

SICK PAY - STATUTORY SICK PAY (SSP)

Employers are responsible for paying Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) to employees who are certified as absent due to sickness for up to 28 weeks in any one continuous period or linked periods of sickness.

For the purposes of calculating SSP, sickness absence includes working days and non-working days (when the employee is not normally scheduled to work, such as weekends or public holidays). It is important that a complete record of periods of sickness is maintained. **A Personal Sickness Certificate must be completed by employees upon their return from sick leave and sent by managers immediately upon receipt directly to Payroll.** This form distinguishes the first day of sickness and first day of absence from work due to sickness, if such distinction is appropriate.

SSP is paid at a flat rate, determined by Government and reviewed annually. Where Occupational Sick Pay (OSP) and SSP are due for the same day, then one payment can be offset against the other. Where entitlement to OSP results in a payment which would be lower than SSP, the employee will receive a weekly payment equal to SSP at the prevailing rate. Entitlement to SSP will be in accordance with the statutory provision of 28 weeks, irrespective of contractual period for OSP. It has been agreed that there are seven qualifying days for all employees: for the purposes of calculating sick pay, all 7 days of the week count.

An employee who has received the maximum entitlement to SSP and who is still incapacitated may be able to claim a Social Security benefit. To ensure that the transition from SSP to a state benefit is uncomplicated, the employer is required to complete an SSP 1 Changeover form, which is sent directly to the employee by the University for him or her to complete and forward to the Benefits Agency. The same form is used if an employee is excluded from SSP. Any member of staff who is approaching 28 weeks sickness absence will automatically be contacted by Payroll to initiate this process.

OSP is dependent on qualifying service and previous sick pay received. Information about qualification and length of OSP can be obtained from the relevant Terms and Conditions of Appointment. Periods of sick leave are aggregated within any span of twelve months. Further advice on sick pay calculation or entitlement can be obtained from the Human Resources Division.

During periods of SSP or nil pay, members of the pension schemes will have the option of either maintaining their pension contributions themselves or electing for Suspended Membership. A letter explaining the options available will be sent at the appropriate time to any pension scheme member to further explain these options.