
Report To:	Policy and Resources Committee	Date:	25 March 2014
Report By:	Acting Head of Organisational Development, Human Resources and Communications	Report No:	HR/10/14/PR
Contact Officer:	Pauline Ramsay Health and Safety Team Leader	Contact No:	01475 714723
Subject:	Sickness Absence Reporting		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to propose to the Committee a change in the Council approach to Sickness Absence Reporting.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Attendance figures for the Council are collated on a quarterly basis and overall Council attendance statistics are presented to the Policy and Resources Committee. These figures are presented as a percentage absence rate, and include details of whether absence is Self Certified or Medically Certified (Appendix 1). This is an internal KPI.
- 2.2 The Council is also required on an annual basis to present absence figures to Audit Scotland and Solace. These figures are calculated on the basis of the number of workdays lost per full time equivalent employee. This is an external SPI.
- 2.3 Since April 2010 all employee sickness absence has been recorded on the HR/Payroll system together with reasons for absence. However, absence recording for reporting purposes still lies within the Services, with each Service manually collating absence data for submission to OD, HR and Communications for incorporation into the quarterly absence report.
- 2.4 Consistency, accuracy and efficiency in production of absence figures would be improved by utilising the HR/Payroll system to produce all absence data, in addition Services will be provided with a toolkit to allow them to examine the overall absence picture for their relevant Service or Section ensuring responsibility for absence can be taken by Managers.
- 2.5 The Solace Absence Benchmarking indicator is the standard by which absence is benchmarked across the Public Sector in Scotland, by bringing the Council's quarterly absence returns into line with this the Council can continuously monitor our performance against this standard.
- 2.6 The current absence target rate is 4.75% which equates to 10.5 days per employee.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That quarterly absence statistics are drawn directly from the HR Payroll system.
- 3.2 That the statistical analysis format is changed to reflect the annual Solace SPI of number of days absence per full time equivalent employee as per the proposals.
- 3.3 That annual absence reporting figures run from April to April in line with the Solace benchmarking indicators.

- 3.4 That Services utilise the reporting functions of the HR Payroll system to monitor and manage absence.
- 3.5 That the change over to drawing absence data from the HR Payroll system commences on the 1st of April 2014.
- 3.6 That the Council sets an amended absence target of 9 days absence per full time equivalent employee.
- 3.7 That Senior Management to continue to develop strategies and proposals to further improve absence rates within the Council.

**Head of Organisational Development,
Human Resources and Communications**

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Managing Attendance is a high priority for all Services and currently absence figures are collated quarterly by Services and reported directly to OD, Human Resources and Corporate Communications for compilation into the Corporate Statistics. The current method used for calculation of the statistics is based on a previous methodology used for reporting absence to COSLA. This method of calculation, providing a percentage return for absence, is no longer used for the SPI return, it is now purely an internal Key Performance Indicator (Appendix 1 shows the current report format).
- 4.2 Services are currently responsible for collating their own absence data, this is generally a manual process with information recorded onto attendance cards and then collated for the quarterly return. While the use of spreadsheets has streamlined this there is still a significant manual effort and room for inconsistencies across the various services. The information regarding sickness is also recorded onto the HR Payroll system and as such there is duplication of effort across the Council.
- 4.3 There are a number of benefits if absence data is drawn directly from the HR Payroll system:
- There is a consistency of approach, with all Service information analysed and calculated in the same way.
 - Release of staff resources currently involved in compiling these statistics within the Services.
 - It is possible to carry out a more in-depth analysis of the statistics by team, type of illness, age profile etc.
 - A documented methodology will be produced which will ensure that like can be compared with like.
- 4.4 Based on the Solace figures for 2012/13 the Council are sitting at 21st position in relation to other Councils and while this position is an improvement from the 2011/12 Solace figures where we were 27th, the number of work days lost per FTE employees, of 10.2, is still higher than we would accept.
- 4.5 Absence rates will only improve through good management of absence by managers, team leaders and supervisors at Service level; statistical analysis of absence figures will not on its own improve absence rates however the information can be utilised by managers to identify hotspots where there may be an underlying cause for higher absence and to ensure that resources are targeted appropriately. Services can draw reports directly from the HR/Payroll system giving them a toolkit by which responsibility for managing absence can be transferred back to individual managers.
- 4.6 Analysis of the information contained within the HR Payroll system has identified that the Council have an aging workforce and this can have a significant effect on the Council's absence rate. In 2012/13, 45% of the Council's work force was aged over 50 and this age group accounted for 57% of the absence for the Council. In 2010/11, 43% of the workforce was over 50 and in 2011/12, 44% of the workforce was over 50. Appendix 2.
- 4.7 Statistical information can be extracted from the HR Payroll system which can assist with identification of trends and areas for targeted assistance. Appendix 3.
- 4.8 The Council annually submits an absence return as part of the SOLACE benchmarking project. This annual return is calculated as per the Audit Scotland guidance on Statutory Performance Indicators. Absence information is provided for:

The average number of working days per FTE employee lost through sickness absence for:

- a) Teachers*
- b) All other local government employees*

A detailed guide on how this information is to be calculated is provided by Audit Scotland.

Currently the Council uses the quarterly absence returns from the Services to calculate this however, there is concern that the returns may not consistently comply with the requirements in that they are based on headcount rather than the FTE number of employees and the non inclusion of temporary employees where required.

- 4.9 Changing the quarterly absence figures to reflect the SPI requirements for reporting would enable the Council to monitor how well the Council are on track to meet with or better the previous year's SPI return and SOLACE benchmarking indicators so that action can be taken quickly where absence levels are rising and targets may be exceeded.
- 4.10 The Council's current target for absence is 4.75%, this equates to approximately 10.5 workdays lost per employee, or 12.3 days per FTE Employee.
- 4.11 The Local Government Benchmarking Framework indicators used by Solace are being extensively reviewed for 2013/14; absence is one of the indicators which is to be reviewed. However, it is not yet known what changes will be made. By using the HR/Payroll system for the production of absence statistics any changes can be implemented more efficiently.

5.0 PROPOSALS

- 5.1 It is proposed that absence data for the reporting of corporate absence rates be drawn directly from the HR Payroll system.
- 5.2 It is proposed that two corporate figures are produced, the first being a quarterly return for the average number of working days lost per employee through sickness absence and the second being the running total for the year of number of working days lost per employee. The proposed format for the quarterly report to Committee has been included as Appendix 4.
- 5.3 To ensure that Services have access to absence data and can monitor their own absence rates a standard report is available on Chris 21. This provides real time information on absences and can be run at any suitable intervals as required by the Service; i.e. weekly, monthly etc. Training in how to draw these absence reports off the system is being carried out. This will ensure that Services have access to absence data without having to go through HR thereby increasing efficiency and access to detailed absence information. Appendix 5.
- 5.4 That the quarterly absence reports reflect the reporting requirements for the Solace Benchmarking indicators. These indicators are measured from 1st of April to 31st of March and the Council system will be implemented to reflect these timescales.
- 5.5 Services utilise the reporting functionality within the HR/Payroll system to monitor absence information on an ongoing basis and take action to manage absence appropriately and promptly.
- 5.6 It is proposed that a new absence target based on the number of workdays lost per full time equivalent employee is set. The target proposed is 9 workdays lost per FTE. If achieved this would place the Council in the 1st Quartile, at 7th place, in the Solace benchmarking league table based on the 2012/13 results. This would be equivalent to an absence rate of 3.5%.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

Finance

- 6.1 There are no financial implications for this report.

Financial Implications:

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report £000	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact £000	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

Legal

6.2 There are no Legal implications.

Human Resources

6.3 There are no Human Resources implications.

Equalities

6.4 There are no Equalities issues within this report.

Repopulation

6.5 There are no repopulation issues within this report

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

7.1 This report was previously submitted to the CMT for consultation and information was sought from those responsible for collating absence data at a Service level.

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 No background papers.

CURRENT QUARTERLY REPORT

Inverclyde Council - Absence Management

Period 3 - 1 July 2013 - 29 September 2013

Chief Executive

Service	Number of Staff			Work Days Available	Number of Days Absence and %								TOTALS	
	LGE	Craft	Teachers		Self Cert	%	Med Cert	%	Ind Inj	%	Unauth Abs	%	Total	%
Chief Executive	12	0	0	649	2	0.31%	35	5.39%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	37.00	5.70%
	12	0	0	649	2	0.31%	35	5.39%	0	0	0	0	37	5.70%

Environment, Regeneration & Resources

Service	Number of Staff			Work Days Available	Number of Days Absence and %								TOTALS	
	LGE	Craft	Teachers		Self Cert	%	Med Cert	%	Ind Inj	%	Unauth Abs	%	Total	%
Finance	160	0	0	7821	73.5	0.94%	360	4.60%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	433.50	5.54%
Customer Service Centre	37	0	0	1454.5	26	1.79%	206	14.16%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	232.00	15.95%
ICT	39	0	0	1663	17	1.02%	85	5.11%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	102.00	6.13%
Regeneration	16	0	0	864.5	4	0.46%	4	0.46%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	8.00	0.93%
Planning	25	0	0	1331	8	0.60%	38	2.85%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	46.00	3.46%
Environment & Commercial	327	0	0	17326.5	153	0.88%	643	3.71%	43	0.25%	0	0.00%	839.00	4.84%
Catering	178	0	0	6699.5	34.64	0.52%	99.88	1.49%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	134.52	2.01%
Cleaning	241	0	0	10888.5	40.98	0.38%	134.68	1.24%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	175.66	1.61%
Janitorial	66	0	0	2850	11	0.39%	152	5.33%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	163.00	5.72%
Property Assets & Facilities Mgt	60	20	0	4156	33	0.79%	138	3.32%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	171.00	4.11%
Legal & Democratic	36	0	0	1791.9	4.7	0.26%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	4.70	0.26%
	1185	20	0	56846.4	405.82	0.71%	1860.56	3.27%	43.00	0.08%	0.00	0.00%	2309.38	4.06%

Education, Communities & Organisational Development

Service	Number of Staff			Work Days	Number of Days Absence and %								TOTALS	
	LGE	Craft	Teachers		Available	Self Cert	%	Med Cert	%	Ind Inj	%	Unauth Abs	%	Total
CLD	71	0	0	2349.5	20.8	0.89%	200.4	8.53%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	221.20	9.41%
Education	730	0	773	72298	534	0.74%	1629	2.25%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2163.00	2.99%
Libraries & Museums	50	0	0	2467.5	14.5	0.59%	84	3.40%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	98.50	3.99%
Safer & Inclusive Communities	143	0	0	5950.5	63	1.06%	319	5.36%	0	0.00%	71	1.19%	453.00	7.61%
OD, HR & Communications	54	0	0	2613.3	31	1.19%	14.3	0.55%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	45.30	1.73%
	1048	0	773	85678.8	663.3	0.77%	2246.7	2.62%	0	0.00%	71	0.08%	2981	3.48%

Community Health & Care Partnership

Service	Number of Staff			Work Days	Number of Days Absence and %								TOTALS	
	LGE	Craft	Teachers		Available	Self Cert	%	Med Cert	%	Ind Inj	%	Unauth Abs	%	Total
CHCP	1082	0	0	51814.5	575.92	1.11%	2437.97	4.71%	65	0.13%	65	0.13%	3143.89	6.07%
	1082	0	0	51814.50	575.92	1.11%	2437.97	4.71%	65	0.13%	65	0.13%	3143.89	6.07%

All Council Services

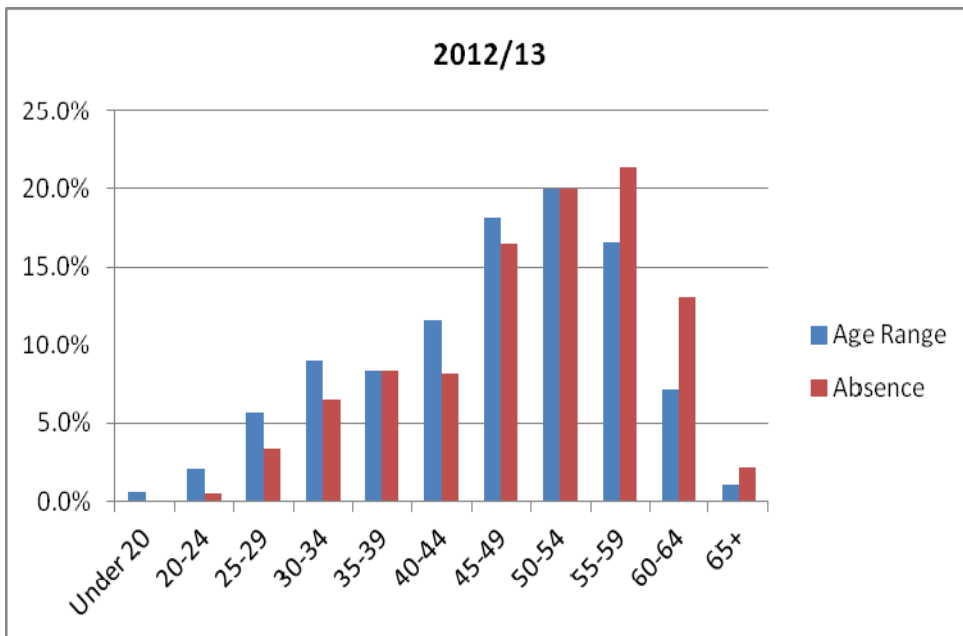
Service	Number of Staff			Work Days	Number of Days Absence and %								TOTALS	
	LGE	Craft	Teachers		Available	Self Cert	%	Med Cert	%	Ind Inj	%	Unauth Abs	%	Total
Overall Council	3327	20	773	194988.7	1647.04	0.84%	6580.23	3.37%	108	0.06%	136	0.07%	8471.27	4.34%

HR/Payroll System Statistical Analysis Benefits

Demographic data drawn from the HR/Payroll system identifies that the Council has an aging workforce, the table below shows the age demographic for the Council and how it compares to the Scottish Public Sector Average.

	Inverclyde Council	Scottish Public Sector Average
Under 20	0.6%	0.5%
20-29	7.6%	11.7%
30-39	17.3%	20.0%
40-49	29.7%	30.7%
50-59	36.5%	30.3%
60+	8.1%	6.8%

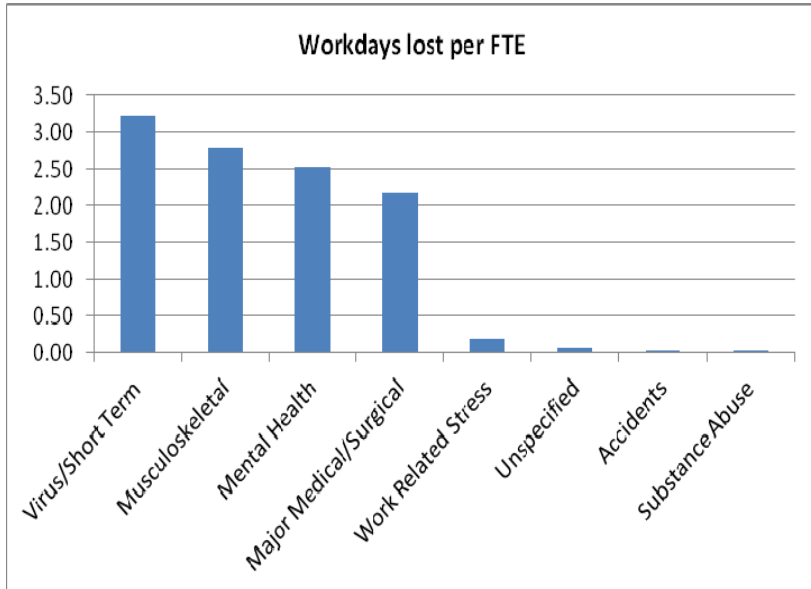
The graph below shows the demographic data for the Council in terms of age range and absence for 2012/13. This demonstrates that the older the employee, the higher the percentage of absence attributable to that age group.



HR/Payroll System Statistical Analysis Benefits

The reason for absence is recorded against 8 criteria; virus/short term, musculoskeletal, mental health, major medical/surgical, accidents (including non work related) substance abuse and maternity related illness. When Payroll receive notification of an absence this is recorded against the most appropriate criteria. This allows for analysis of the main causes of absence.

The graph below shows the number of workdays lost per FTE Employee for 2012/13



PROPOSED QUARTERLY REPORT FORMAT

Quarter 3 - July - September 2013

Directorate	Service	Number of Employees		FTE work days lost - Reason for absence									Workdays Lost	
		FTE Employees	Head count	Accidents	Major Medical/Surgical	Maternity Related Illness	Mental Health	Musculo skeletal	Virus/ Short Term	Work Related Stress	Not known	Total	Workdays lost per FTE Employee	Workdays lost per employee
Chief Executive		12.0	12					35.0	2.0			37.0	3.1	3.1
	Chief Executive	12.0	12					35.0	2.0			37.0	3.1	3.1
Comm Health & Care Partn		902.9	1135		683.4	8.8	524.5	894.0	698.4	55.9	26.0	2890.9	3.2	2.5
	CHCP Business Support	98.5	127		107.0		167.5	49.9	136.0		20.0	480.4	4.9	3.8
	Child/Fam & Criminal Jus	168.6	182		65.0		54.0	63.0	108.6	4.9		295.5	1.8	1.6
	Health & Community Care	503.0	686		355.4	8.8	277.6	678.1	404.5	51.0	6.0	1781.5	3.5	2.6
	Mental Health &Addiction	87.2	91		156.0		19.3	93.0	25.2			293.5	3.4	3.2
	Plan Health Imp & Commis	45.6	49				6.0	10.0	24.0			40.0	0.9	0.8
Education Communities OD		1633.9	2045		493.7	52.1	751.2	416.4	431.0	112.5	10.5	2267.4	1.4	1.1
	Education Non Teaching	443.0	627		122.4	5.0	310.7	178.3	78.7	41.9		737.0	1.7	1.2
	Education Teachers	790.4	868		70.4	35.5	56.8	109.6	140.7	70.6	0.0	483.6	0.6	0.6
	OD HR & Comms	46.5	57				4.7	5.0	35.6			45.4	1.0	0.8
	Planning & Culture	188.3	264		148.9	11.6	132.5	35.9	61.3			390.2	2.1	1.5
	Safer & Inc Communities	165.7	229		152.0		246.5	87.6	114.7		10.5	611.2	3.7	2.7

Quarter 3 - July - September 2013

Directorate	Service	Number of Employees		FTE work days lost - Reason for absence									Workdays Lost	
		FTE Employees	Head count	Accidents	Major Medical/Surgical	Maternity Related Illness	Mental Health	Musculo skeletal	Virus/ Short Term	Work Related Stress	Not known	Total	Workdays lost per FTE Employee	Workdays lost per employee
Env Regen & Resources		923.5	1180	11.0	370.0	28.0	382.9	571.1	444.1	55.0	16.5	1878.7	2.0	1.6
	Environ & Comm Services	317.3	330	11.0	124.6		114.0	262.5	218.6	55.0		785.7	2.5	2.4
	Finance	139.8	158		26.0	25.0	153.7	46.0	100.2		15.6	366.6	2.6	2.3
	ICT Services	40.0	40		39.0		54.0		7.0			100.0	2.5	2.5
	Legal & Democratic Servs	32.9	36			3.0			1.7			4.7	0.1	0.1
	Prop Assets & FM	351.7	573		156.4		61.2	262.6	109.6		0.9	590.7	1.7	1.0
	Regeneration & Planning	41.8	43		24.0				7.0			31.0	0.7	0.7
Overall Council		3472.3	4372	11.0	1547.1	88.9	1658.5	1916.6	1575.5	223.3	53.0	7074.0	2.0	1.6
Financial Year running total per FTE employee		April - June	2.6	July - Sept	2.0	Oct - Dec		Jan - Mar					4.6	

As per Audit Scotland requirements certain categories of employees are not included, these are casual/sessional employees and temporary employees who were employed for less than one year. This accounts for variations between the headcount in the table in Appendix 1 and the table in Appendix 4.

Examples of reports which are available to Services via the HR/Payroll system

Detailed Report for Sample Service between 01/07/13 and 30/09/13

Absence Rates											
Absence Details											
REPORT 2 - Sick Leave Employee Totals taken between 1- 7-13 to 30- 9-13 - (Sorted on Employee within Org Levels)											
Employee Number	Employee Name	Position	Leave Start Date	Leave End Date	Reason Sick	Leave Days	Leave Hours	Company	Company Name	Service	Service Name
1	Employee 1	Position 1	09/09/2013	10/09/2013	Code 4	1.00	7.40	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
2	Employee 2	Position 1	25/09/2013	30/09/2013	Code 2	2.00	14.25	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
3	Employee 3	Position 3	12/07/2013	12/07/2013	Code 4	1.00	6.66	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
3	Employee 3	Position 3	11/09/2013	13/09/2013	Code 4	3.00	21.83	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
4	Employee 4	Position 4	05/08/2013	06/08/2013	Code 4	2.00	14.80	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
5	Employee 5	Position 5	01/07/2013	14/07/2013	Code 1	6.00	35.00	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
6	Employee 6	Position 6	17/09/2013	18/09/2013	Code 4	2.00	14.80	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
7	Employee 7	Position 7	29/07/2013	07/08/2013	Code 4	5.00	37.00	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
7	Employee 7	Position 7	30/09/2013	30/09/2013	Code 4	1.00	7.40	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
8	Employee 8	Position 8	29/08/2013	29/08/2013	Code 4	1.00	7.40	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
9	Employee 9	Position 9	23/07/2013	02/08/2013	Code 4	9.00	66.60	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
10	Employee 10	Position 10	08/07/2013	08/07/2013	Code 4	1.00	7.57	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
11	Employee 11	Position 11	09/09/2013	10/09/2013	Code 4	2.00	14.80	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
12	Employee 12	Position 12	22/08/2013	23/08/2013	Code 4	2.00	14.80	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
13	Employee 13	Position 13	19/08/2013	21/08/2013	Code 4	3.00	22.20	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
14	Employee 14	Position 14	15/07/2013	15/07/2013	Code 4	1.00	7.40	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
15	Employee 15	Position 15	29/07/2013	02/08/2013	Code 2	5.00	37.00	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
16	Employee 16	Position 16	20/08/2013	21/08/2013	Code 4	2.00	14.80	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
17	Employee 17	Position 17	22/07/2013	22/07/2013	Code 4	1.00	7.40	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
17	Employee 17	Position 17	19/09/2013	20/09/2013	Code 4	1.35	9.99	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
18	Employee 18	Position 18	11/09/2013	12/09/2013	Code 4	2.00	15.16	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
Totals						53.35	384.26				

Summary Report for Sample Service between 01/07/13 and 30/09/13

Absence Rates

Absence Summary

REPORT 2 - Sick Leave Employee Totals taken between 1- 7-13 to 30- 9-13 - (Sorted on Employee within Org Levels)

Employee Number	Employee Name	No of Absences	Period Days	Leave Days	Period Hours	Leave Hours	Absence Rate	Company	Company Name	Service	Service Name
1	Employee 1	1	66.00	1.00	488.40	7.40	1.52	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
2	Employee 2	1	27.00	2.00	192.83	14.25	7.38	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
3	Employee 3	2	42.00	4.00	236.79	28.49	12.03	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
4	Employee 4	1	66.00	2.00	488.40	14.80	3.03	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
5	Employee 5	1	40.00	6.00	234.50	35.00	14.92	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
6	Employee 6	1	66.00	2.00	488.40	14.80	3.03	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
7	Employee 7	2	33.00	6.00	244.20	44.40	18.18	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
8	Employee 8	1	39.00	1.00	288.60	7.40	2.56	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
9	Employee 9	1	66.00	9.00	488.40	66.60	13.63	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
10	Employee 10	1	66.00	1.00	488.40	7.57	1.55	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
11	Employee 11	1	66.00	2.00	488.40	14.80	3.03	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
12	Employee 12	1	66.00	2.00	488.40	14.80	3.03	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
13	Employee 13	1	33.00	3.00	244.20	22.20	9.09	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
14	Employee 14	1	66.00	1.00	488.40	7.40	1.52	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
15	Employee 15	1	66.00	5.00	488.40	37.00	7.57	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
16	Employee 16	1	66.00	2.00	488.40	14.80	3.03	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
17	Employee 17	2	66.00	2.35	488.40	17.39	3.56	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
18	Employee 18	1	66.00	2.00	488.40	15.16	3.10	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
Totals		18		53.35		384.26					

Absence rate for Sample Service between 01/07/13 and 30/09/13

Absence Rates

Absence Summary

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REPORT 2 - Sick Leave Employee Totals taken between 1- 7-13 to 30- 9-13 - (Sorted on Employee within Org Levels)

Totals for Org Level	Org Level Name	Total Employees	Total Absences	Number of Days	Leave Days	Number of Hours	Leave Hours	Total Absence Rate (%)	Company	Company Name	Service	Service Name
Service	Sample	54	21	2,921.00	53.35	21,216.04	376.87	1.78	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample
Company	Inverclyde Council (EES)	54	21	2,921.00	53.35	21,216.04	376.87	1.78	ICE	Inverclyde Council (EES)	X	Sample