

## Management of Work Related Stress Policy

<b>Operational Owner:</b>	<i>Director of Wellbeing / Director of Health and Safety</i>
<b>Executive Owner:</b>	<i>Paul Stephenson, Vice President Human Resources</i>
<b>Effective date:</b>	<i>October 2018</i>
<b>Review date:</b>	<i>October 2021</i>
<b>Related documents:</b>	<i>This policy is supported by and should be read in conjunction with all other relevant University policies, particularly: Health &amp; Safety, Dignity at Work and Study, Sickness absence, Hazardous working, Working Time Directive, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Health and Wellbeing concerns: Guidelines for staff.</i>

### Approval History

Version	Reviewed by	Amendment history	Approved by	Date
1.0	Rotimi Akinsete, Director of Wellbeing Clive Parkinson, Health and Safety	First Draft (old format)	Health and Safety Committee	June 2015
2.0	Rotimi Akinsete, Director of Wellbeing	Second Draft (old format)	Wellbeing Strategy Group / Health and Safety Committee	January 2016
3.0	Rotimi Akinsete, Director of Wellbeing Clive Parkinson, Health and Safety	Reviewed and updated (2018 format )	Wellbeing Strategy Group Health and Safety Committee	October 2018  15 February 2019

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>
<b>1.1</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
1.1.1	The University recognises that the management of work related stress has grown in prominence and acknowledges the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors. This policy therefore seeks to identify work related stressors and outline the strategies available for managing these.
<b>1.2</b>	<b>Scope</b>
1.2.1	This policy applies equally to all employees, be they working onsite or at home. It is further recognised that work related stress can affect anyone regardless of their position in the organisation.  This policy and procedure does not form part of any employee's contract of employment. It may be amended from time to time.
<b>1.3</b>	<b>Definitions</b>
1.3.1	<b>Stress</b>  Stress is defined as 'the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed upon them'. It arises when the person perceives that they cannot cope (Tackling Work-Related Stress HSE 2003).  It is important to note that stress and pressure are not the same as it is recognised that pressure can be a positive state if managed correctly.
1.3.2	<b>Stressor</b>  Any events, circumstance or demand (external or internal to the individual) which places pressure on the individual and may result in stress. Different people respond differently to different stressors.
1.3.3	<b>Manager</b>  Manager is defined as any person who has supervisory responsibility for other people within the work environment.
1.3.4	<b>Employee/Staff Member</b>  A person employed by the University on a full-time, part-time, permanent or fixed-term contract.
1.3.5	<b>Training and Briefing</b>  Training is equipping staff, students (and others where the University has a duty-of-care) with relevant skills to deal appropriately with a given Health and Safety situation.  Briefing is informing such persons of relevant knowledge in relation to Health and Safety.  Training and briefing will be made available in a range of formats according to the needs of the trainee and different groups of staff, students and others.
1.3.6	<b>Occupational Health, Safety and Environment</b> is defined as "the measures and systems aimed at preventing harm and ill health to those at work, whilst protecting the environment from damage that could result from work practices."
1.3.7	<b>Accessibility</b>  The duty to make reasonable adjustments, as far as possible, to ensure that all staff and students (and others where the University has a duty-of-care) with a disability have equal access to everything they need to do a job or studies as those persons without a disability.

2	<b>Policy</b>
2.1	<b>Principles</b>
2.1.1	<p><b>Context:</b></p> <p>It is reasonable to assume that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees are psychologically capable of withstanding reasonable pressures at work</li> <li>• Employees are subjected to periods of pressure at work</li> <li>• Short periods of pressure are not necessarily of concern</li> </ul> <p><b>However, sustained and/or excessive pressure over long periods of time can result in anxiety, depression and poor lifestyle patterns</b></p> <p>This is commonly referred to as work related stress and can lead to serious illness (HSE website Document INDG424 <i>Working Together to Reduce Stress</i>).</p>
2.1.2	<p><b>Policy Statement:</b></p> <p>The University is committed to creating a healthy and safe working environment for all its employees and recognises that this includes mental as well as the physical wellbeing of its employees.</p> <p>The University recognises work-related stressors as a potential hazard to health and is committed to managing work related stress in a proactive manner to reduce the personal impact on its employees.</p> <p>To fulfil its commitment and obligations the University will provide the necessary resources to implement this policy. In particular, it will support managers in fulfilling their obligations under this policy and ensure that the additional support services referred to are adequately resourced.</p> <p>See Wellbeing Strategy for further guidance:  <a href="https://surreynet.surrey.ac.uk/staff-services/health-wellbeing/wellbeing-strategy">https://surreynet.surrey.ac.uk/staff-services/health-wellbeing/wellbeing-strategy</a></p>
2.1.3	<b>Policy Procedures</b>
	<p>The aim of this policy is to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Areas where work related stress for individuals appears prevalent are identified and assessed as appropriate, and relevant measures are introduced to control the risk to health;</li> <li>• Ways are identified to control and reduce the costs associated with work related stress, be they financial, organisational or personal;</li> <li>• Roles, responsibilities and accountabilities are clearly defined and understood in order to achieve successful management of work related stress;</li> <li>• Relevant departments co-operate effectively in the management of work related stress e.g. Occupational Health, Human Resources, Health &amp; Safety, Centre for Wellbeing;</li> <li>• Employees are provided with appropriate information, guidance and training relevant to work related stress;</li> </ul> <p>That staff and managers are informed of their responsibilities in respect of the policy.</p>

<b>2.2</b>	<b>Roles and Responsibilities</b>
2.2.1	<p><b>Director of Health &amp; Safety</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor and report on the University performance on responding to work related stress.</li> <li>• Ensure that compliance with this policy is included as part of the normal health and safety audits and reviews.</li> <li>• Actively support and promote the policy by providing guidance and advice.</li> </ul>
2.2.2	<p><b>Human Resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer guidance and support to managers regarding the implementation of the policy.</li> <li>• Support individuals who report work related stress issues and be actively involved in advising on absence relating to work related stress.</li> <li>• Collate staff survey data and provide reports for the Wellbeing Strategy Group regarding absence and staff turnover due to work related stress.</li> <li>• Arrange appropriate training courses as required.</li> <li>• Ensure <u>all</u> employees who are absent from work with 'work related stress' are referred to Occupational Health.</li> </ul>
2.2.3	<p><b>Director of Robens Occupational Health &amp; Safety</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide specialist advice regarding work related stress.</li> <li>• Support managers and Human Resources in implementing this policy.</li> <li>• Support individuals who report stress issues particularly if this has resulted in absence.</li> <li>• Contribute to data collection and analysis, particularly looking at equality profile of individuals to ensure that any patterns or trends are identified for specific protected groups.</li> <li>• Support the Health &amp; Safety Department and the Wellbeing Directorate in the discharging of their duties, particularly regarding the audit and review process.</li> </ul>
2.2.4	<p><b>Director of Wellbeing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support individuals who report stress related concerns particularly if this has an adverse impact on employment and personal life.</li> <li>• Provide access to a variety of support interventions, including counselling, groups and systemic consulting to departments.</li> <li>• Advise the Wellbeing Strategy Group of significant trends in mental wellbeing.</li> <li>• Arrange for wellbeing related workshops to combat work related stress as appropriate.</li> <li>• Liaise with other internal providers of support as appropriate.</li> </ul>
2.2.5	<p><b>Senior Managers (Deans and Directors)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct work-related stress surveys under the guidance of Health &amp; Safety and Human Resources.</li> <li>• Implement management strategies as identified in the survey.</li> <li>• Ensure that all members of their senior management team are trained on how to effectively manage work-related stress.</li> <li>• Put in place measures to comply with the aims and objectives of this policy.</li> <li>• Setting a positive example and behaving in a manner conducive to supporting constructive management of work related stress.</li> </ul>
2.2.6	<p><b>Managers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry out work-related risk assessments under the guidance of Health and Safety.</li> <li>• Implement any actions identified within the risk assessment.</li> <li>• Review risk assessments in a timely manner and ensure data (e.g. sickness absence)</li> </ul>

	<p>contributing to risk assessments is recorded and used appropriately.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure appropriate communication between managers and staff.</li> <li>• Liaise with HR and/or Wellbeing to facilitate training for staff (including themselves).</li> <li>• Facilitate additional, appropriate support and training for staff.</li> <li>• Evaluate and implement appropriate recommendations made by Occupational health where the health of an employee is identified as being at specific risk from work-related stress.</li> <li>• Set a positive example through role modelling and identifying possible work related stressors and proactively aim to reduce these.</li> <li>• Ensure all employees who are absent from work with 'work related stress' are referred to Occupational Health, regardless of the period of time absent.</li> <li>• The University has a 'duty of care' to protect the health, safety and welfare of all employees while at work including assessing the risks arising from work-related stress.</li> </ul>
2.2.7	<p><b>Employees</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperate with Managers, Human Resources, Health &amp; Safety and Occupational Health personnel in discharge of their duties relating to this policy.</li> <li>• Raise areas of concern at the earliest opportunity with the appropriate person (please refer to the CWB <a href="https://surreynet.surrey.ac.uk/staff-services/health-and-wellbeing/self-help">https://surreynet.surrey.ac.uk/staff-services/health-and-wellbeing/self-help</a>)</li> <li>• Set a positive example through role modelling and identifying possible work related stressors and proactively aim to reduce these.</li> <li>• Attend Occupational Health referrals.</li> <li>• Inform their line manager (or suitable person) if they are suffering from excessive pressure or stress at work; and</li> <li>• Follow appropriate systems for work laid down for their safety.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<b>Governance Requirements</b>
<b>3.1</b>	<b>Implementation / Communication Plan</b>
3.1.1	<p>The policy is communicated to all staff through;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The University Policies website</li> <li>• Links in related websites for Wellbeing, Health and Safety, Human resources and Occupational Health</li> <li>• Referenced in the University staff induction process</li> <li>• Referenced in the University Health and Safety Handbook</li> <li>• Referenced in the booklet '<u>Health &amp; Wellbeing Concerns: Guidelines for staff</u>'.</li> </ul>
<b>3.2</b>	<b>Exceptions to this Policy</b>
3.2.1	This relates to external, subsidiary or arm's length individuals and companies not managed by University of Surrey.
<b>3.3</b>	<b>Review and Change Requests</b>
3.3.1	<p>This Policy is regularly reviewed by the Director of Wellbeing and Director of Health and Safety; and the Wellbeing Strategy Group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Minor changes will be reviewed and agreed by Wellbeing Strategy Group, and approved through Health and Safety Committee (HSC);</li> <li>➤ Major changes will be reviewed through Wellbeing Strategy Group, agreed by Health and Safety Committee - and if required, submitted to Executive Board, for final approval.</li> </ul>

	Review will generally be every three years or in line with any relevant changes to Legislation, if sooner. Health and Safety Consultative Committee will be consulted during the review process, as required.
<b>3.5</b>	<b>Legislative context</b>
3.5.1	This Policy complies with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and other associated legislation, noted in Appendix 2.
3.5.2	<u><i>Health and Safety Policy legal statement</i></u>
	<p>This policy sets out to comply with the required 'duty of care' placed upon the University. Under Health and Safety Law a 'duty of care' is generated between organisations and individuals when carrying out activities that could foreseeably cause harm.</p> <p>The primary duty of care is owed through the employer-employee relationship in which the employer owes a duty of care to ensure that work activities that could result in harm to the employee are assessed and controlled. That duty of care is put into practice by the line management responsibilities as set out in the hierarchy of the organisation.</p> <p>This duty of care cannot be delegated away; instead the act of delegation must be accompanied by a realistic and workable system of monitoring or supervision to ensure that the delegated task has been adequately implemented (i.e. the responsibility is not met by giving directions; it is met when those directions have been confirmed as carried out). The result is a cascade of delegated accountability that runs through the organisation via the line management network, accompanied by a system of monitoring, supervision and feedback.</p> <p>The duty of care extends to assurance that services provided by others (be they another department of the University or contractors) are undertaken safely. The level of assurance required should be commensurate with the risk of the activity.</p> <p>In addition, anyone carrying out an activity owes a duty of care to anyone who may be put at risk by the activity, such as students, staff and visitors.</p>
<b>3.6</b>	<b>Stakeholder Statements</b>
3.6.1	<p><b>Equality:</b> Consideration is given to the protected characteristics of all people groups identified in the Equality Act 2010. The protected characteristics are gender, age, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, pregnancy and maternity, and marriage/civil partnership.</p> <p>The University recognises the need for specific measures to ensure the health and safety of each of these groups. This policy and all other associated Health and Safety related policies take this into account.</p>
3.6.2	<b>Health &amp; Safety:</b> This Policy forms part of the overarching statement on health and safety for the University.
3.6.3	<p><b>Executive Board, Health and Safety Committee, Wellbeing Strategy Group, and Health and Safety Consultative Committee (as required)</b></p> <p>Changes to this policy will be consulted, reviewed and approved at the appropriate level; in line with policy guidance.</p>

## **Appendix 1**

### **Supporting Documentation**

This policy is supported by and should be read in conjunction with all other University policies, particularly

- Health & Safety
- Dignity at Work and Study
- Sickness absence
- Hazardous working
- Working Time Directive
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

## **Appendix 2**

### **List of Associated Legislation**

In addition to the Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974 – this policy will comply with the requirements of the following:

- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, 1999, to ensure the health safety and welfare at work of their employees. This includes minimising the risk of stress-related illness or injury to employees.