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BECKETT
UNIVERSITY

Stress Management Policy and Procedure

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Policy Statement

Purpose and Core Principles

This Policy sits within the University's overall Safety, Health and Wellbeing Policy that aims to provide a safe and healthy environment for work and study. Its purpose is to set out the core principles for managing work-related stress and to provide information and procedures for identifying, evaluating and managing exposure to workplace stressors.

The University has a duty to provide a healthy and safe place of work and in doing so acknowledges the importance of identifying and reducing risk through work-related stress. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines work-related stress as 'the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them'.

Scope

This policy and procedure covers all aspects of work that have the potential to cause stress and has been written to support managers to identify and manage work related stressors their employees may be exposed to.

Responsibility

Every member of the University has a responsibility for health and safety; these duties as they apply to work-related stress are outlined in this Policy. Human Resources has responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this Policy and its supporting procedures and will provide advice and guidance to managers and employees.

Review

This policy and procedure will be monitored and reviewed every three years and/or amended in light of legislative changes and organisational requirements as appropriate.

Procedure

1. School/Service Stress Risk Assessment

- 1.1 The School/Service Stress Risk Assessment allows work place stressors to be identified and controlled. Leadership teams should complete the stress risk assessment for their school or professional service. The risk assessment should consider issues across the school or professional service. On occasions where roles within a school or professional service differ greatly, separate risk assessments may need to be completed.
- 1.2 Risk assessments should be reviewed every six months and when there is a significant change in circumstances (such as changes to the team structure, introduction of a new system, increase in team workload or long term absence).
- 1.3 Where areas of concern are identified, a stress risk assessment should be completed by the manager and the team to identify preventative measures. Concerns may be identified through absence reports, complaints, grievances, concerns raised by trade unions and other relevant measures.
- 1.4 In addition, on occasions where it is found to be valuable or where the team requests one, managers may complete a team risk assessment or identify any potential stressors through discussions, briefings or one-to-one conversations with team members.
- 1.5 The guidance accompanying this Policy details the process of completing the School/Service Stress Risk Assessment. This is supported by further information on the Managing Stress intranet page and an online module that is available in the People Development Online training library.

2. Individual Stress Risk Assessment

- 2.1 On occasions where a manager becomes aware that an individual is suffering stress, the manager should complete the Individual Stress Risk Assessment Checklist. The checklist is designed to help the manager in determining the exact nature of the issues, assess the individual's role and working environment, and identify any reasonable additional measures that may help. The process for completing the Individual Stress Risk Assessment Checklist will vary depending on the individual circumstances, for example, whether the individual is at work or absent from work. Completion of the form may require support from Human Resources and in cases where there is an underlying or long term condition, advice should be sought from Occupational Health.
- 2.2 The guidance accompanying this Policy details the process of completing the Individual Stress Risk Assessment Checklist. This is supported by further information on the Managing Stress intranet page and an online module that is available in the People Development Online training library.

3. Referrals to Occupational Health

- 3.1 The University's Occupational Health team provides professional support and advice to managers on work related and work-relevant aspects of ill-health. Where managers need to refer an individual to Occupational Health, an Individual Stress Risk Assessment Checklist must be completed before a referral to Occupational Health is made. Where this cannot be achieved, the manager should contact a member of the Occupational Health team to discuss the case prior to completing the referral.

4. Responsibilities and Duties

4.1 Managers

All managers with line management responsibilities are responsible for health and safety within their respective group/team. As such, their stress management duties are to ensure the following:

- Effective communication with employees, particularly with regard to organisational or procedural change;
- Ensure group/team resourcing minimises exposure to workplace stressors through effective training, professional development and reasonable workloads;
- Monitor and take action in cases of excessive working hours and under-utilisation of holiday entitlements;
- Create and maintain formal and informal opportunities for employees to discuss issues, request additional support and receive feedback;
- Ensure that bullying and harassment is not tolerated and is actioned in accordance with the University's Dignity at Work & Study Policy;
- Provide reasonable support to employees suffering stress due to external factors.

Where concerns are identified regarding work-related stress, they should contribute to the School/Service Stress Risk Assessment to:

- Identify any workplace stressors that employees may be exposed to and assess the level of risk that they may cause;
- Implement control measures to eliminate or reduce risk associated with workplace stressors to an acceptable level, one that is conducive to wellbeing;
- Ensure that all employees within their group/team are aware of University-wide and local measures for minimising risk of exposure to workplace stressors.

Where individual concerns are identified, the manager should complete an Individual Stress Risk Assessment Checklist with the individual to identify any additional reasonable measures that may help.

4.2 All Employees

All employees have duties regarding to work-related stress, which are to:

- Taking care of themselves by not taking on excessive workloads or working excessive hours on a regular basis, of their own accord;
- Treat colleagues, students and others with respect;
- Escalate issues or concerns regarding work-related stress to their line manager, or Human Resources as appropriate;
- Accept opportunities for support and assistance when recommended and where appropriate.

5. Stress Management Guidance

- 5.1 Further resources and information for managers and staff on managing stress are available on our Managing Stress and Wellbeing webpages.

Related Policies and Documentation

Safety, Health and Wellbeing Policy

Guidance on Undertaking Stress Risk Assessments

Managing Stress Related Absence (Essential Guide to Managing Sickness Absence)

Reviewed July 2019

SCHOOL/SERVICE STRESS RISK ASSESSMENT



School/Service - _____

Completed by - _____

Group/Team (if applicable) -

Date completed - _____

Action Plan Summary		By Whom?	By When?
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
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7			
8			
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10			

Review Dates -						
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Step 1 – What aspects of work might staff find stressful and what is already in place to help address any issues?

Following consideration of the control measures in place, what is the risk factor for each aspect?

<p>Demands Potential stressors: e.g. Do staff have the right amount of work to do? Have they had sufficient training? Are there any issues with the working environment?</p> <p>Existing control factors: e.g. team meetings, resource plans, training and development plans, workload prioritisation, working hours, workplace risk assessments.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">L M H</p>	<p>Role Potential stressors: e.g. Do they have conflicting job demands? Is there confusion over others job roles? Are staff clear about their roles and responsibilities?</p> <p>Existing control factors: e.g. up-to-date job descriptions, sharing of team objectives, 1-2-1 meetings, development plans, new starter induction, team and organisational structure charts.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">L M H</p>
<p>Control Potential stressors: e.g. Do staff have a say in how they do their work? Can they control their workflow? Are they included in decision-making? Are they using their skills to full effect?</p> <p>Existing control factors: e.g. staff consultation in decision making, team meetings, 1-2-1 meetings, flexible working, development opportunities, feedback mechanisms.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">L M H</p>	<p>Relationships Potential stressors: e.g. Are staff subject to unacceptable behaviours? Is there conflict in the team? Are staff exposed to high levels of complaints?</p> <p>Existing control factors: e.g. poor behaviours not tolerated, prompt resolution of conflict, team building activities, open discussions at team meetings, awareness of escalation mechanisms.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">L M H</p>
<p>Support Potential stressors: e.g. Do staff feel supported by their manager? Do they feel supported by colleagues? Are they aware of support available to them? Do they have a good work-life balance?</p> <p>Existing control factors: e.g. team meetings, 1-2-1 meetings, open door policies, active management support, support tailored for individual needs, awareness of organisational support (EAP, mediation).</p> <p style="text-align: right;">L M H</p>	<p>Change Potential stressors: e.g. Are staff aware of changes that may affect their work? Are there fears of job security? Have they been consulted on change? Do they understand how it impacts on them?</p> <p>Existing control factors: e.g. open/honest communication, change road map and timetable, meaningful consultation, team meetings and 1-2-1s to discuss local issues, skills analyses.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">L M H</p>

Step 2 – What other reasonable measures could be taken? With these in place, what is the remaining risk factor?

Demands Does anything more need to be done to help staff cope with the demands of their job? What issues might need escalating?

L M H

Role Does anything more need to be done to help staff understand their role and responsibilities? What issues might need escalating?

L M H

Control Does anything more need to be done to help staff have a say in how they do their work? What issues might need escalating?

L M H

Relationships Does anything more need to be done to ensure nobody is subject to unreasonable behaviours? What issues might need escalating?

L M H

Support Does anything more need to be done to help staff receive adequate support and information? What issues might need escalating?

L M H

Change Does anything more need to be done to ensure staff are engaged when the organisation undergoes change? What issues might need escalating?

L M H

INDIVIDUAL STRESS RISK ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST



Employee - _____

Completed by - _____

Group/Team - _____

Date completed - _____

Action Plan Summary		By Whom?	By When?
1			
2			
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Review Dates -						
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What are the individual's specific concerns regarding stress? **Complete relevant sections only**

Demands

Potential factors: - for example

- Does the individual have a reasonable workload?
- Do they have the required skills/abilities to fulfil the role?
- Are workloads covered during staff absences?
- Is workload distributed evenly between members?
- Are sufficient resources provided to carry out the job effectively?
- Is the physical working environment comfortable and safe?

Control

Potential factors: - for example

- Does the individual have a say in the way their work is undertaken?
- Can they influence work patterns?
- Are they able to influence the pace of their work?
- Does the job allow them to use their skills and initiative?
- Are there opportunities to learn new skills or take on new pieces of work?
- Is the role subject to conflicting demands?

Can additional reasonable measures be taken?

What are the individual's specific concerns regarding stress? Complete relevant sections only

Support

Potential factors: - for example

- Is the individual aware of the support available to them?
- Are they encouraged to seek support if they need it?
- Are regular meetings held to review work issues?
- Is support available from other team members, both formally and informally?
- Does the individual know how to access all the job resources available?
- Do they receive regular and constructive feedback?

Role

Potential factors: - for example

- Does the individual have clear performance and development objectives?
- Does their job description reflect the full nature of the role in practice?
- Is there a clear plan of work in place for the role?
- Do they understand management expectations of the role?
- Do they understand how their role fits alongside others in the team?
- Do they understand how their role fits into the University's aims and objectives?

Can additional reasonable measures be taken?

What are the individual's specific concerns regarding stress? Complete relevant sections only

Relationships

Potential factors: - for example

- Does the individual have good working relationships with others?
- Are they subject to unreasonable behaviours?
- Are they exposed to high numbers of complaints?
- Does the individual behave reasonably to others?
- Are they aware of the policies and support networks in place to tackle unreasonable behaviours?
- Does the individual feel able to report their concerns formally?

Change

Potential factors: - for example

- Has the individual been consulted with as part of the change process?
- Have individuals been given an opportunity to ask questions regarding the change process?
- Does the individual understand the reasons for changes?
- Do they understand the likely impact of change on their job?
- Have additional support measures been implemented through the change process?
- Have all relevant timescales been communicated to individuals?

Can additional reasonable measures be taken?