Staff absence and changed delivery of a session Policy

1.0 Introduction and background

1.1 The University takes seriously the needs of students and is fully aware that they should be kept informed of any alterations of class times, or if a session has unavoidably to be changed from its advertised mode.

2.0 Purpose and scope

2.1 This Policy details the protocol at times of staff absence when sessions are scheduled.

2.2 This Policy will normally be used to cover exceptional absences rather than longer term absence, which would be dealt with in accordance with section 5.3 below.

3.0 Definitions

3.1 n/a

4.0 Key principles

4.1 A planned tutor-led session may sometimes need to be amended or changed but the learning should not be cancelled or postponed. Possible remedies to cope with absence include:
- providing substitute tutor (contingent on staff expertise in subject area absent colleague would be expected to teach);
- providing self-study equivalent (either in groups, class or individually);
- other similar alternatives.

4.2 If a tutor is unavailable to deliver a planned session due to sickness or exceptional personal circumstances that cannot be reasonably dealt with at any other time, alternative arrangements will be applied.

4.3 Every effort should be made to notify all students involved about the change as soon as possible.

4.4 Students must be made aware of this Policy and it should be referred to in every programme handbook.

4.5 If a session cannot be delivered as planned, students should be notified by:

- an announcement, *using the specified proforma[1]* (see appendix A), posted on the door where the session is to be held *and*
- a message posted using the module's entry on NILE *or* by using email/text notification to the whole module cohort

4.6   Where appropriate, staff should make available work in lieu via NILE. This should, as a minimum, be a generic activity that could be undertaken at any point throughout the module and should be designed to take up time equivalent to that of the cancelled session. Activities chosen should be pedagogically appropriate and align with the nature of the missed session.

4.7   At the start of the module, students should be made aware of what action will be taken should a session need to be re-arranged and specific details, as appropriate, should be written into module handbooks.

5.0   Key responsibilities

5.1   Students should be informed that it is their responsibility to check their email and the information on NILE regularly.

5.2   Staff teams (eg at Subject or Programme level as appropriate) should agree on a procedure on staff absence to ensure that:
- a member of staff knows who to contact in the event of their being absent from teaching
- the contact is aware of their responsibilities with regard to staff absence
- a notification form is posted for students
- students are notified via NILE/email
- students are provided with work in lieu.

5.3   Staff Teams should ensure that appropriate provision is made to deliver a module if a member of staff is to be absent for longer than two weeks during term time and should liaise with the HR department, as appropriate, to ensure that the University fulfils its duty of care.

6.0   Links to related UN Policies/Guidance/Regulations

6.1   HR policies around staff absence

7.0   Links to related external documents (e.g. QAA)

7.1   n/a

8.0   Appendices

8.1   Summary Sheet

Summary Sheet:

Policy Title:	
Staff Absence and the Changed Delivery of a session	

Purpose of Policy and to whom it applies (please specify cohorts):	
To explain protocols in the instance of academic staff absence for a scheduled learning opportunity. This applies to all taught programmes held at the University of Northampton campuses	

Owner and Department:	
Academic Registrar	

Principal contact:	
Academic Registrar	

Dissemination and implementation plan:	
Via SEC and SSECs Via the website	

Date of initial committee approval (state committee name):	SEC – June 2014
Date of Senate approval:	2 July 2014
Date for implementation and cohorts to which it applies:	September 2014 for all cohorts
Proposed date of annual update:	June 2024
Date of last annual update:	June 2023
Proposed date of full review:	June 2024
Date of last full review:	June 2018
Version number and date:	2.0