Medical Certificates for Students

The role of healthcare professionals at the ByWard Family Health (BWFHT) and the Campus Same Day Clinic is to assess and document a patient’s fitness to perform their primary occupation, i.e. attend work or school.

These guidelines comply with the University of Ottawa’s Revised Academic Regulation 9.5: Justification of absence from an examination or of late submission of assignments (January 10, 2011) available at http://www.uottawa.ca/about/academic-regulation-9-evaluation-of-student-learning

Important information regarding medical certificates:

1. Talk to your professor or your Faculty’s academic secretariat first (and before the exam/deadline) if you are unable to attend an exam or turn in an assignment. There may be solutions available to you that are more appropriate than a medical certificate.

2. See a doctor before the exam. If you feel unwell on the day of your exam and require healthcare or medical advice, go see the doctor or nurse practitioner before the exam. You can see your family doctor or go to the campus clinic, but you must allow enough time for this. Please advise the receptionist on arrival if you have an exam on the day of your visit.

3. See a doctor or nurse practitioner when you are sick. You must see a provider when you are unwell and experiencing symptoms. A physician or nurse practitioner cannot document an illness that they didn’t treat, and they will not document that someone has an illness when they do not.

4. Late for an exam or class? A medical certificate will not be provided for a student who arrives late for an exam or class unless the late arrival is specifically due to illness. Professors should not send students to BWFHT for a certificate in these situations. The professor must work out a solution directly with the student or refer the student to the Faculty Office.

5. Minor illness? A medical certificate might not be issued for minor illnesses or past illnesses that are resolved or for which there is no documentation or evidence.

6. Medical certificates issued by BWFHT are given directly to the patient. If a student is issued a medical certificate to justify an absence from an examination or a late submission of an
assignment, it is the student’s responsibility to provide the medical certificate to the Faculty’s academic secretariat or professor.

7. There is a fee for the provision of a medical certificate as this is an uninsured service, i.e. it is not covered by provincial health plans. Please refer to the list of Fees for Uninsured Medical Services available at https://bywardfht.ca/our-clinic/fees/

8. If your request for a medical certificate is denied, there may be other options available to help you. Please contact the Academic Accommodations Service or the academic secretariat of your Faculty.

9. If the authenticity of your medical certificate is questioned, the Vice-Dean of your Faculty should contact the office of the Clinical Director at the ByWard Family Health Team at UOHSAdmin@uohs.uottawa.ca. BWFHT will only confirm the authenticity of the medical certificate. No personal health information will be revealed without the patient’s consent.

Other services available if you are feeling stressed but not be medically unwell:

✓ Academic - If you are struggling with the academic requirements of a course or program, your Faculty offers academic advisors to help you work out the option to best meet your needs. A physician or nurse practitioner will not give you a medical certificate to drop a specific course as this may result in unexpected complications for you.

✓ Disability or non-medical condition: If you have a non-medical condition or disability that make exam writing or academic work difficult, the Academic Accommodations Service offers the following services/assistance:
  * Temporary accommodation for study issues. Examples include a broken limb, carpal tunnel, etc. The Service will assess your needs and will provide assistance or support as required.
  * Accommodation for a disability
  * Situational/temporary counselling

✓ Temporary exemption for psychological reasons: If you are experiencing a significant disruption in your personal life and, as a result, feel temporarily unable to meet your academic obligations, contact Counselling and Therapy Service to request an assessment with one of their counsellors. They may be able to assist you with a supporting letter from the Counselling and Therapy service. For more information, consult the uOttawa website: https://www2.uottawa.ca/campus-life/health-wellness/counselling-therapy

Other resources: Good2Talk/AlloJ’Écoute 1-866-925-5454 (available 24/7/365); SFUO/FÉUO Peer Support/Ligne téléphonique d’entraide 613-562-5604.