learning to develop practitioners driven by inclusion and social justice for young people.

2.0 Scope and Purpose

- 2.1 This policy is for managing Trainees' absence from the course due to ill health and/or where a Trainee does not attend regularly and reliably due to ill health or any other reason, including maternity related absence.
- 2.2 The Ted Wragg Teacher Training partnership recognises that Trainee engagement and attendance is a key part of successfully completing an Initial Teacher Training year. Full participation and attendance in the course:
 - Enables Trainees to fully evidence their progress against the Teachers' Standards
 - Demonstrates the levels of professional conduct described in Part Two of the Teachers' Standards
 - Increases Trainee employability at the end of the course
- 2.3 This Policy is intended to provide a structured and reasonable support system to identify problems early so that support can be offered to enable Trainees to successfully complete the course.

3.0 Definition

- 3.1 For the purpose of this document: Ted Wragg Teacher Training Partnership SCITT and 'the partnership' refers to the SCITT and its Training Partners in ITT delivery.

4.0 Legal Framework

- 4.1 This Policy will be shared with Training Partners and will be included in the SCITT's Policy Monitoring Schedule. This policy is written to ensure compliance with the Department for Education's Initial Teacher Training Criteria and Supporting Advice, specifically items 3.1-3.4.

5.0 Roles and Responsibilities

- 5.1 Trainee Responsibilities:
 - Trainees have a responsibility, where necessary, to take any steps required to minimise their absence.
 - Trainees must accept that absences, approved or otherwise, may result in the lengthening of their course until all requirements are met, or deferral to a year when trainees absences will be decreased.
 - Trainees must take all reasonable steps to attend meetings as required and adhere to this policy.

5.2 Management Responsibilities:

The SCITT Director is required to ensure that each Trainee is aware of this policy, understands the attendance standards required of them and the consequences of not attaining and meeting these standards. Action should be taken consistently to identify concerns and reinforce attendance standards before it becomes necessary to take formal action. SCITT Training Partner Directors are required to manage the process effectively, fairly and reasonably. In addition, SCITT Training Partner Directors should create a healthy and supportive work environment where Trainees feel valued, want to come to work and have a good work/life balance; and follow up all absences with a return to work meeting when the Trainee resumes work, regardless of the length of absence. The intention at all times is to ensure Trainee attendance and engagement is sufficient to ensure they make good progress towards successful completion of programme.

6.0 Sources of Support

6.1 The TWTP Training Partner Course Handbooks detail for Trainees the extensive support on offer to ensure Trainees are successful on the course. Trainees can seek support from:

- Mentors
- Lead Mentors
- Teacher Training Coordinators and Lead Partner Directors.

6.2 The intention is to ensure that Trainees have the best possible chance of success and have a positive impact on the children they are working with on placement.

6.3 Should trainees require a period of absence of one day or more they must inform the Programme Administrator, and their in-school Mentor, as per the instructions issued in the guidance from each Lead Partner in September each year.

7.0 Applications and Exclusions

7.1 This policy is based on good practice to ensure a consistent and effective approach. The application of this policy will be fair, equitable, objective and will not discriminate either directly or indirectly on the grounds of a Trainee's gender, age, disability, gender re-assignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy, maternity status, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

7.2 This policy applies to all Trainees engaged on Ted Wragg Teacher Training Partnership's ITT courses.

8.0 Trigger Points – Sickness Absence

8.1 The SCITT Training Partners should ensure an accurate record is kept of absence from the course due to ill health and the trigger points below should be used to determine when absence from the course is beginning to have an impact either on the placement school,

students in the trainee’s classes and/or on the trainee’s progress towards QTS. All absences due to ill health (including pre-arranged absences for planned procedures) are counted towards trigger points.

Trigger Point 1	4 or more single days of absence and/or 4 periods of absence in any rolling 3-month period. The trainee is invited to a meeting with the Training Partner Director to discuss their situation and the impact of their absences.
Trigger Point 2	8 or more single days of absence and/or 8 periods of absence in any rolling 12-month period. Second Absence Meeting and Rapid Action Plan process initiated as described above in order to support the trainee to catch up lost learning. Training Partner Directors will inform the SCITT Director.
Trigger Point 3	10 or more days of absence in any rolling 12-month period. Cause for Concern process with a Formal Absence Meeting. SCITT Director informed.
Trigger Point 4	A discernible pattern e.g. regular absence on a day or certain weeks during the year (School holidays/term time, Easter break, Christmas). Cause for Concern process initiated with a Formal Absence Meeting. Trainees may complete a two-week period of Rapid Action Plan in order to support the trainee to catch up lost learning but if absence recurs at any point this process will pick up where last left off, moving through up to four weeks of Rapid Action Plan support before Cause for Concern is initiated.

9.0 Determining Who Will Hear the Matter

9.1 Absence Meetings:

Where there are concerns about an Trainee’s absence(s) due to ill health and action is to be taken in accordance with this policy, the Training Partner Director should usually deal with the matter, who will be responsible for arranging the meetings, writing to the Trainee and arranging for a suitable person to attend to take notes.

9.2 Formal Absence Meeting:

Formal Absence Meetings must be conducted and chaired by those that have delegated authority to terminate the trainee’s place on the course. This is likely to be the Training Partner Director.

9.3 The Training Partner Director will be responsible for arranging the hearing, writing to the Trainee and arranging for a suitable person to attend to take notes.

10.0 Time Limits

10.1 The time limits included in this policy may be varied by mutual agreement. The policy makes reference to a number of ‘days’ within which certain actions/events are to occur. A

'day' is defined as any Monday to Friday excluding public holidays.

11.0 Being Accompanied

11.1 The Employment Relations Act 1999 determines that an employee has a statutory right to request to be accompanied at any disciplinary or grievance hearing and it is our policy to extend this right to trainee teachers. To invoke that right a Trainee must make a reasonable request to the SCITT to be accompanied by either:

- a paid official from a recognised trade union/professional association
- an official of a trade union/professional association whom the union/professional association has reasonably certified in writing as having experience of, or as having received training in acting as a Trainee's companion at disciplinary or grievance hearings
- an appropriate work colleague.

11.2 Friends/family members are not permitted unless they fall under the above criteria and it is agreed as appropriate. It would not normally be reasonable for a Trainee to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union/professional association representative whose presence would prejudice the hearing and/or was from a remote geographical location if someone suitable and willing was available more locally.

11.3 If a Trainee's chosen representative is not available on the day proposed for the hearing, the Trainee can propose an alternative date within the following five days of the original proposed date.

12.0 Non-Attendance

12.1 If a Trainee fails to attend a meeting or hearing through circumstances beyond their control, an alternative time and date may be offered. Alternatively, they may submit a written statement or nominate a representative to attend on their behalf.

12.1 Where a Trainee is persistently unable or unwilling to attend the meeting/hearing without good cause, it will proceed in their absence and a decision based on the evidence available will be made.

13.0 Reporting Sickness Absence

13.1 On the first day of absence, the Trainee must contact the Training Partner Administrator and their placement Mentor following guidance issued by their Training Partner

Director to:

- confirm the reason for not attending
- advise what date they were unable to attend (even if it was not a normal training day)
- advise the likely return date, where possible.

13.2 In situations where the Trainee's Mentor and the administrator are unavailable, the

Trainee must contact another suitable person to confirm the points listed above.

13.3 The Trainee should personally email the Administrator and their Mentor.

13.4 Where a Trainee fails to attend and/or maintain appropriate contact during a period of sick leave this may be considered as the Trainee being absent without leave. In these circumstances, action under the Non-Academic Misconduct policy may be considered once efforts to contact the Trainee have been exhausted.

13.5 Where the Training Partner Director has concerns about the regularity of a Trainee's absence or the reasons for the absence given, the Trainee may be instructed to submit a Fit Note from the first day of any absence.

13.6 The Training Partner Director is required to:

- record the first day of absence even if that was not a calendared course day for the Trainee, ensuring that disability and maternity related absences are recorded appropriately (see Section 11 and 12)
- review the Trainee's absence against the trigger points and determine whether any action should be taken
- consider any health, safety or wellbeing issues associated with the absence
- where the absence is due to an accident or injury that occurred on placement, record and investigate the incident as required
- ensure that an appropriate risk assessment is completed for any absence where the placement environment may impact on the Trainee's well-being and consider what action may be taken.

13.7 Timely and accurate recording of absence is essential to ensure correct payment of contractual and/or statutory sick pay where applicable.

14.0 Absence for More than Seven Days

14.1 The Trainee is required to:

- provide their Training Partner Director with a Fit Note from their doctor covering all the days from the eighth day of the absence through to the last working day before they return to work, regardless of whether these are their working days or not.
- discuss with the Training Partner Director any recommendations in the Fit Note that would enable them to return .
- attend any appointments made as a result of a referral to Occupational Health.
- maintain contact with and keep the Training Partner Director informed about their progress and the likely return to work date; and attend any meetings if required to do so.

14.2 The Training Partner Director is required to:

- consider any recommendations in the Fit Note and establish whether these are reasonable, taking advice where necessary
- maintain an appropriate level of contact with the Trainee, meeting as necessary to ensure that the Trainee's absence is managed and that appropriate support to

- help them return is available
- refer the Trainee to Occupational Health if appropriate
- refer to the trigger points and determine appropriate course of action in accordance with this policy
- keep a written record of all actions taken.

15.0 Fit Notes / Occupational Health

15.1 Some Fit notes or Occupational Health reports may suggest adjustments that could be introduced to assist the Trainee to return to work. The SCITT Director will need to determine if the suggested adjustments are 'reasonable' and can be accommodated in placement given the nature of the role carried out by the Trainee. If the suggested adjustments cannot be accommodated, the Trainee remains unfit for the course and should continue to provide Fit notes during the absence.

16.0 First Absence Meeting

16.1 When a trigger point has been reached, the Training Partner Director will convene a First Absence Meeting with the Trainee. The Trainee may be back on placement or still absent at this time. The purpose of the meeting is for the Training Partner Director to:

- clarify the reason(s) the Trainee was absent or is still absent
- ensure the criteria under the relevant sick pay scheme have been met, where the Trainee is eligible (employment-based routes)
- ensure that the Trainee and the Training Partner Director have been keeping in contact
- if the Trainee is still absent, determine the likely date for a return to work
- discuss what steps the Trainee has taken to reduce their level of absence
- discuss the impact the Trainee's absence has on the service / colleagues and what arrangements might be put in place to cover classes etc
- consider a referral to Occupational Health. This may include a referral to seek advice on the trainee's fitness to train to teach
- set targets for reducing absence levels if it is determined that the Trainee has a disability covered by the Act (see Section 10 and 11), agree whether any reasonable adjustments could be considered or reviewed to reduce absence
- discuss whether the Trainee could access any support through specialist groups e.g. counselling at the discretion of the Training Partner Director.

17.0 Second Absence Meeting

17.1 The Second Absence Meeting will be convened by the SCITT Lead on the date agreed at the First Absence Meeting. If the Trainee's absence(s) has reduced, there may be no need for the Second Absence Meeting to go ahead if it was pre-arranged. The agenda followed at the Second Absence Meeting will be similar to that followed at the First Absence Meeting but in addition may also include the following points:

- seek further advice from Occupational Health. This may include a referral to seek advice on the trainee's fitness to train to teach
- determine what has prevented the Trainee from reducing absence levels and if possible, determine likely future absence
- where it is determined the Trainee has a disability covered by the Act, consider whether any suggested adjustments are reasonable or review any already in place
- discuss any support through specialist groups e.g. counselling, that may be of benefit.

18.0 Formal Absence Meeting

18.1 The purpose of the Formal Absence Hearing is to consider whether a Trainee is able to fulfil their contractual obligation to carry out the role of the trainee teacher and meet the requirements of the course as by this stage the amount of absence may raise concerns about their ongoing fitness to train to teach.

18.2 The SCITT Director will prepare a summary report which should include the reasons for the absence(s), an up-to-date medical opinion from Occupational Health, what adjustments have been looked at and/or introduced, the impact of the absence on the placement and on the trainee's progress and what support measures have been considered.

18.3 A Formal Absence Hearing will be convened in any of the following circumstances:

- where there is evidence that a Trainee, due to illness, cannot carry out the duties required of a trainee teacher,
- following unsatisfactory conclusion of a monitoring period,
- where the Trainee's pattern of absence illustrates an inability to fulfil Part Two of the Professional Standards,
- where the Trainee is assessed by a Physician/Occupational Health Adviser as not fit to train to teach in the foreseeable future and/or no indication of when the Trainee is likely to return to placement and where no reasonable adjustments can be put in place to facilitate a return or,
- where there is sufficient concern for the Trainee's welfare and/or for the welfare of others with whom the Trainee may come into contact with, (including students) that the continuation of their place on the course will be considered.

18.4 Where it is determined that a Formal Absence Hearing is to be convened, the SCITT Director will notify the Trainee in writing giving at least 5 days' notice, stating the details of the Formal Absence Hearing, the possible outcomes of the hearing, the Trainee's right to request to be accompanied and that the hearing may take place in the Trainee's absence if they fail to attend without providing a satisfactory explanation.

18.5 The SCITT Director is responsible for presenting the summary report at the hearing and they may be accompanied by an HR Adviser.

18.6 The Chair of the hearing will ensure that all relevant information presented at the hearing by the SCITT Lead and the Trainee will be considered. There will be an adjournment to

enable consideration of the information by the Chair or First Committee. The outcomes may include:

- to issue a final written warning
- adjournment while further medical information/reasonable adjustments are looked into with a date set to reconvene.
- termination of the trainee's place on the course.

18.7 The SCITT Director will reconvene the hearing and confirm their decision verbally, unless valid reasons exist not to do so, and will write to the Trainee within five days to confirm their decision.

18.8 If the decision is to terminate the Trainee's place on the course, the Trainee must be informed of their right of appeal and where to send the appeal.

18.9 Where termination of the place on the course is the outcome, consideration should be given to assisting the Trainee in seeking suitable next steps.

19.0 Appeal

19.1 If a Trainee wishes to appeal against the decision from the Formal Absence Hearing, they must do so in writing, stating the grounds for their appeal, within five days of receiving the written outcome.

19.2 A Trainee may appeal on the following grounds:

- the sanction given was too harsh given the circumstances,
- the procedure was not fairly or correctly applied or,
- new information has come to light that would directly affect the decision made at the hearing.

19.3 The appeal should be sent to the SCITT Administrator who will then arrange for the appeal to take place.

19.4 An Appeal Committee, consisting of the Training Partner Director, SCITT Director, Strategic Board Chair, a member of Learner & Partner Experience sub-group and an administrator to take minutes will be convened to hear the appeal.

19.5 The appeal should be heard without unreasonable delay. A minimum of five days' notice will be given to the Trainee to allow for preparation.

19.6 The outcome of the appeal hearing may be to:

- adjourn and refer the matter back to the SCITT Lead if significant new information/evidence is provided, which was not available previously, and may change the original decision.
- conclude a procedural irregularity occurred. Determine whether this had an impact on the decision-making process and outcome. If so, determine

an appropriate sanction and make a recommendation to rectify the situation.

- uphold the appeal and determine an alternative sanction/appropriate course of action. reject the appeal and confirm that the original decision stands.

19.7 The decision will be given verbally to all parties at the end of the appeal hearing unless valid reasons exist not to do so. The decision will be confirmed in writing to the Trainee within five days. An appeal is not a re-hearing of all of the facts but to determine if the original decision was reasonable given the circumstances. The process ends with the decision of the Appeal Committee.

20.0 Maternity Leave

20.1 Pregnant trainees have the right to defer their place on programme and take maternity leave.

20.2 Trainees are able to take up to 52 weeks leave for maternity leave.

20.3 The two weeks immediately after childbirth are deemed as compulsory maternity leave and trainees are not permitted to return to programme during this time.

20.4 Pregnant trainees must inform their Programme Director, in writing, by the end of the 15th week before childbirth.

20.5 Maternity leave can start at any time from the beginning of the 11th week before the expected week of childbirth (EWC) unless the baby is born prematurely in which case it will start from the date of birth.

20.6 If a trainee wishes to change their mind about when to start maternity leave, they must inform their Programme Director giving at least 28 days' notice.

20.7 If trainees are in receipt of a bursary, payments will cease at the date on which they start their maternity leave and will resume on their return. Course fees will be taken by the SCITT at the start of each term as per the payment schedule. Details of Maternity related benefits that trainees may be entitled to can be found on <https://www.gov.uk/maternity-allowance>

20.8 Trainees must give at least 8 weeks' notice of their intention to return to allow training partners sufficient time to source placements.

20.9 If a trainee is absent from work due to a pregnancy related illness during the four weeks prior the EWC, their maternity leave will start automatically.

20.10 Pregnant trainees are entitled to time off programme to attend ante-natal, midwife or health visitor appointments. This time should be requested through their Training Partner Director

or Administrator, providing evidence of the appointments and, where, possible, the appointments should be made outside school hours.

- 20.11 Training Partner Directors may support trainees who have experienced pregnancy related absence with a Rapid Action Plan to structure their catch -up of lost learning.
- 20.12 Partners of pregnant women will be allowed unpaid leave to attend up to two ante-Natal appointments.
- 20.13 Trainees whose EWC is within 8 weeks of the programme end date as stated in the Trainee Contract in exceptional circumstances may request to be considered for the early award of Qualified Teacher Status.
- 20.14 Early award of Qualified Teacher Status is dependent upon: completion of 120 days on placement, completion of 20 days of Intensive Training and Practice, successful completion of three End of Phase Reviews, an Evidence Bundle that demonstrates the trainee meets the Teachers Standards, as described by our SCITT Assessment Matrix. Award of early QTS is at the discretion of the SCITT Director.

21.0 Paternity Leave

21.1 General principles

- Trainees will be eligible to Paternity Leave if they are taking time off to look after the child; and they are the father, the partner of the mother (or adopter), the child's adopter (unless there has been paid time off for adoption appointments) or the intended parent (in the case of surrogacy arrangements) or where a local authority places a child with you and/or your partner under a fostering for adoption arrangement and you expect to have main responsibility (with your partner) for the child's upbringing.
- Ordinary paternity leave is for a maximum of two weeks. This leave may be taken as two separate periods of one week.
- Eligible trainees will be able to take their paternity leave at any time in the 52 weeks after the birth or adoption of the child.

21.2 Notification of paternity leave

- Trainees must notify their Training Partner Director with at least 15 weeks' notice in writing of their intention to take paternity leave, the date they wish to start, expected date of birth and the length of paternity leave they wish to take.
- Trainees who are adopting a child and wish to take paternity leave must inform their manager in writing no later than seven days after the date of the match. Details of the date the child is expected to be placed, the date the employee wishes to start paternity, the length of the paternity leave being requested and the date the employee was notified as having been matched should be provided.

- Trainees may vary their paternity leave providing they give at least 28 days' written notice.

21.3 Extended Paternity Leave

- Trainees may choose to defer their place on programme and take extended paternity leave.
- If trainees are in receipt of a bursary, payments will cease at the date on which they start their maternity leave and will resume on their return. Course fees will be taken by the SCITT at the start of each term as per the payment schedule. Details of Maternity related benefits that trainees may be entitled to can be found on- <https://www.gov.uk/maternity-allowance>
- Trainees must give at least 8 weeks' notice of their intention to return.
- TWTP acknowledge the Shared Parental Leave but in order to support the success of trainees offers the options of;
 - 2 weeks paternity leave
 - Deferring their place on programme

22.0 Adoption Leave

22.1 Trainees who are adopting have the right to defer their place on programme and take adoption leave.

22.2 Trainees are able to take up to 52 weeks leave for maternity leave. Leave is split between 26 weeks ordinary adoption leave and 26 weeks additional adoption leave. Trainees may request a shorter leave of absence instead of deferring.

22.3 Prospective adoptive trainees must inform their Training Partner Director, in writing, at the earliest opportunity detailing their intention to defer their place on programme and take adoption leave. This must be no later than 7 days after the trainee was notified of the placement.

22.4 Adoption leave can start:

- On the day the child is placed for adoption or up to 14 days earlier (UK adoptions)
- When the child arrives in the UK or within 28 days of this date (overseas adoptions)
- The day the Child's born or the day after (surrogate arrangements)

22.4 Prospective adoptive or foster to adopt trainees are entitled to reasonable time off to attend adoption appointments. These must be requested through their Lead Partner Director and, if possible, made outside school hours.

23.0 Emergency Time Off for Dependants

23.1 All trainees are entitled to up to 2 days across the course to deal with non-serious illness of a dependant.

23.2 A dependant is defined as a spouse, partner, child, grandchild, parent or someone who relies on you for care.

24.0 Compassionate Leave

24.1 Trainees will be supported with compassionate leave of up to one week in the event of a bereavement or serious illness of a close relative.

24.2 A close relative is defined as a spouse, civil partner, partner, sibling, parent (or other relative/carer who bought up the trainee), child or corresponding relatives-in-law.

25.0 Jury Service

25.1 If a trainee is called for Jury service, they should contact their Training Partner Director as soon as possible and provide a copy of the court summons

25.2 Jury service normally lasts for 10 days but may be longer

25.3 Where it is determined that a trainee's absence will have a substantial impact on their progress, the trainee will be asked to make an application to defer/excuse as appropriate. The SCITT will provide a letter to support with the application.

25.4 Trainees not required for a full day of Jury service must return to their normal duties.

26.0 Notifying of Non-Illness Emergency Leave

26.1 On the first day of absence, the Trainee must contact the Training Partner Administrator

and their placement Mentor following guidance issued by their Programme Director to:

- confirm the reason for not attending placement or training
- advise what date they were unable to attend (even if it was not a normal working day)
- advise the likely return date, where possible.

26.2 In situations where the Trainee's Mentor and the administrator are unavailable, the Trainee must contact another suitable person in the workplace to confirm the points listed above.

26.3 The Trainee should personally email the Administrator and their Mentor.

26.4 Where a Trainee fails to attend and/or maintain appropriate contact during a period of leave this may be considered as the Trainee being absent without leave. In these circumstances, action under the Non-Academic Misconduct policy may be considered once efforts to contact the Trainee have been exhausted.

26.5 Upon return to work email the Training Partner Director.

27.0 Process for Requesting Leave

27.1 All absences (expecting emergency ones) must be requested and approved in writing. Including those listed above and other exceptional circumstances.

27.2 Email the Training Partner Administrator with a minimum of 7 days' notice with the dates and reasons for your requested absence.

27.3 Training Partner Administrator or Lead Partner will respond within 1 working week to confirm or deny your request or ask for further details.

27.4 Training Partner Administrator or Lead Partner will inform you of any actions necessary to support your absence including but not limited to: setting cover work; completing reading; submitting assignments.

27.5 If the request is granted the trainee will inform their mentor and relevant staff at placement school.

28.0 Additional Reasons for Leave

Ante-natal care for expectant mothers	The right to time off to attend ante-natal care on production of evidence of appointments if requested.
Fertility treatment	Up to 5 days per cycle for the woman to undergo treatment, up to a maximum of 15 days across the course. Up to 1.5 days per cycle for the man, up to a maximum of 4.5 days.
Organ/bone marrow donation	The Course Director may approve leave with pay to attend medical appointments, for operations and procedures and reasonable periods of recovery, up to 4 weeks.
Graduation ceremony	1 day leave for own graduation ceremony.
House removal	1 working day with as much advance notice as possible.

Interviews / selection processes the for other positions in local authority maintained / academy schools.	Up to 6 days in 1 academic year will be granted where the vacancy is at a Local Authority maintained school, Academy
For members of another Trust Board, Local Governing Body or School Governing Body	Up to a maximum of 4 half-days per annum depending upon the reasonableness of the request.
Times of severe weather	For placement days trainees will contact their placement school and fulfil the duties required of them by their school. Trainees will also call their Lead Partner Administrator. For training days trainees will call their Lead Partner Administrator with reasons they are unable to travel in, giving evidence when requested.
Medical screening or medical appointments	For reasonable periods where attendance during normal working hours cannot be avoided.
Members of non-regular forces annual training	Up to 10 days across the course.
Religious observance	Trainees are entitled to request reasonable time off to allow them to observe their particular faith.
Jury Service/witness in Court proceedings	For the required period.
Magisterial duties	Minimum attendance requirement including training and membership of a statutory tribunal not exceeding 20 working days a year.
Weddings/Civil Partnership of close relatives i.e. sibling, parent (or another family member/carer who brought up the trainee), children or relatives-in-law.	The wedding day and 2 travel days where necessary.
Supporting dependant or close relative during critical medical appointments	

29.0 Reasons for Leave at the Discretion of the Course Director

- Interviews / selection processes for positions not in schools/academies
- Sports representation as competitor at national/ international level
- Graduation of close relative
- Request for leave during strike action if not striking
- Weddings (own and those not of close relatives)
- Deployment of Spouse/partner in armed forces
- Children’s medical appointments where both parents wish to attend
- House move (over 1 day)
- Overseas visits Sporting tournaments (below national level)
- Court hearings
- Funerals (other than close relatives)
- Accompany a pregnant woman to an ante-natal class (max 2)
- Religious Pilgrimage which cannot be taken during periods of school closure

30.0 Periods of Exceptional Leave

30.1 The SCITT recognises that on rare occasions our standard leave entitlement will not offer the level of sympathetic support a trainee will require. In such circumstances the SCITT Director may authorise additional leave. Such additional arrangements will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and will not set precedent for the future.

31.0 Trainees With Disabilities

- 31.1 The Equality Act 2010 ('The Act') gives Trainees with a disability certain legal rights. The onus of proof is on the Trainee to show that they meet the requirements of section 6 of the Act which looks at whether a Trainee has a physical or mental impairment that affects the Trainee's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities and whether the adverse effect is substantial and long term. It should be noted however, that some Trainees are covered by the provisions of the Act from the point of diagnosis when they have a progressive condition such as HIV, cancer or multiple sclerosis.
- 31.2 Trainees are not covered by the Act if any impairment is as a result of an addiction e.g. alcohol, nicotine or any other substance (unless originally prescribed). However, there may be underlying health issues resulting from addiction that may lead to the Trainee being covered by the Act e.g. liver disease, lung cancer.
- 31.3 Where a Trainee is covered by the Act, the SCITT has a legal responsibility to consider making 'reasonable adjustments' that will assist the Trainee to reduce and minimise absence and remain at work on the course. It is important to emphasise that adjustments need to be reasonable given the circumstances.
- 31.4 The SCITT needs to manage the absences of Trainees covered by the Act appropriately and can seek guidance from their Occupational Health provider as to what adjustments to the work/workplace could be considered. SCITT Leads will determine whether suggested adjustments are reasonable given the circumstances and may seek advice from the lead school HR team.
- 31.5 Any absence from the course by a Trainee with a disability which is not connected to the disability should be dealt with in accordance with this policy in the usual way. There will be some cases where the Trainee's disability prevents them from regularly attending even though all reasonable adjustments have been put in place. Certain conditions apply if the Trainee is not attending due to the disability, covered by the Act, of someone the Trainee cares for. Further advice should be sought from HR.

32.0 Absences that Should be Recorded Separately

32.1 In the following circumstances, the SCITT should determine whether it can be justified

that these absences should be included in assessing the meeting of trigger points e.g. where reasonable adjustments have been made but absence levels are still unsatisfactory:

- any pregnancy related absence (note: if pregnancy related absence occurs during the four weeks prior to the expected week of childbirth [EWC] maternity leave is automatically triggered)
- absence that arises as a consequence of the Trainee's disability covered by the Act
- absences resulting from an accepted accident on placement unless resulting from the Trainee's negligence or carelessness.

33.0 Specific Long Term, Serious or Life-Threatening Illness

33.1 At the SCITT and Partnership Group's discretion, the stages and outcomes of this policy may be modified for Trainees who have a specific long-term illness. Discretion may also be used to allow the Trainee to be accompanied by their partner or support worker in a supportive role if it aids the managing absence process.

34.0 HR Advice

34.1 The Ted Wragg Trust HR team can provide advice and support to the SCITT Director involved in the application of this policy at any stage. This includes attendance at meetings/hearings where required.

35.0 Medical Suspension / Fitness to Work

35.1 In some circumstances, it may be necessary to suspend a trainee on medical grounds in order to ensure they do not stay at work or resume their duties if there is a risk to the Trainee or any other person the Trainee may come into contact with. There may also be occasions where a Trainee's doctor has certified the Trainee as fit to return to work but given the nature of the work undertaken by the Trainee, the SCITT Director and Training Partner Director have concerns about the Trainee's fitness to return to/remain at work. In these circumstances, further advice should be sought on fitness to work from Occupational Health and HR for any HR process being considered.

36.0 Accident, Incident or Injury at Work

36.1 Any accident, incident or injury arising out of a work activity should be reported to the SCITT Director.

37.0 Recording of Information

37.1 A written record must be made of all meetings held during the application of this policy. Those involved in each meeting will be provided with a copy of any records made.

37.2 The SCITT Director will ensure there is a record of the process which should include all statements, records and evidence. All records will be retained confidentially, securely and in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998).

38.0 Raising a Grievance During the Application of this Policy

38.1 If a Trainee is currently being managed under this policy and has a complaint related to either the person applying it and/or its application, the Trainee will raise a complaint under the Complaint Policy which will be investigated. It may be necessary to suspend the application of the policy while the complaint is being looked into. Any delay to the application of this policy to deal with a Trainee's complaint should not exceed 10 days.

38.2 If a Trainee has an unrelated complaint, then the Trainee should use the Complaints Policy. As the matter is unrelated, there will be no need to put any absence process currently being applied on hold as the complaint can be dealt with in parallel.

39.0 Professional Standards/Statutory/Registration Requirements

39.1 Some professions have minimum standards of fitness to be able to carry out the role and all Trainees covered by these standards and SCITT Director should ensure they are familiar with the obligations e.g. Health Standards (England) Regulations 2003 (for staff in schools), Health and Care Professions Council's guidance on health and character (for health and social care professionals).

40.0 Recording of Information

40.1 There may be situations where a Trainee attends placement but is unable to carry out the full duties/requirements of their job, not as a consequence of a disability or ill-health but due to physical factors which are not related to their health. The physical factor may prevent the Trainee from undertaking duties such as responding quickly and effectively to children's needs in an emergency; caring for vulnerable adults appropriately; or inhibiting the Trainee from carrying out personal care to clients. In these circumstances, the Fitness to Practice Policy should be used to manage the situation after determining that no underlying health issues exist.

41.0 Confidentiality

41.1 Any parties affected by or involved in the application of this policy will be expected to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. Breaches of confidentiality will be taken seriously, especially if they hinder the application of the policy. Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in action being taken under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

41.2 Disclosure of information may also be a breach of the Data Protection Act (1998) and may lead to action being taken under the provisions of this legislation, in addition to actions being taken under the Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

42.0 Support for Trainees

42.1 Trainees are encouraged to seek support from their trade union/professional association in the first instance.

42.2 Where a referral to Occupational Health is required, this should be made by the Trainee's Training Partner Director.

This policy should be applied in conjunction with the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy, the Wellbeing and Workload Policy and the Complaints Policy.

43.0 Procedure Flow Chart

