



## **Attendance Policy: Trainees**

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## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Trust has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy. The Executive Steering Group is responsible for approving this policy and monitoring its effectiveness. The Executive Steering Group is responsible for ensuring that staff are treated fairly and consistently in the application of this policy and procedure. The Executive Steering Group has delegated day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy to the SCITT Director. The SCITT Director has specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this policy and that procedures are followed.

## **Introduction**

Ripley ITT is a programme of professional work-based learning leading to a professional qualification. Full time attendance is compulsory and this applies to school days and Friday training days. Trainees can take school holidays as applicable to their placement school and the dates for these need to be taken into account before planning any holidays. Trainees cannot start the programme late due to pre-booked holidays or request holiday leave at any time outside of school holidays.

## **Absence procedures**

If you are timetabled to be in school or to attend a session, then you are professionally required to attend. If you miss the session without good reason (see below), then we will simply add the number of unexplained absences to your record. Any unexplained absence will be discussed by a SCITT tutor or leader.

In accordance with the SCITT and placement school policies and procedures, if you are unexpectedly absent (e.g. because of illness) you must contact your placement school as

soon as you are able to do so. You should contact the SCITT Administrator and also your SCITT Personal Tutor. In terms of placements, please note that you are regulated, in terms of your attendance and professionalism as if you are a member of staff in your school. You should mark the absence on your personal Ripley ITT attendance tracker.

### **Leave of Absence: Trainees**

If you know in advance that you will not be able to attend school or training days, you need to complete a Leave of Absence form. These are available from the SCITT Administrator and must be agreed and signed by the SCITT Director. A copy of all Leave of Absence forms will be placed in your SCITT record and trainees must mark the absence on the personal Ripley ITT attendance tracker. Leave of Absence will only be granted for important reasons such as medical appointments, family illness, bereavement etc. Trainees should not arrange to take holidays during term times and must ensure they are aware of any work requirements outside of term time.

Attending job interviews for teaching posts will not be classed as absence and will not require a Leave of Absence request. Trainees should notify their school and the SCITT Administrator of this planned absence as detailed above. School visits prior to making an application should wherever possible take place only after requesting permission from the SCITT Director.

Please note that it is your responsibility to ensure you have undertaken appropriate measures to catch up on work you have missed. You should proactively ask for guidance from subject/primary school mentors, the SCITT Director and Lead Subject Mentors (secondary) as appropriate about how to catch up.

### **School Closures**

If a trainee cannot attend school due to school closures this will not be recorded as an absence. In these circumstances trainees will be expected to engage with training remotely wherever possible, including the planning and delivery of pupil learning activities and assessing pupil work. They should remain in touch with mentors and school colleagues to facilitate this. During any extended period of school closures, such as a lockdown, programme leaders will ensure that training opportunities are provided online. Trainees should follow the reporting procedures as outlined above should they become ill during any school closure and are unable to work remotely.

### **Industrial Action**

Tuition fee trainees are not entitled to strike even if they are a member of a striking union. Strike action is taken against an employer. There is no right to strike against a programme of study. Therefore, all tuition fee trainees should be expected to continue to engage fully in their ITT programmes.

Trainees should not be asked to provide cover in the event of strike action, they can continue to teach their timetable with appropriate supervision. If a trainee is asked to provide cover then they should contact their personal tutor.

In the event of a school closure, Ripley ITT will direct trainees towards other programme related activity that can be undertaken during this time. As the disruption is expected to be minimal for any individual trainee, Ripley ITT does not anticipate that there will be any cause for a trainee to claim their programme has been significantly disrupted.

If a significant event in Ripley ITT's calendar is disrupted due to strike action (such as a core training day), Ripley ITT will provide alternative activities to replace the session to ensure that the trainees' programme as a whole is not undermined. As the disruption is expected to be minimal, Ripley ITT does not anticipate that there will be any cause for a trainee to claim their programme has been significantly disrupted.

### **Sickness Absence Trainees**

Absence due to sickness must be reported as above. Sickness absence of less than 7 days (including weekends and bank holidays) will require a self-certificate and a return to work interview with the professional mentor/ITT Coordinator, whereas sickness absence which exceeds 7 working days will require a medical note and a return to work interview with the SCITT Director/Deputy Director. A return to work interview with the SCITT Director/ Deputy Director may also be required if there are repeated absences of less than 7 days. Absence proformas are available from the SCITT Administrator.

Return to work interviews will include the following questions:

- Establishing reasons for absence
- Ensuring appropriate documentation and notification procedures have been completed
- Confirming fitness to work
- Establishing any support needs, including catching up on missed training

### **Prolonged absence: Trainees**

If any trainee has a level of absence which results in them completing insufficient days in school to be assessed for QTS this may mean that they will need to either extend their school placement or suspend their training and return to the programme at a later date (intercalation) to repeat their school placement.

ITT bursaries are administered by Ripley ITT on behalf of the Department for Education while trainees are in attendance on programme. Under the terms of the ITT Bursaries Funding Manual we will have to notify the DfE if trainees are not in attendance and the bursary payments might be stopped accordingly.

If a trainee develops a medical condition requiring a significant degree of absence from the programme they may need to request to suspend their studies and return to the programme at a later date – see Intercalation Policy.

Serious illness may result in a referral to Occupational Health in order to establish fitness to practise.

Trainees complete a Health Questionnaire as a condition of offer of a place on our programme. If they experience a change in their health which might affect their Fitness to Teach they should inform the SCITT Director.