

UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS
POLICY ON STUDENT ABSENCE

1. Definition of Absence

Students are absent if:

- a) they fail to attend an examination, or
- b) they fail to attend any element which is identified as compulsory in the Module booklet, or
- c) they fail to submit a compulsory assessment on time, including where a student has negotiated an extension prior to the deadline, or
- d) they are unable attend classes for one week or a total of 10 non-consecutive teaching days.

Conditions a) and d) are unlikely to apply to students studying primarily online. Handbooks must specify which elements of a module are compulsory.

2. Working Periods

If submission of a self-certificate of absence is temporarily impossible then the student should make every effort to contact the Module Co-ordinator or the School Teaching Office and then complete a self-certificate of absence as soon as is practical thereafter. Self-certificates of absence submitted later than the normal deadline, for no good reason, will not normally be accepted.

5. University procedures for responding to self-certificates of Absence

The submitted self-certificate of absence will be used by:-

Module Co-ordinators, who have access to the student self-certificates of absence through e-Vision and access to registers of class attendance at the compulsory elements of a module. Module Co-ordinators record absences from compulsory elements, then note absences for which self-certificates of absence have not been submitted and issue an appropriate academic alert. A module co-ordinator can decide to refuse a self-certificate of absence, even if the certificate is submitted in time. In this case, the absence would be regarded as unauthorized which may have consequences for a student. A student can consult with Student Services for further information to aid the decision making process.

The Associate Dean (Students), and the Registry Officer for Student Support, who process student Leave of Absence cases where students have not met the minimum attendance requirements (University Senate Regulation) and advise students who have substantial absences of less than 21 days. In addition the University is legally bound to inform the Home Office of absences by international students and this may result in a visa being rescinded if an international student fails to meet the requirements.

Student Services monitor self-certificates of absence and may reach out to a student to offer support. Any student reporting a previously undisclosed disability or long-term medical condition may be contacted by Student Services.

6. Incomplete Module Assessment

On completion of the module the Module Board shall consider cases where the assessment of the module is incomplete due to student absences in the following way:-

The Module Co-ordinator must declare in the Module Booklet or the School student handbook the minimum proportion (or elements) of assessment that must be completed for credit to be awarded for the module. This requirement must be defined by the School and can constitute 100% but must be no less than 75% of the total assessment.

Where the evidence supplied indicates a valid reason for incomplete assessment and the minimum requirement (as defined by the School, but no less than 75%) has been achieved then the Module Board can elect to award the grade calculated using the marks completed that are provided.

Where less than the minimum requirement has been achieved and the documented evidence supplied indicates valid reason then the Module Board should advise a deferred assessment (0D) to the Registry and the School should provide alternative assessment or extensions for continuous assessment elements and/or deferred examinations.

-committee of at least three members (mixed gender) of academic staff prior to the Module Board. This sub-committee can request documentary evidence. This task can be performed by the existing S-code committee, if preferred.

Where the student has not submitted a Self-Certificate of Absence or not presented satisfactory documentary evidence when requested or not given valid reason AND completed less than the minimum requirement then 0 X should be reported.

Where the student has not submitted Self-Certificates of Absence for missing elements and the minimum requirement has been completed then the student can be awarded credit for the module but the grade must be calculated on the basis of being awarded zero for the missing elements of assessment.

7. Documentary Evidence

Verifiable documentary evidence may be required if the absence results in the inability to successfully complete the compulsory elements of the module and/or a deferred assessment is required. The School will indicate to the student (giving one week's notice) when further evidence is required in addition to existing self-certification.

Suitable types of evidence include:-

a medical note from a doctor who is not related to the student. Students will be responsible for meeting any costs incurred in obtaining documentation. Student Services can be contacted and can advise on the documentation that needs to be provided.

a notification from Student Services;

letter of confirmation of required attendance at University competitions;

medical evidence from a hospital doctor;

evidence from a member of staff who was alerted to the circumstances at the time.

Version number	Purpose / changes	Document status	Author of changes, role and school / unit	Date
01	Additional text to highlight that self-certificates of absence can be refused. Registry Officer can use self-certificates of absence when processing Leave of Absence requests. Updated information responsibility for charges relating to medical notes. Removed information about contacting Examinations Office when absent from exams.	Updated	-	

