

ROYAL HOLLOWAY, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

LONE WORKING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

(Version 2)

1 Introduction

This Policy and Procedure reflects the College's commitment to meeting its legal duties with respect to lone and out of hours working. It identifies the duties of each Head of Department/School/Director (hereafter referred to as 'Managers') and provides guidance to those charged on their behalf with taking action necessary to ensure compliance.

The general duties of the Health and Safety at Work etc., Act 1974 and more specific duties of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended) requires the College to provide a safe environment, safe equipment and safe systems of work for its employees and those working on its premises. These requirements are applicable to all work situations, including where staff (and others) are working alone or outside normal working hours.

There are many areas in the College where staff and students work alone. In the majority of cases this will be without significant risk (e.g. persons working alone in offices where appropriate safety precautions are in place). However, there will be occasions when this is not so. Working alone can introduce or accentuate hazards (e.g. lack of assistance if needed, inadequate provision of first aid, sudden illness, violence from others, emergencies, failure of services and supplies, etc.).

This Policy and Procedure contains generic guidance to assist managers with identifying, through the risk assessments process, those tasks which may be undertaken by a lone worker and those which may not. It will also assist managers with developing their own Departmental Policies for lone and out of hours working.

This Policy and Procedure is not intended to be restrictive or provide definitive guidance on lone working. Where any doubt exists as to the action to be taken or advice or assistance being required, contact should be made with the College Health and Safety Office.

2 Definition

Lone working is intended to cover all work proposed to be undertaken alone where the risk to the lone worker may be increased either by the work itself, or by the lack of on-hand support should something go wrong.

Lone working can occur:

- During normal working hours at an isolated location within the normal workplace.

- When working outside of normal working hours.

Under either of these circumstances, the College’s guidance on lone working on campus will apply.

Normal working hours are defined as:

During Academic Terms: Monday – Friday 08:00 – 18.00

Outside of Academic Terms: Monday – Friday 08:00 – 17.00

Work undertaken at weekends, bank holidays and when the College is closed (i.e. discretionary days) will be considered outside of normal hours.

3 Risk assessment and control

Managers shall ensure that all lone working activities are formally identified and appropriate risk assessments undertaken, which identify the risk to lone workers and the control measures necessary to minimise risks, as far as reasonably practicable.

To assist managers with this process, it is suggested that lone working activities are arranged into three risk categories, namely *low*, *medium* and *high*. Examples of typical low, medium and high risk activities are identified in Appendices 1, 2 and 3 respectively, including guidance on the controls measures required for each situation. This list is not exhaustive, and managers will need to identify and organise their lone working activities into these categories.

Once departments have identified their lone working activities, and organised them into these categories, the actions arising from this categorisation are as follows:

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|--------------------|---|
| Low risk | Generic guidance for lone working to be included in departmental health and safety documentation such as safety handbooks |
| Medium risk | Where a department categorises activities as ‘medium’ risk then: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ These should be listed in the departmental health and safety documentation ▪ A risk assessment must be completed for each activity using the College’s ‘General’ Risk Assessment form (Note: where appropriate, a ‘generic’ risk assessment can be completed) ▪ Appropriate controls implemented |
| High risk | Where a department categorises activities as ‘high’ then: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ These should be listed in the departmental health and safety documentation |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ A risk assessment must be completed for each activity using the College's 'General' Risk Assessment form▪ Appropriate controls implemented▪ A copy of the risk assessment to be forwarded to manager for approval and countersigning (see Appendix 4 – Lone Working Approval form) |
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The types of control measures identified from the risk assessment will vary depending on the type of work, location, experience of persons involved and local conditions. Further guidance on the questions that need to be asked with respect to the selection and consideration of control measures is given in Appendix 5.

4 Information, Instruction and Training

Managers must ensure that everyone who is required to work alone is competent to do so, having received suitable and sufficient information, instruction and training (including refresher training) to enable them to work safely. The extent of the instruction and training provided will vary according to the level of risk identified.

Records of training and refresher training must be retained by the Department.

It is the responsibility of all staff and students to undertake work (including lone working) in accordance with the findings of the risk assessment, to comply with any information and training received, and to report immediately to their line manager any problems or concerns.

5 Supervision of lone working

Although lone workers are not subject to constant supervision, managers are still required to ensure appropriate control of the work. Supervision complements information, instruction and training, ensuring that staff and students understand the risks associated with their work, and that necessary safety precautions are being carried out. It can also provide guidance in situations of uncertainty.

The extent of the supervision required depends upon the risks involved and the proficiency and experience of the person carrying out the work. Persons new to a job, undergoing training, doing a job which presents special risks, or dealing with new situations may need continuous supervision until such time as they are competent to work alone.

The extent of the supervision is a management decision, which should be established through the risk assessment process. It should not be left to individual members of staff or students to decide that they require assistance/supervision.

6 Activities away from College premises

It is likely that most activities will take place on College premises. However, the principles contained in this document will apply to staff and students undertaking duties outside of the campus. Those on field work, for example, may encounter risks that can be adequately managed by the guidance contained in the College's 'Field Work Code of Practice'.

Further advice and assistance can be obtained from the College Health & Safety Office.

7 Departmental compliance with this Policy and Procedure

Each department's compliance with the requirements of this Policy will be reviewed by members of the College Health and Safety Office during the health and safety audit process.

This Policy and Procedure forms part of the College's Health and Safety Policy.

Matt Purcell
Deputy Health & Safety Adviser
Version 2 (reviewed with no changes)
16th June 2010

'In accordance with the College's commitment to equality and diversity, this Policy has been written and screened to avoid discrimination and promote a positive approach to race, disability and gender issues. Comments on the content of this document should be directed to Mrs Leanie DuToit in the College Health and Safety Office.'