

Horizon Community College Cover Policy



This policy should be read in conjunction
with the Leave of Absence Policy.

Amended:
Nov 2021
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COVER POLICY

CONTENTS

Section 1	General Policy Statement	3
Section 2	Absence Arising from Foreseeable Circumstances	3
Section 3	Absence Arising from Circumstances that are not Foreseeable	4
Section 4	Absences Arranged in Advance	4
Section 5	Absence as a Result of Illness	5
Section 6	Cover Work	6
Section 7	Other Information	7
Section 8	Cover Flow Chart & Other Pro Forma	7

SECTION 1 General Policy Statement

It is the aim of this policy to explain how the college will continue to provide a purposeful learning environment for students affected by the absence of their regular teacher.

This policy sits alongside the *Special Leave of Absence Policy*.

Absence occurs when the person who has been timetabled to take a particular class or group is absent. The type of absence could be for a variety of reasons, including internal and external activities as well as sickness. It could be short or long term. For the purpose of this policy, the Principal will exercise her professional judgment in determining what should be regarded as short and long-term absence.

Teachers should be required to cover only rarely, and only in circumstances that are not foreseeable. Foreseeable circumstances for the college include events that are foreseeable on the basis of historic experience, events that are foreseeable in the normal local experience and events that may be expected as part of the evolving pattern of provision.

Wherever possible, long-term absence will be covered by a teacher, through the use of a cover teacher or a fixed-term contract. Occasionally and in negotiation with the Principal's Team, such an absence may be covered by an appropriately trained cover supervisor.

Absence is of two kinds: planned and unplanned. Planned absence must always be approved in advance and will be for instances such as CPD, meetings, trips out of college, leave of absence and medical reasons. Unplanned absence arises from sudden illness and from unexpected personal or family reasons. The priority at all times is to ensure continuity of learning.

SECTION 2 Absence Arising from Foreseeable Circumstances

Absences arising from foreseeable circumstances will be covered in the following ways:

- **By a cover supervisor**
The college employs cover supervisors who provide short-term cover for absent colleagues. Cover supervisors are not expected to plan lessons or mark work.
- **By a cover teacher**
The college employs cover teachers who provide long-term cover for absent colleagues. Cover teachers are expected to plan lessons and mark work.

All covered lessons will be managed in such a way that students are able to continue their learning.

SECTION 3 Absence Arising from Circumstances that are not Foreseeable

Wherever possible, even in circumstances that are not foreseeable, cover will be provided as outlined in the section above (Absence arising from foreseeable circumstances). However, where this is not reasonable or possible, these situations will constitute a time when teaching staff will be asked to 'rarely cover'. In such cases, so far as is practicable, teachers will be expected to teach the lesson they are asked to cover.

It is the responsibility of all teachers requiring cover or to be kept non-contact for whatever reason to adhere to the procedures outlined below.

SECTION 4 Absences Arranged in Advance

Before staff submit any CPD requests or book a meeting or trips out of college, this should be discussed with the appropriate line manager and, where this is not the same, the subject leader. If they are happy for you to proceed with the request, consult the Cover Manager (Michelle Walker) regarding viability of dates and Associate Principal (Dave Bowden) regarding cost before formalising the requests.

Complete a Leave of absence / CPD form/'Meeting' request form as appropriate. These forms must be completed where a member of staff is to be out of college during the working day or requesting 'time off' timetable (see paragraph below). Completed Leave of absence forms and 'Meeting' request forms should be sent to 'Cover-Requests', for approval. For external courses, CPD forms should be passed to the Associate Principal, Dave Bowden, for consideration. **Please note, that cover will only be provided once the request has been approved.**

When the request is approved:

- If you are a form tutor, inform the appropriate school team
- Inform the subject leader and provide adequate cover work for all your teaching groups. The cover work should be saved in the 'Cover Supervisors' folder on staff shared, using a file name that includes the date and staff initials. Any additional resources should be provided to the Cover Manager in advance of the absence. Please see further guidance under 'Cover work', later in this document
- If the absence is to include a duty day, arrange a 'swap' with another colleague

It is important particularly with regard to visits and planned absence to give as much notice as possible.

If cover is to be paid for by an outside agency (e.g. an Examination Board), the Finance Office must be informed and a 'Teacher Release' voucher claimed.

Staff wishing to go out of college in a non-contact period should ask permission.

Although Horizon CC tries to be flexible concerning staff absence, **it should be noted that pre-arranged absences such as dental or doctor's appointments and other personal business should not normally be arranged in teaching time.**

Issues of an exceptional or compassionate nature will be dealt with under the trust's Special Leave of Absence policy.

SECTION 5 Absence as a Result of Illness or Self-Isolation (Covid-19)

If taken ill during the college day

Inform your subject leader and the Cover Manager. Where possible, leave cover work with the Cover Manager.

If unable to come to college

- All absences should be reported via the college cover line (answer phone facility is available out of college hours) on telephone number – 01226 704231 no later than 7:00am on the first day of absence. **Please note that it is not acceptable to contact your line manager and ask them to pass on a message to the Cover Manager.** Please also ensure you let your line manager know.
- If possible, indicate the reason and expected length of the absence.
- If the absence is Covid-19 related, please state whether you are ill or self-isolating and whether you will therefore be teaching remotely via Teams.
- If the call is not answered please leave the information on the answer machine.
- You should also email cover work to both the Cover Manager (mwalker@horizoncc.co.uk) and your subject leader before 8.00am. Please ensure this procedure is followed for every day of absence.
- You are expected to inform the college for each day of absence. The college will assume you to be present the following day if you do not inform the Cover

Manager otherwise. Anyone absent on a Friday will be assumed to be back in work on the following Monday, unless you have informed the college to the contrary

- From the 8th calendar day of sickness absence (including weekends), you must provide a Statement of Fitness for Work
- On your return to work please arrange to meet Anna Lee (HR Business Partner) for a return to work 'interview' and to complete the Self Certification Form

SECTION 6 Cover Work

It is expected that where the absence is planned, teachers will provide details of and equipment for, the work to be undertaken by the students during lessons covered by a cover supervisor. Lessons must also be uploaded onto Teams at the beginning of each day or before.

Where the absence is unplanned, and the teacher is not able to provide lessons, they are expected to liaise with their subject leader to discuss the work to be undertaken by their students in their absence.

Subject leaders are expected to ensure that appropriate cover work is provided for all lessons within their subject area.

Where possible, when the absence is Covid-19 related, the lessons will be taught remotely via Teams. In this instance, the lessons should be uploaded by the teacher at the beginning of the day or before as is normal practice. Cover supervision will be provided to support the teaching of lessons delivered remotely.

When setting and leaving cover work, please bear the following in mind:

- Cover supervisors/cover teachers are not normally subject specialists
- Include seating plans
- Highlight any students who are 'exceptional cases' e.g. students who receive in class support, those with a hearing / visual impairment or any behavioural concerns
- Neither the Cover Manager nor cover supervisors/cover teachers have time to photocopy resources, so please ensure that any copies are made in advance and left with the Cover Manager
- If books or other resources are to be used during a lesson, make it clear where they are kept

- It is not always clear what to do with the information on PowerPoint slides / Flipchart pages, so any additional guidance for cover supervisors/cover teachers is very helpful
- Provide answers to any work set

SECTION 7 Other Information

The Associate Principal will be responsible for the strategic deployment of all staff in respect of cover.

The Cover Manager will be responsible for keeping the college diary up to date and for the day-to-day deployment of all staff in respect of cover.

The Cover Manager will keep accurate records of the amount and nature of the cover undertaken by cover supervisors/cover teachers and ensure that this is evenly distributed amongst those staff in accordance with their roles.

The Cover Manager will continue to keep accurate, up-to-date records of the amount of cover undertaken by each teacher. The Associate Principal will ensure that this is as evenly distributed amongst teaching staff as is possible according to the timetable.

Section 8 – Cover Flow Chart and Other Pro Forma

Please see the flow chart for information.

Horizon Community College - Cover Flow Chart

Planned Absence

Discuss with your line manager and, where this is not the same, your subject leader. Consult the Cover Manager regarding viability of dates and Associate Principal regarding cost before formalising the request, if the absence is CPD related.

Complete a **Leave of absence / CPD / Meeting & Event request form** as appropriate, ensure your line manager signs this and then submit to **Cover-Requests**.

Cover is approved

Inform your **subject leader**.

If you are a **form tutor** inform the appropriate school team.

If the absence includes a **duty day**, arrange a 'swap' and ensure Cover Manager is aware.

Provide cover work for all your teaching groups/form periods, and save in the 'Cover Supervisors' folder on the Hub. Make sure all other resources / copies are given to the Cover Manager. Ensure all lessons are uploaded to Teams.

Unplanned Absence

If taken ill during the school day

Inform your **Subject Leader**.

Inform the **Associate Principal**.

Make cover work arrangements and leave with the **Cover Manager or subject leader**.

If illness continues to the following school day continue as per the next column.

If unable to come to school

Report via the school cover line on telephone number - **01226 704231** by 7:00am on the first day of absence.

State whether able to teach remotely. Where this is not possible, email cover work to the **Cover Manager** and your **subject leader**. All lessons should be uploaded to Teams.

Repeat the same arrangements for every day of absence.

On your return to work please arrange to meet **Anna Lee** for a return to work 'interview' and to complete the Self Certification Form.



APPLICATION FOR CPD

This form should only be completed if the applicant's request is approved by their Line Manager and funding and cover is available. Lessons which require cover, must be uploaded to Teams.

Section 1 is to be completed electronically by the applicant and forwarded to their Line Manager to complete Section 2. The completed application should be sent electronically to **Dave Bowden** for teachers and **Debbie Musgrove/Sarah Harrison** for support staff for consideration.

Section 1 - To be completed by Applicant

Applicants Name/Dept.									
Course Title									
Organising Body									
Address									
Tel. No.									
Venue									
Date(s)									
Course Time	From:						To:		
Please shade periods that cover is required	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

Delete as appropriate*

***I HAVE ALREADY BOOKED THE COURSE / *I HAVE ATTACHED DOCUMENTATION FOR THE COURSE TO BE BOOKED BY FINANCE** (Please note, the course cannot be booked without supporting documentation)

Costs and Cover

Course Fee	
Travel/subsistence	
Source of Funding	
Cover authorised by:	

Section 2 - To be completed by Applicant's Line Manager

Reasons for supporting this application	
Name of Line Manager	

Application *Approved/Rejected (*delete as appropriate)

Name:	
Date:	



REQUEST TO ATTEND A MEETING/EVENT DURING THE COLLEGE DAY

Please complete this form if you are requesting to attend a meeting/event during the college day, which does not constitute a 'leave of absence' or 'CPD' (in which case, a different form must be completed).

Lessons which require cover, must be uploaded to Teams.

Name			
Department			
Date		Time	
I confirm I have discussed this with my Line Manager or Subject Leader (if different).			Please tick
I confirm I have checked the viability of the date with the Cover Manager, (Michelle Walker).			Please tick
Brief description of the meeting/event:			
How important is <i>your</i> attendance at the meeting/event			
How flexible is the date/time of the meeting/event i.e. How easily could it be rearranged if necessary?			

Please return / email the completed form to Cover-Requests.



APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Please refer to the Leave of Absence Policy to identify the category under which you are requesting leave. Once completed and signed by Line Managers, please forward electronically to:-

Horizon-Distribution-Cover-Requests@horizoncc.co.uk.

Lessons which require cover, must be uploaded to Teams.

A	Name of Applicant:															
	Date of Absence:		Expected Time of leaving:													
			Expected Time of return:													
	Category:		Compassionate Leave		Dependents Leave		Medical Reasons									
			Public & Communities Duties		Public Body Activities											
			Other (please specify)													
	Please indicate below which lessons will require cover.															
	P0		P1		P2		P3		P4		P5		P6		P7	
	For the purpose of:															
	Signed Applicant:								Date:							
B	Line Manager comments:															
	Signed Line Manager:								Date:							
Once sections A and B have been completed, please email to Cover Requests for consideration. You will be informed of the outcome by the HR Officer (Clare Wollerton) as soon as possible.																
SECTION C IS FOR OFFICE USE ONLY																
C	Approved				Please tick											
	Not approved															
	With pay															
	Without pay															
	Approved by:				Date											
Reply emailed		Yes / No				Entered in College diary				Yes / No						