



NELTA 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 NELTA policy.
- b. The NELTA team (NELTA manager, NELTA Tutors, NELTA Assistant Principal and NELTA Principal) 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 NELTA admin team (NELTA manager and NELTA admin apprentice) are responsible for maintaining accurate records of absence.

NOTIFYING PLANNED ABSENCES: MEDICAL AND DENTAL APPOINTMENTS

From time to time, NELTA 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 **NELTA trainees should complete a Planned Absence Request for (PAR form)**. This form can be found at the end of this document, on the NELTA website or can be requested by emailing admin@NELTA.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

NELTA 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 **NELTA trainees should complete a Planned Absence Request form (PAR form)**. This form can be found at the end of this document, on the NELTA website or can be requested by emailing admin@NELTA.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 and the NELTA team (admin@NELTA.co.uk) and their NELTA Tutor. Salaried trainees should take care to ensure that they follow their employing school's procedure as well as informing NELTA. 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 toolkits by signing an attendance register. Spot checks on attendance will be made by asking mentors and PCMs to confirm trainee attendance. Records of attendance are maintained for every NELTA 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) are self-certifying. However, in cases of poor attendance due to multiple short-term absences, NELTA 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 NELTA, 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 admin@NELTA.co.uk.

When a trainee returns to work after a period of sickness absence, their NELTA Tutor must conduct an informal return to work discussion. During this discussion, the NELTA Tutor will discuss the employee's health issues, ensure 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, NELTA Tutors 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. Trainees are also expected to demonstrate that they are meeting all parts of the PLECO competencies, including Part Two of the Teacher Standards and so as such poor attendance is a real concern to the NELTA Team. NELTA Tutors should discuss attendance informally with a trainee on their return after any period of absence at the back to work meeting. If the NELTA team have concerns about a trainee's absence a NELTA 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 (NELTA 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:

NELTA Tutors 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 NELTA Tutor 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 NELTA Tutor 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 NELTA training programme. With the trainee's consent, NELTA 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 NELTA 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 a **NELTA Support Plan** drawn up by a trainee's NELTA Tutor. 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 NELTA Tutor 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 NELTA 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, NELTA Tutors should consider seeking advice from HR and Occupational Health.



PLANNED ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

To be completed when you need to take time off from the NELTA training programme (either a training session/day or during school placements) in an emergency/exceptional circumstances (e.g. medical appointment, funeral, childcare, interview, etc.) Please note that the Principal 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 5 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 NELTA Principal (3) NELTA Tutor (4) NELTA Manager

(1) TRAINEE DETAILS

TRAINEE DETAILS	Name:		Subject	Name of NELTA 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 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Total number of days requested: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>		
RETURN DATE	Date of return:		Time of return:		
MORE INFO	Details of supporting documents attached: <i>Please note that for a medical appointment or interview NELTA expects to see proof of appointment/interview</i>				
ABSENCE HISTORY	Please provide accurate details of your absence history to date for the current training year (if unsure please ask the NELTA Manager as we track absences): <i>Please note that incomplete forms will be returned and will delay the process.</i>				



(2) AUTHORISATION

<p>NELTA PRINCIPAL APPROVAL</p> <p>NAME</p> <p>SIGNATURE</p> <p>DATE</p>	<p>A) Approved in line with NELTA SCITT policy <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If approved, does this time need to be made up at the end of the programme?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please give dates _____</p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>B) Refused <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Reason:</p>
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(3) NELTA Tutor NOTIFICATION

<p>NELTA Tutor</p> <p>NAME</p> <p>SIGNATURE</p> <p>DATE</p>	<p>NB: If Principal has decided that the absence needs to be made up at the end of the programme, please explain this to trainee.</p>
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(4) NELTA Manager

<p>NELTA ABSENCE TRACKER UPDATE</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I can confirm that the absence history has been updated.</p>
<p>NAME</p> <p>SIGNATURE</p> <p>DATE</p>	



SELF-CERTIFICATION & RETURN TO WORK FORM

Part 1 - Personal details

Full Name:	NELTA Tutor:
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Part 2 - Period of absence

<p>To be completed by the trainee. Please note that weekends bridged by a period of sick absence should be counted.</p> <p>First day of absence:</p> <p>Last day of absence:</p> <p>Date of return to work:</p> <p>Absence is 7 days or less, treat as self-certified</p>
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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 - NELTA Tutor

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

Is the trainee feeling better? Yes /No

Signature (trainee):

Signature (manager):

Date:

Date: