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1. Introduction

This Policy and Procedure reflects the Students' Union'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 and Line Manager, as well as individual employees, 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 Act 1974 and more specific duties of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended) requires the Students' Union 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 Students' Union where staff 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 the 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 assessment 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 Developmental Policies for lone working and out of hours working.

2. Who is a Lone Worker?

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 workers are those that work by themselves without close or direct contact with another staff member (HSE).

Lone workers include:

- Staff who work away from their fixed base, out in the community or in other people's homes
- Staff who work outside normal working hours
- Staff who work from home
- Staff who work in establishments where only one person is on the premises at a time
- Staff who work in the same building as colleagues but on their own

Normal working hours are defined as:

During Academic Terms and Non-Term time: Monday – Friday 09:00-17:00

3. Employer Responsibilities

Under the H&S at Work Act 1974 employers must provide a safe place of work. RHSU devolves responsibility for lone working arrangements to its Heads of Departments and Line Managers as follows:

- The Heads of Department have overall responsibility for ensuring that lone worker arrangements are acceptable within their department, i.e. Trading Services, Student Opportunities, Union Bus Drivers.
- Line managers are responsible for undertaking (and maintaining) a Risk Assessment on lone worker arrangements and ensuring suitable remedial actions/arrangements are implemented.

- Line managers should identify control measures, communications systems and training requirements for staff who work alone within the confines of RHSU Buildings, Campus Buildings, or undertake community visits/meetings or home visits.
- Line managers must regularly review working practices in order to ensure that all situations where staff are required to work alone are kept to a minimum and appropriate control measures are in place.

4. Employee Responsibilities

Personal Safety is also the legal responsibility of individual employees. RHSU expects all employees working alone to:

- Be responsible for working within agreed safety parameters while lone working and following the controls identified in their departmental risk assessment.
- Take reasonable care to look after their own health and safety and that of others.
- Follow organisational policy and procedures.
- Attend training as requested and become familiar with the information provided by the employer.
- Follow safe systems of work where they are in operation and report any shortcomings or concerns in the employer's arrangements for health and safety to their line manager as soon as possible.
- Report any incidents of violence or aggression to the employer, including 'near misses'.

5. Risk Assessments and Control

Line 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.

RHSU will ensure so far as is reasonably practicable that employees are protected when working alone through the process of hazard identification, risk assessment and elimination; or where elimination of the risks is not possible, to reduce the risks to an acceptable level.

Assessments shall be carried out for all staff whose working practice makes them vulnerable. This includes staff that are site based but may work in isolation as well as mobile staff whose work takes them out into the community (i.e. Union Bus). Recommendations will be made to eliminate or reduce the risk to the lowest level reasonably practicable.

Appropriate action will be taken to minimize the risk to employees as far as is reasonably practicable, this may include:

- Amend shift patterns to minimise or remove lone working.
- Changing work patterns so that only essential work which has to be completed alone is done so – with other arrangements made for different work.
- Provision of mobile communication – phones, radios etc.
- Enhanced security alarms, access controls, CCTV etc in areas affected.
- Preventing lone workers from undertaking any tasks which are hazardous.
- All persons working alone shall be medically fit to do so.
- Means of monitoring, communication and summoning assistance shall be provided wherever practicable.
- Specific safety work instructions will be drafted if required.

Risk assessments should be reviewed at least annually, or when there has been a significant change in working practice.

6. Training

Where employees are identified as lone workers, they will be provided with appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision to enable them to carry out their duties in a safe manner and to identify hazards and risks associated with lone working.

Line managers must identify the training requirements of their employees during supervision sessions and give employees the opportunity to have input into this process. Line managers must then ensure that relevant training courses are identified and the employee are given the opportunity to attend them.

Records of training and refresher training must be retained by the Department and also forwarded to HR for central recording and reporting purposes.

7. Monitoring

The implementation of this Policy will be monitored at departmental level. Any accident, incident or near miss statistics will be collated and reported to the Board of Trustees and Health & Safety Committee. Such reports will be used to facilitate reviews of any trends and necessary corrective action.