EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY

EMPLOYEE SUPPORT PROCEDURE

1. **Introduction**

   1.1 This procedure explains what to do when a member of staff's attendance first falls below an acceptable standard. As a result of the changes in Disciplinary and Grievance Legislation in April 2009, ACAS has provided a revised code of practice, upon which this policy is designed, in order to provide a framework for managers to better manage matters of attendance.

   1.2 It is called Employee Support because it is separate from the Disciplinary Procedure and if used quickly and appropriately it can help resolve any problems before they need to be addressed in a more formal way. The purpose of this procedure is to help staff improve their own attendance to a satisfactory level. The basic principle underlying this procedure is that staff should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own lives and actions – in short, it is about helping people to help themselves.

2. **When to Use this Procedure**

   2.1 This procedure would normally be used in situations where an individual's attendance record is less than satisfactory (if this relates to sickness absence, this procedure would be used in conjunction with the triggers contained within the Managing Sickness Absence Policy)

   2.2 Any meetings conducted within this procedure would normally involve just the immediate line manager and member of staff themselves. There is no requirement to be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague and ideally the meeting should be between the individual and their line manager. However, if both parties believe that the involvement of a trade union representative might help, the manager has the discretion to agree to this.

   2.3 When considering a member of staff's need for support in an area outlined above, the line manager should ensure that they have the details and evidence in the form of dates, times, frequency and any other relevant records. A note outlining a record of date/times when issues have been raised verbally with the employee will be provided, if these occurred outside the 1-to-1 process.

   2.4 The line manager should arrange a time and date for the meeting and give the member of staff at least two (2) days notice of the purpose and format. The line manager will provide the member of staff a copy of the papers as detailed in 2.3 in advance of the meeting. The manager should also allow

sufficient time and a calm and private environment for the meeting to take place without interruption.

2.5   The manager should inform their Human Resources Client Partner (HRCP) that they are initiating Employee Support, and liaise with the HRCP after the meeting to ensure that the time frames they apply are appropriate and consistent. Human Resources will retain a record that Employee Support has been initiated and the review time frames for management information, but will not include any record on the Employee's file at this informal stage.

3.   At the Meeting

3.1   At the beginning of the meeting the line manager should clarify the purpose and what he/she expects to talk about, and be clear about how the meeting will be recorded. As a minimum it is recommended that the manager makes a brief note of the meeting which sets out the main points of discussion and agreement together with any review dates. The use of the Employee Support Action Plan is recommended as a framework for the meeting. (Appendix A)

3.2   The problem should be discussed with the member of staff and everything should be done to encourage the individual to participate fully in the discussion. A more positive outcome is likely if both parties understand the issues and can agree a way of resolving them.

3.3   The manager should always listen to what the member of staff is saying and try to gauge their level of understanding and recognition of the perceived problem. It is also important to remain calm and reasoned, and if necessary repeat the issues if the manager feels there is little or no recognition from the member of staff.

3.4   Issues affecting work may be a result of factors outside work so managers should be sensitive and sympathetic, encouraging the member of staff to disclose any relevant information if they want to, in confidence. In this case the manager should recommend support services such as those outlined in the Employee Assistance Policy and as detailed on the Health and Wellbeing page on the intranet.

3.4   Finally, the meeting should be concluded by:

- summarising what has been agreed, the individual's proposed solution and the timescale in which you meet again to review it

- explaining again what the problem is and suggesting what the member of staff can do to achieve a satisfactory level of attendance if they have not acknowledged that a problem exists and explain that you will be available for support or advice at any time

- advising the member of staff what will happen if there is no satisfactory improvement within the agreed timescale.

4. After the Meeting

4.1 The line manager should make a brief note of the meeting including any agreements reached and the review period, and as detailed in the Action Plan. The manager should also keep examples of improvements in attendance - or indeed any failures to improve. Ongoing feedback is a very important part of helping a member of staff to improve. If the review period is more than a month it is helpful to have interim meetings, at least once a month, to give feedback and support.

5. At the End of the Review Period

5.1 At the end of the review period the line manager should meet with the individual again to discuss the current levels of attendance. If the level of improvement is such that the attendance is now fully satisfactory the individual should be told of this and advised that no further action will be taken unless there is a further decline.

5.2 If the attendance remains below a satisfactory standard further action may need to be considered in line with the University's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure and at this stage the line manager should contact an HR Client Partner.

6. Further Advice

6.1 Points to remember about this procedure:

- Positive feedback to staff following discussion of a problem is very important

- Improvements must be acknowledged

- The purpose of the Employee Support Procedure is to assist a member of staff improve their attendance

- The procedure must therefore be used in a supportive and non – threatening manner.

6.2 Any questions or advice about this procedure can be answered by your HR Client Partner.

Human Resources   **March 2018**

Appendix A

EMPLOYEE SUPPORT ACTION PLAN

NAME _____   TIMESCALE: From :_____   To _____

OBJECTIVE	SUCCESS CRITERIA	ASSISTANCE TO BE PROVIDED	REVIEW DATE

LINE MANAGER SIGNATURE _____   DATE_____