

Attendance, Holidays and Leave of Absence Policy

1 Attendance

- 1.1 Students are permitted to proceed with their approved course of study only if they maintain regular attendance and acceptable academic progress.
- 1.2 While students are responsible for their own learning there is an expectation that they will take full advantage of the learning opportunities provided on all medicine and related degree courses, attending all timetabled sessions of the course, whether in College buildings or associated NHS Trust sites..
- 1.3 Attendance is regularly monitored at lectures, practicals, clinical placements and all small group teaching via attendance registers and/or ID card scanning. Students who fail to produce their ID cards during an ID card-scanned session will be marked absent.
- 1.4 Students who voluntarily absent themselves from timetabled teaching will be referred to their Head of Year and/or Senior Tutor.
- 1.5 Should a student choose to regularly absent him/herself from the course without authorisation they should be aware that they would be missing valuable teaching and/or clinical experience which they will require in order to prepare fully for future examinations. This might mean that they find themselves in a situation where they are in danger of being required to withdraw from the course as a consequence of examination failure. Should they find themselves in this situation, the fact that they have by their own action received less teaching and clinical experience than their fellow students will be taken into account when considering any requests for mitigation.
- 1.6 Teaching staff and firm leaders are expected to keep students' attendance under constant review and warn them if they feel it is inadequate. Attendance problems should be reported to the Faculty Education Office – Medicine (FEO), who will inform the Head of Year, personal tutors and the Student Progress Group, which makes recommendations to the Director of Education or designated Deputy on any remedial action that might be appropriate. Students' personal tutors may wish to investigate whether the poor attendance is a symptom of personal or academic difficulties that the student may be experiencing.
- 1.7 In the event of there being insufficient improvement following a warning, the case will be reported to the Director of Education or designated Deputy. The Director of Education or designated Deputy may, at their discretion and following investigation, require the student to repeat part of the course; or, should they decide that the student's academic record and/or application is inadequate or that the student is unable to profit from continuing the course, the Director of Education or designated Deputy may require the student to withdraw from the School, in accordance with College withdrawal procedures. Students have the right of appeal.
- 1.8 Students should notify the FEO (relevant Curriculum Administrator/Assistant) if they note the absence of a colleague for more than 3 days and the reason is not apparent, recognising that this is required of them for the safety of their colleague.

2 Holidays

- 2.1 Timetables for most years include breaks at Christmas, Easter and in the summer. However, before arranging holidays students should check their relevant term dates and the timing of examinations, bearing in mind the possibility that a resit might be necessary – it is not always possible for examinations to be timetabled during term time.
- 2.2 The exception is Year 5 where clinical attachments may span the Christmas and Easter periods (details available on the teaching intranet).

3 Absence due to illness

- 3.1 If a student is absent from the School of Medicine, due to illness, they must inform the FEO by logging their absence on-line (<http://www5.imperial.ac.uk/medicine/absencereport/>) **on the first day of absence**. Students on clinical attachment must also inform their firm leader and local site teaching co-ordinator (where applicable) on the first day of absence. Written supporting medical documentation must be sent to the FEO if the absence is for 7 consecutive (calendar) days or more. Students who receive a grant and who are absent due to illness for more than 14 days must inform their Student Finance England or equivalent funding body
- 3.2 Where a student is too ill to inform the School, the information may be sent by a parent or next-of-kin. Illness can only be taken into account in assessing the significance of poor attendance, work or examination results if it is supported by medical verification obtained from a GP or treating physician at the time of the illness and submitted to the School.
- 3.3 A student who contracts an infectious or contagious disease may be required to present a medical certificate acceptable to the College Health Service, indicating freedom from infection, before resuming attendance at the College.
- 3.4 The FEO will inform students' personal tutors where a students' absence might affect their academic progress, i.e., where it is protracted or where there is a high frequency.

4 'Special' or Compassionate Leave

- 4.1 If it is necessary for a student to be absent from the School for any reason other than illness, permission must be sought from the Director of Education or designated Deputy, via the FEO. This might include a period of absence where a student has suffered a close family bereavement, or to enable a student to participate in a major cultural or sporting event.
- 4.2 Students are permitted to join sporting, musical or other tours organised by the Student Union (College or ICSM). The maximum period of leave for all tours undertaken in any one year is restricted to 3 working days, and students are required to apply to the Director of Education or designated Deputy requesting permission to attend.
- 4.3 Requests should normally be submitted via email to Janette Shiel, Student Services Manager (j.shiel@imperial.ac.uk), for students in Years 1, 2, 4 (BSc), GE1 and Biomedical Science (BMS) or Jitender Yadav, Clinical Curriculum Manager (j.yadav@imperial.ac.uk), for students in Years 3, 5 and 6.
- 4.4 Students wishing to present their research (undertaken during their – BSc/PhD) at national or international meetings may be allowed up to 3 days leave from the course. These requests for leave will be considered on their individual merits by the Director of Education or designated Deputy. Students are reminded that whilst there are no central Faculty funds to defray the full costs of these activities, they may apply for a small Faculty Travel Award. More detailed information may be found on the teaching intranet <https://education.med.imperial.ac.uk/Years4>
- 4.5 Students, who wish to discuss their request before writing, should do so with Janette Shiel, Student Services Manager (j.shiel@imperial.ac.uk), for students in Years 1, 2, 4 (BSc), GE1 and BMS or Jitender Yadav, Clinical Curriculum Manager (j.yadav@imperial.ac.uk), for students in Years 3, 5 and 6.
- 4.6 In circumstances where there is a strong precedent for approval to be given AND absence is necessary at very short notice (e.g., in the case a close family bereavement) AND where the period of absence will be less than three days, Janette Shiel or Jitender Yadav may give approval on the Director of Education or designated Deputy's behalf.

5 Study Leave for Re-sit Examinations

- 5.1 It is NOT College policy to provide study leave for students re-sitting examinations. If the examination takes place during a timetabled period of teaching, students are expected to absent themselves for the minimum period of time required to sit the examination. It is not always possible to timetable re-sits to follow a period of holiday, and it would be

unreasonable to expect all the students who passed the examination at the first attempt to take a break in their course to allow re-sit students to catch up.

6 Student Records

- 6.1 Details relating to 1 to 4 above may be placed on a student's confidential file and made available to personal tutors, taken into consideration by and at the discretion of the Boards of Examiners, used as evidence in cases of student appeals, complaints, disciplinary and Fitness to Practise Panel hearings.

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FEO