

Board of Management
Finance and Resources Committee
Annual Staff Attendance Report for 01 August 2021 to 31 July 2022
Report by Director of People and Culture

1. Introduction

Members will be aware that as part of College monitoring systems it routinely records staff attendance figures and reports these to the Committee.

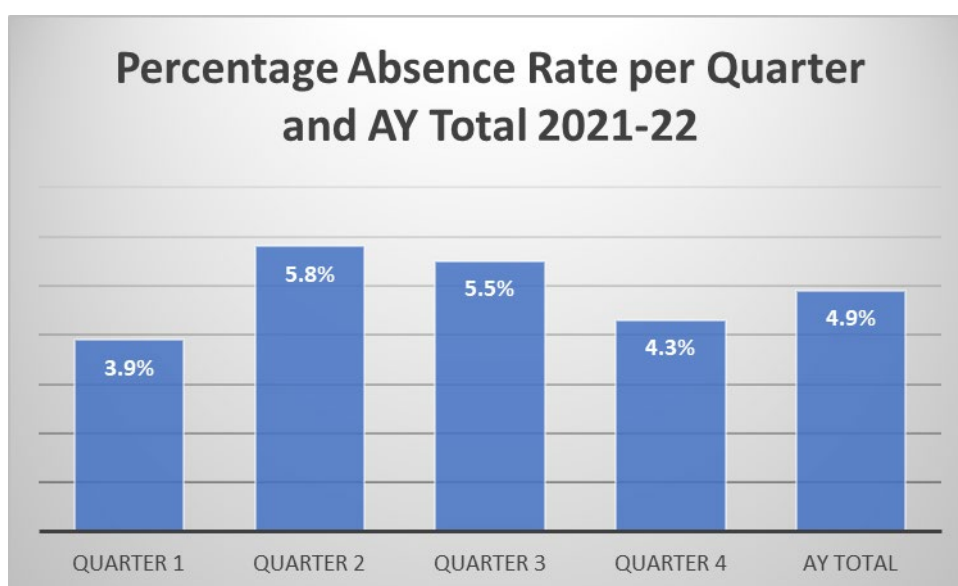
The purpose of this report is to provide further details on the statistics for academic year (AY) 2021/22, 01 August 2021 to 31 July 2022.

2. Attendance

The attendance and absence information for the College is split into the four main staff groups represented in the College workforce. The allocation is SMT/OMT, Support Staff, Permanent Teaching and Temporary Teaching Staff.

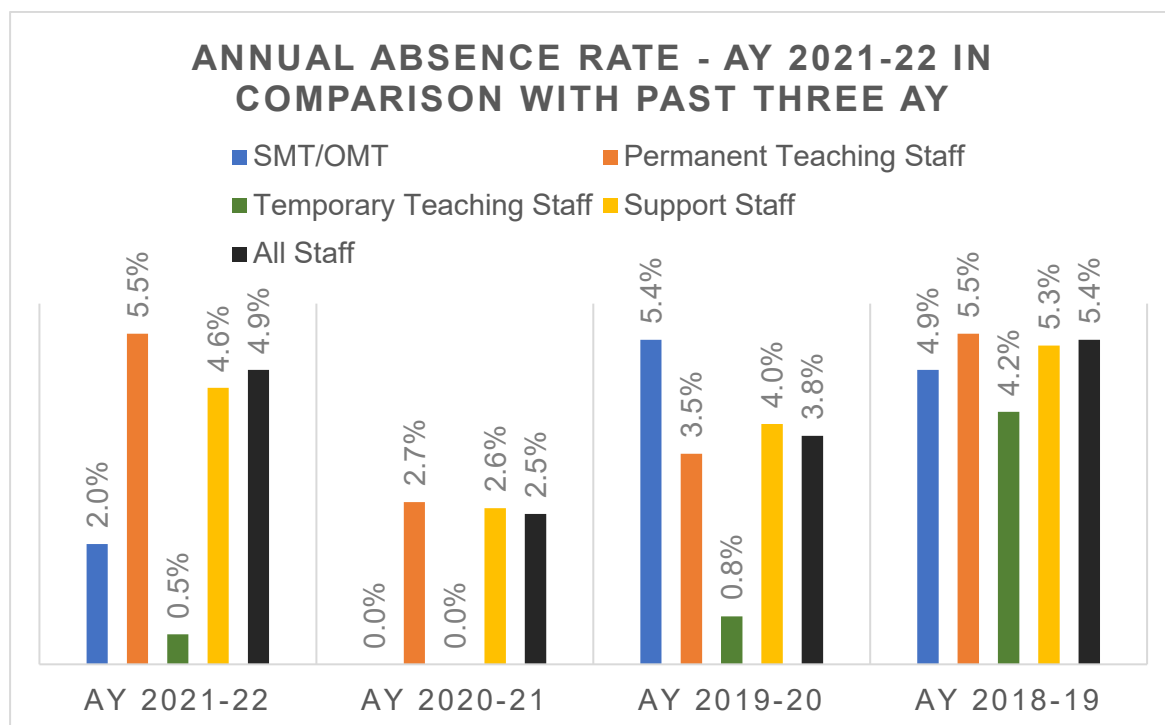
Graph 1 below shows the combined absence statistics for the four staff groups for AY 2021/22 per quarter.

Graph 1



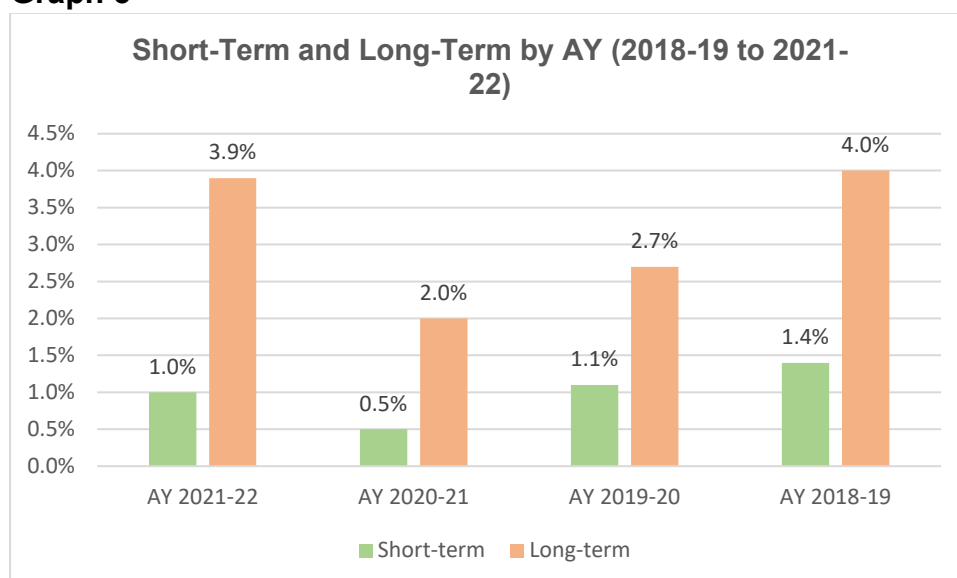
Graph 2 below shows the absence statistics for the four staff groups for AY 2021-22 in comparison to AYs 2020-21, 2019-20 and 2018-19.

Graph 2



The annual absence rate for AY2021-22, 4.9% has increased in comparison to the previous AY at 2.5%. The absence rate shows a decrease during the period of the pandemic. Graph 3 below shows that, whilst there was a decrease in short-term absence, the significant reduction in the absence rate is associated with a decrease in long-term absence.

Graph 3



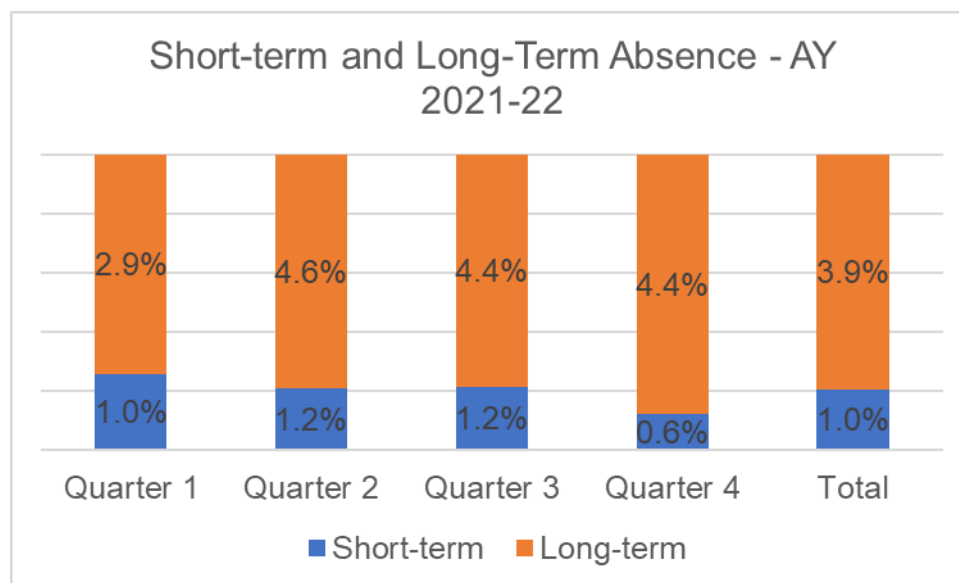
3. Long-Term Absence

Members will recall that the College regard an absence of 11 days or more as long-term.

During AY 2021-22 there were a total of 76 instances of long-term absence involving 75 employees in comparison to 44 instances, involving 41 employees, in AY 2022-21. Of the 75 employees, 2 were management, 29 were support and 44 were teaching.

Graph 4 below shows the absence rate per quarter for AY 2021-22 and the percentage rate of absence by short-term and long-term for the academic year. From quarter two onwards long-term absence remained fairly static at over 4%. Long-term absence continues to be the main challenge for the College.

Graph 4



4. Mental Health and Wellbeing

Members will be aware that the College specifically monitors and reports on absence related to mental health and wellbeing, including conditions such as work-related stress, anxiety, depression, bereavement, stress, and nervous debility. Wellbeing has been high on the College's agenda for the past few years particularly considering the impact of the pandemic. The College utilised the funding provided by the Scottish Funding Council to support the mental health and wellbeing of staff and students to create two fixed-term roles; a Wellbeing and Engagement Lead and an ESOL (Wellbeing) Support Officer.

The Lead role has a focus on the delivery of activities to support the wellbeing of both staff and students.

The Support Officer role was created to specifically engage with ESOL students to support their wellbeing and provide a single point of contact from the time of application to the completion of the course.

In AY 2021-22 a total of 1,547 working day were lost due to conditions relating to mental health and wellbeing involving 46 employees. In comparison to AY 2020-21 when a total of 805 working days were lost involving 25 employees.

Of the 46 employees, 7 suffered from a diagnosed mental health condition (e.g. anxiety, depression) and 39 experienced poor mental health (e.g. bereavement, personal stress, stress, personal or work related)

Of the 39 employees who experienced poor mental health, 30 staff absences were related to personal matters and 9 reported issues related to the workplace (3 support staff and 6 teaching staff).

Of the overall absence percentage rate in AY 2021-22, 4.9% a total of 1.77% was related to mental health and wellbeing, of which 0.27% were associated with work related stressors.

5. COVID 19

Members will recall that the National Joint Negotiating Committee Circular 01/20 – COVID-19 – Guidance on Paid Leave for Lecturing and Support Staff provided colleges with guidance on paid leave and special leave related to COVID -19 for staff. The circular provided for paid leave and special leave related to COVID-19 for staff who followed NHS guidance and who self-isolated and were unable to work.

The College therefore recorded absences related to COVID-19 separately from those recorded under its Attendance Management and Support Policy and Procedure for part of AY 2021-22. As the rules on self-isolation changed the College commenced recording absences where staff reported symptoms similar to COVID-19. However, without testing and confirmation, the absence was recorded under its sickness absence Policy for those staff who were unfit for work and not under paid and special leave in accordance Circular 01/20.

During AY 2021-22 the College recorded 263 incidents associated with COVID-19 involving 210 employees and a total of 1,347 days. In comparison to 89 incidents in AY 2020-21 involving 77 staff and a total of 322.5 days. The figure for both AYS includes confirmed cases, isolation and quarantine. In addition, 29 employees reported unfit for work due to COVID related symptoms under the

Attendance Management Policy and Procedure a total of 370 days. Of the 29 employees, 20 were unfit to return to work after a period of isolation.

6. CIPD Health and Wellbeing at Work Report 2021

Members will be aware that the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), produce an annual report titled [Health and Wellbeing at Work Report](#) (HWR) 2022 in partnership with Simplyhealth. The College benchmarks its performance against the annual report to assess how it compares to other public sector organisations.

The HWR key findings show:

- There is slightly less management focus on health and wellbeing compared with the first year of the pandemic.
- More organisations are taking steps to tackle presenteeism.
- COVID-19 continues to have a huge impact on employee health.
- New or better support for people working from home.
- Looking after people throughout the employee lifecycle.

Members will recall that the Scottish Funding Council allocated funding to support the mental health and wellbeing (Funding for Mental Health in colleges AY 2021-22) in colleges. The funding is to support the appointment of a Mental Health Co-coordinator role. As noted in section 4 above, the College appointed a Wellbeing and Engagement Lead, fixed-term until July 2023.

The College continues to have a strong focus on health and wellbeing for staff and students. A separate paper on the College's approach to health and wellbeing is on the agenda for this Committee.

6.1 Short-term Absence

The CIPD report identifies the five common causes of short-term absence. These are shown in Table 1 below.

The CIPD identified minor illness as the most common reason for short-term absence. This is also the most common for the College.

The CIPD identified COVID-19 (including self-isolation and quarantine) as the second most common reason for short-term absence. Whilst this is the same for the College, if the College were to use the same definition as the CIPD and include self-isolation and quarantine, COVID-19 would be the most common reason for short-term absence for the College.

Table 1 – Five Most Common Causes of Absence for Glasgow Kelvin College compared to those reported by the CIPD for short-term absence

AY 2021/22		AY 2020/21	
GKC	CIPD	GKC	CIPD
Minor Illness (e.g. colds/flu, stomach upsets, headaches and migraines)	Minor Illness (e.g. colds/flu, stomach upsets, headaches and migraines)	Minor Illness (e.g. colds/flu, stomach upsets, headaches and migraines)	Minor Illness (e.g. colds/flu, stomach upsets, headaches and migraines)
COVID-19 (staff reporting as unfit to work) (excluding confirmed cases, isolation, quarantine, shielding)	COVID-19 (including confirmed cases, isolation, quarantine, shielding)	Hospital Treatment/Surgery	Musculoskeletal
Poor mental health (non-diagnosed includes, bereavement, low mood, anxiety, domestic stress. Excludes diagnosed mental health conditions)	Musculoskeletal injuries (e.g. neck strain, repetitive strain injury, including back pain)	Poor mental health (non-diagnosed includes, bereavement, low mood, anxiety, domestic stress. Excludes diagnosed mental health conditions)	COVID-19 (including confirmed cases, isolation, quarantine and shielding)
Musculoskeletal injuries (e.g. neck strain, back injury, including back pain)	Mental ill health (e.g. clinical depression and anxiety)	Acute Medical Conditions	Stress
Hospital Treatment/Surgery	Stress	Musculoskeletal	Mental Ill Health (e.g. clinical depression and anxiety)

6.2 Long-term Absence

The CIPD class long-term absence as 20 days or more in the report produced. It identifies the five most common causes of absence associated with long-term absence, and whilst the College class long-term absence as periods of absence lasting 11 days or more, for the purpose of this report 20 days has been used as the calculator. Table 2 below shows the five most common causes for absence using 20 days as a direct comparator with the CIPD.

Table 2 – Five Most Common Causes of Long-term Absence for Glasgow Kelvin College compared to those reported by the CIPD

AY 2020/21			AY 2020/21	
GKC	CIPD		GKC	CIPD
Poor mental health (non-diagnosed includes, bereavement, low mood, domestic stress, work stressors. Excludes diagnosed mental health conditions)	Mental Ill Health (clinical depression, anxiety)		Acute Medical Conditions	Mental Ill Health (clinical depression, anxiety)
Hospital Treatment/Surgery/Injury	Musculoskeletal injuries (e.g. neck strain, back injury, including back pain)		Stress (personal, work, bereavement)	Musculoskeletal injuries (e.g. neck strain, back injury, including back pain)
Minor Illness (e.g. colds/flu, stomach upsets, headaches and migraines) and Mental Ill Health (clinical depression, anxiety) had the same number of instances.	Stress		Hospital Treatment/Surgery	Stress
Acute Medical Conditions (e.g. stroke, heart attack and cancer)	Acute Medical Conditions (e.g. stroke, heart attack and cancer)		Musculoskeletal injuries (e.g. neck strain, back injury, including back pain)	Acute Medical Conditions (e.g. stroke, heart attack and cancer)
Musculoskeletal injuries (e.g. neck strain, back injury, including back pain)	Long COVID (symptoms from COVID lasting at least 12 weeks)		Minor Illness (e.g. colds/flu, stomach upsets, headaches and migraines)	Minor Illness (e.g. colds/flu, stomach upsets, headaches and migraines)

Mental ill health was identified as the most common reason for long-term absence, in comparison this is the third highest for the College on a par with minor illness. Poor mental health however was the most common reason identified for the College and related to bereavement, personal stress, etc.

The College provides a wide range of support and advice to staff that experience a long-term period of absence to assist them during their absence and to aid their return to work.

The College employed a total of 530 employees during the reporting period. Of the staff employed 222 (42%) experienced one or more period of absence due to illness. In comparison during AY 2020-21 were the College employed a total of 542 staff during the reporting period of which 129 (24%) experienced one or more periods of absence due to illness.

An analysis of the overall sickness absence information for the College for AY 2021-22 is detailed below. Information was benchmarked against the CIPD report, where data was available.

The main points include:

- An average of 9.9 working days were lost per employee in comparison to an average of 4.3 days in AY 2020/21. The average reported for the UK for 2021 was 4.6 working days (ONS).
- 66% of absence incidents were 5 days or less which is overall a 3% reduction in comparison to AY 2022-21 (69%).
- 11% of absence were greater than five days but less than 11 which is an increase from 8% in AY 2020-21.
- 23% of absence incidents were long-term which is the same percentage as AY 2020-21.
- Of the total number of instances of one or more period of absence 58% were associated with a female staff member and 42% male in comparison to 64% female and 36% male in the previous AY.
- Of the total number of instances related to short-term absence, five days or less, 58% were female and 42% male (AY 2019/20 - 67% were female and 33% male).
- Of the total number of instances related to medium-term absence, six to ten days, 63% were female and 37% male (AY 2019/20 - 53% were female and 47% male).
- Of the total number of instances related to a period of long-term absence, 11 days or more, 55% were female and 45% male (AY 2019/20 - 64% were female and 36% male).

- Of the total number of instances 45% (AY 2020-21 - 40%) were teaching staff, including teaching management; 53% (AY 2020-21 - 60%) were support staff and 2% were OMT.

7. Resources Implications

There are no resource implications identified as a result of this report.

8. Equalities

There are no equality implications identified as a result of this report

9. Risk and Assurance

There are no risk and assurance implications identified as a result of this report.

10. Data Protection

No data protection issues have been identified as a result of this report.

11. Recommendations

Members of the Finance and Resources Committee are recommended to note the content of this report.

12. Further Information

Further information on the content of this report can be obtained from Doreen Shiels, Director of People and Culture Services (dshiels@glasgowkelvin.ac.uk).