Covering/ Cancelling Student Contact Time – Principles, Policy and Procedures

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Definitions

Student Contact Time – timetabled lectures/seminars/tutorials/practical sessions and workshops

Sickness Policy – the policy for reporting staff absence/sickness

1. Introduction

1.1 The University is committed to delivering high and consistent standards of service to students. The services provided to students include contact time in the form of lectures, seminars, tutorials, practical sessions and workshops.

1.2 The Student Charter states that the University will:

“Give as much notice as we can if we change the teaching arrangements”

“Ensure that staff arrive punctually for all lectures/seminars/workshops and tutorials”

1.3 The Student Charter states that the University expects students to:

“Attend all timetabled classes”

“Inform the Programme Leader or Faculty Office promptly of any changes in circumstances”

2. Policy Statement

2.1 The University recognises that it has a duty to deliver all lectures/classes in accordance with the published timetable.

3. Purpose and Scope

3.1 This policy applies to all taught programmes (FE/HE).

3.2 The purpose of this policy is to put in place procedures to record the cancellation of student contact time, resulting from staff sickness/absence, and/or the provision of alternative lecturers. This issue will be reported on a regular basis to senior management and to committees that focus on maintaining academic standards.
4. **Policy Principles**

4.1 In circumstances where planned student contact time may be disrupted, the University will follow procedures to ensure that suitable alternative arrangements are put in place and students are notified in advance, where appropriate.

4.2 Such procedures will operate in addition to any policy requiring the reporting of absence/sickness by a member of staff.

4.3 Consistent approaches will be adopted for cancelling classes.

4.4 All students will be notified about cancelled classes in a timely manner and cancelled classes will be rescheduled where possible. Any relevant background information and learning materials will be made available to students in a timely fashion.

4.5 The number of cancelled classes, and the reasons for these, will be monitored at the appropriate management level within appropriate time frames.
Appendix A

1 Procedure

i) Reporting the need to cancel student contact time

1.1 Lecturers should contact the Faculty Office (or other designated contact) at the earliest opportunity when they cannot attend a class. The deadlines referred to in paragraphs 1.3 and 1.4 below are taken from the time the lecturer’s call is received.

ii) Cancelling/rescheduling student contact time

1.2 Before teaching time is cancelled, the Faculty should make every effort to find a stand-in lecturer. If this is not possible students should be informed that the class has been cancelled and will be rescheduled using a variety of communication tools (email, pop-up messages, text messages and telephone) and, in addition to the forgoing, a notice on door (Appendix C), rather than employing a single means of communication.

1.3 If relevant learning materials are available, they should be made available within 24 hours, ideally on Blackboard, so that the student can continue to make progress until the next scheduled class.

1.4 Where appropriate, the class should be rescheduled and students notified of the new arrangements as soon as possible (ideally within two working days). It should be made clear to students that whilst every effort will be made to find a time convenient to all students, this is not always possible given the students’ personal and professional commitments. Consequently, replacement sessions will be scheduled to accommodate the majority and the information covered made available to students unable to attend the rescheduled event.

i) Recording Cancelled Classes

1.5 A record of cancelled classes should be maintained within the Faculty so that the position can be monitored and the reasons for the cancelled classes analysed.

1.6 A standard Cancelled Class Monitoring Return has been created and is attached (Appendix B). Copies of the template can be downloaded from the intranet. The form includes an example of the information which should be provided for each cancelled class.
ii) Monitoring Cancelled Classes

1.7 The Cancelled Class Monitoring Returns should be analysed within the Faculty and become a standing item on the Faculty Executive agenda. It should also be supplied to the Deputy Vice Chancellor on a monthly basis.

1.8 The Return should become a periodic item on the agenda for Faculty Academic Standards and Quality Committee meetings and an annual item on the Academic Quality and Standards Committee’s agenda.

1.9 The overall results will be incorporated into the annual reporting cycle.

1.10 Details of the number of uncovered classes should be reported bi-annually to the Student Liaison Committee for discussion.
## Appendix B - Faculty of [insert name]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Details</th>
<th>Lecture Details</th>
<th>Cancellation Details</th>
<th>Action Taken: What, how and when?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course Code</strong></td>
<td><strong>Course Title</strong></td>
<td><strong>Date and Type of Contact</strong></td>
<td><strong>Time</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>123</td>
<td>B.A. Accountancy</td>
<td>1 Dec 10 Lecture / Seminar / Tutorial / Practical / Workshop</td>
<td>11:00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NOTICE OF CANCELLATION OF A [LECTURE/SEMINAR/WORKSHOP/TUTORIAL]

The Faculty of ............ wishes to apologise for the cancellation of this class.

Room Number:          Date:          Time:  from/to

Name of Member of Staff:

Arrangements for rescheduled class: *(if known or notice of how this information will be made available to students)*

Date when materials will be available on Blackboard: *(normally within 5 working days)*

For further information please contact: *(insert contact number or contact point e.g. Faculty Office)*