ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

Date of Meeting	16 MAY 2017
Paper Title	ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT – QUARTER 2
Agenda Item	17.25
Responsible Officer	NICOLE PATTON, HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES
Status	DISCLOSABLE
Action	FOR NOTING AND DISCUSSION

TOPIC: ABSENCE STATISTICS

1.   INTRODUCTION

This report details the Absence Statistics for Glasgow Clyde College for the period 1 November 2016 to 31 January 2017.

The figures are based on working time lost due to sickness absence. Hours lost are classed as short term or long term absence depending on the length of the absence. Short term absence is a single period of absence of less than four working weeks, and long term absence is a single period of absence of four working weeks or more.

Temporary Lecturers and Classroom Assistants are excluded from these statistics.

2.   BACKGROUND

The CIPD Absence Management Survey 2016 found that the vast majority of public sector organisations are actively engaged in the management of absence. The public sector is considerably more likely than other sectors to manage absence through health promotion initiatives.

Glasgow Clyde College recognises the benefits of providing support to staff making use of occupational health services, employee assistance programmes, changes to working pattern, risk assessment to aid return to work, stress counselling and rehabilitation programmes

The CIPD Absence Management Survey 2016 reported that the average absence in the public sector for 2016 was 4.3%, and more specifically 3.9% for the education sector.

3.   ABSENCE STATISTICS

Long term absence is higher than short term absence with the averages being 2.69% and 2% respectively.

The overall absence rate was lowest in January at 3.61% and highest in November at 6.01%.

The average absence for Glasgow Clyde College for the first quarter 2016/17 was 4.69% which is 0.39% higher than the public sector average in comparison to 0.79% higher for the education sector average.

3.2   *Annual Absence Comparison*

Comparing short term absence to the previous academic year, there was a 0.31% increase overall. The average short term absence percentage was higher in 2016/17 during November and December by 1.37% respectively. During January short term absence decreased by 0.99%.

Short term absence was 1.37% and 0.55% higher in November and December 2016/17 compared to 2015/16. However, during January 2017 absence decreased by 0.99% in comparison to 2015/16. Overall short term absence has increased by 0.31% for the second quarter.

Chart 1
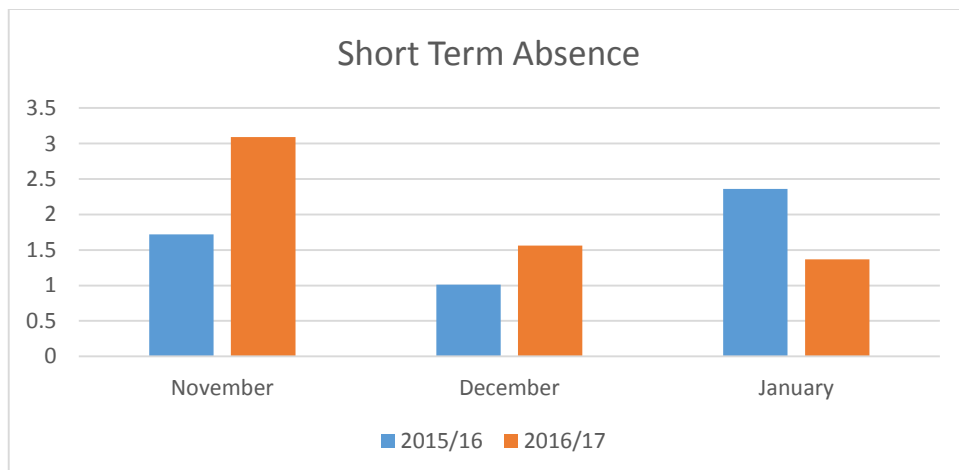
When we compare long term absence with the previous academic year, we can see there is a reduction. The greatest difference was in January where there was a decrease of 1.59%, with an overall decrease of 1.05% for the quarter.

Chart 2

Long Term Absence
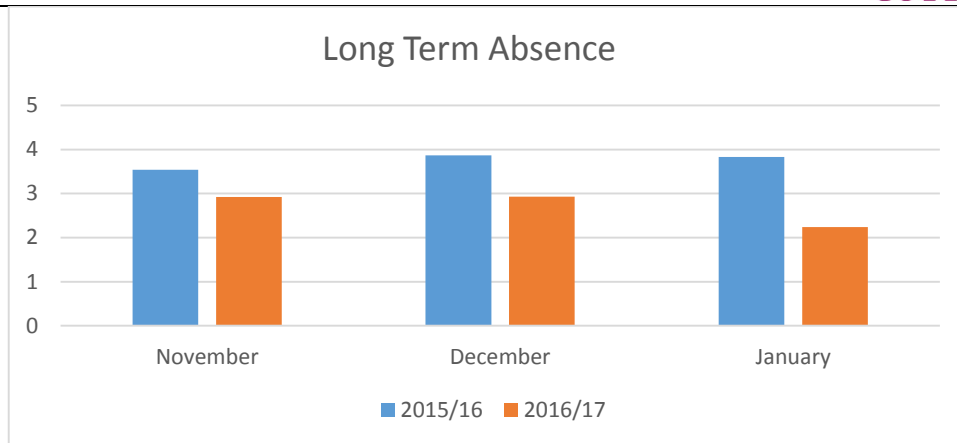
Comparing total absence in 2016/17 to the previous academic year there was a 0.74% decrease overall. The greatest difference was in January where there was a 2.58% decrease.

3.3   *Teaching vs Non-Teaching*

For academic year 2016/17, 43% of Glasgow Clyde College absence was from teaching staff and 57% from non-teaching staff. This has changed significantly from the first quarter 2016/17, 65% of the overall college absence was from non-teaching staff and 35% from teaching staff.
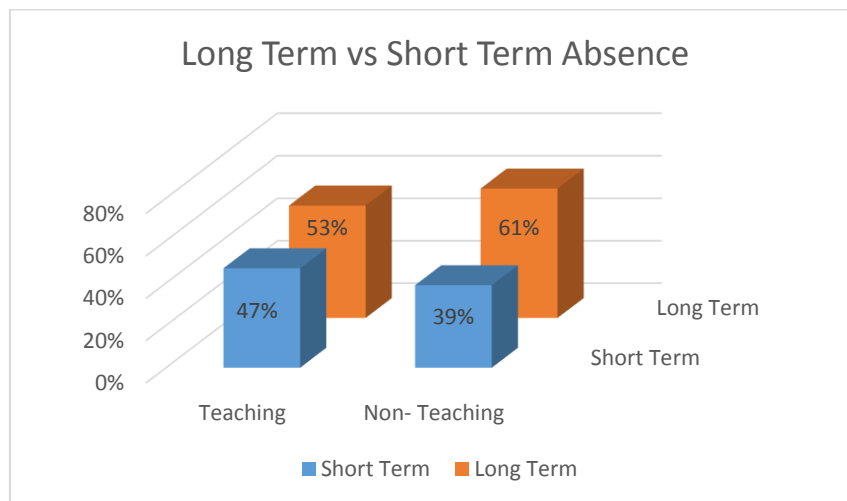
Chart 3

Chart 3 shows that long term absence is higher in comparison to short term absence. Short term absence was 47% for teaching compared to 39% for non-teaching, with long term absence making up the majority of absence in both areas, at 53% and 61% respectively.

3.4   *Reasons for Absence*

The most common reasons for short term absence based on total hours lost is as a result of minor illnesses followed by mental ill health and musculoskeletal.

Work related stress and mental ill health total 30% of the long term absence with ben/mal tumours/cancer totalling 11%. Mental ill health and work related stress are in line with the top 5 causes of short and long term absence within the public sector provided by CIPD Absence Management Report 2016.

The most common reason for absence for non-teaching is gastrointestinal however for teaching staff is mental ill health. This is closely followed by other for non-teaching staff with cough/cold/respiratory for teaching staff.

Based on total hours lost the most common reason for absence for non-teaching staff is other whereas mental ill health is the most common reason for absence for teaching staff. However, this is closely followed by mental ill health at 12.59%

4.   CONCLUSION

Glasgow Clyde College findings show that average absence levels have decreased by 0.74% compared to last year.

CIPD reported that stress, mental health and musculoskeletal injuries are the top causes of absence in the public sector (after minor illness for short term absence). This is in line with the findings for Glasgow Clyde College with minor illness remaining the most common cause of short term absence, followed by mental ill health. Work related stress, other, musculoskeletal injuries and mental ill health continue to be the most common causes of long term absence.

Absence management remains a key management priority for Glasgow Clyde College. The College is actively taking steps to improve absence using a wide range of approaches utilising occupational health services, employee assistance programmes, and counselling service.

There has been greater focus on addressing absence in terms of completed Individual Stress Risk Assessment (ISRA) to address issues quickly.

The College will also benefit from the following project which is being funded by Glasgow Clyde Foundation. SAMH are working in partnership with Glasgow Clyde College to create a Mentally Healthy College Community. The Project Co-ordinator will lead, co-ordinate and directly contribute to the development of a high quality programme aimed at assisting Glasgow Clyde College students and staff to tackle the stigma and discrimination around mental health.

Mental Health Champions will also be identified throughout the College to ensure staff have access to good mental health support. Promoting greater use of counselling, improved teaching about mental health, and supporting joint working between mental health services and colleges is vital.

In addition to this training for managers to more effectively manage and support staff with mental health problems is a priority for Glasgow Clyde College. Efforts to support employees with mental health problems need to be developed along with methods that focus on reviewing, monitoring and deterring absence.

Training for managers will focus on ensuring they are confident and competent to spot the early warning signs of poor mental health as well as supporting them to have the confidence to have sensitive discussions with staff and signpost to expert mental health sources of help if required.

5. RISK ANALYSIS

There are risks if absence is not managed effectively in the organisation and although the college has different attendance management procedures in place absence is managed efficiently, sensitively and timely.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific legal implications associated with this paper.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

As identified above there are high costs associated with covering absence and therefore managing attendance is a priority for the organisation.

8. REGIONAL OUTCOME AGREEMENT IMPLICATIONS

N/A

9. HAS AN EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT BEEN CARRIED OUT

N/A