

Local Rule

Occupational Health

Approved by Court /
Health & Safety Policy
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CONTENTS

	Page
1. <u>Introduction</u>	3
2. <u>Responsibilities</u>	4
3. <u>Occupational Health Service Provision</u>	5

1. Introduction

1.1 University Policy

It is the Health and Safety Policy of the University of Strathclyde to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable the health, safety and welfare of all its employees at work, of students while they are engaged in activities under the supervision of the University and of members of the general public who have access to University property.

1.2 Aim and Scope of Policy

Occupational Health is concerned with the impact of work and the work environment on an employee's health and the impact of an employee's health on their work.

The University of Strathclyde acknowledges that the workplace has a responsibility to view work in its wider context and support the Scottish Executive health strategies that may benefit not only University business and employees but also the economy, environment and society as a whole. It encourages and supports partnership working and action across all fields that can influence health in Scotland. The University of Strathclyde encourages all staff to consider and care for their own health and wellbeing.

At the University of Strathclyde the Occupational Health Service is within the remit of the Safety Services, but operates independently, providing an impartial and confidential service. The Service is committed to a holistic approach to general wellbeing which brings together workplace activities where there are obvious synergies.

- The Service works in partnership with Safety Advisers in helping Departments to identify and prevent health risks at work.
- It provides key support to the Human Resources Department and line managers/supervisors within departments to develop workplace policies that promote safe and healthy environments.
- Consults directly with the Centre for Sport and Recreation to actively promote health in the workplace particularly physical activity, a key health priority.

Occupational health provision cannot replace an individual's general practitioner. Staff and students need to be registered with a local general practitioner.

The arrangements set out the University of Strathclyde's policy and arrangements to deal with occupational health issues arising from University activities or premises.

- The University aims to ensure that the potential for ill health or injury arising from University activities or premises is minimised at source to the lowest level that is reasonably practicable. It recognises that this duty of care for its staff extends to mental health as well as physical health at work and that this duty of care applies in certain circumstances to its students.
- The University aims to ensure early identification and management of occupational ill health and to enable staff to raise, discuss and resolve issues, through the involvement of and consultation with Departmental Safety Conveners.

- The University aims to develop a framework to ensure that managers and staff are aware of the nature, causes and effects of ill health. This is achieved through provision of information and guidance in the form of University policies and through the use of risk assessments to identify risks to health and to establish appropriate health monitoring. The University provides training, support and health education to inform managers and staff about occupational health issues.
- The University will ensure that individuals whose health is identified as particularly at risk at work are provided with appropriate management and advice, while recognising the need for confidentiality to be maintained.
- The University will monitor the scale of occupational ill health and the effectiveness of its measures to reduce it.
- The University provides competent specialist occupational health advice and services to staff and managers or supervisors. This support is extended to students in situations when they are carrying out activities that could pose a risk to their health as part of their coursework.
- The Occupational Health Service will ensure that medical information relating to individuals is treated by the Occupational Health Service in strict confidence in line with medical ethics, data protection requirements and policy.

2. Responsibilities

2.1 Deans, Professional Services Directors, Heads of Departments, managers and supervisors must ensure that the health of their staff is not adversely affected by their work. They must:

- ensure that work activities and premises are assessed and designed so far as reasonably practicable so that they will not lead to ill health or injury;
- ensure that their staff are advised of risks and are provided with appropriate training;
- address ill health as it arises among their staff; and
- ensure that there are appropriate work plans for individuals at significant risk.

Staff are responsible for their own health and for taking advantage of the occupational health support provided by the University.

2.2 The Occupational Health Adviser ensures the provision of professional occupational health services to all staff. These services include health surveillance programmes; medical and counseling referrals; advice on health; risk assessment; health education programmes; and in liaison with Human Resources, monitoring the effectiveness of the stress policy.

3. Occupational Health Service Provision

- 3.1 The University employs the services of an Occupational Health Adviser who is recorded on the professional register maintained by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) as a 'Specialist Practitioner (occupational health nursing)' and an Occupational Health Physician who is a member of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine. The function is supported by a nursing team and an administrator.
- 3.2 Staff experiencing ill health or injury that they believe may be related to work should obtain advice by contacting the Occupational Health Service.
- 3.3 Within the management function, any manager can obtain support and guidance on health and stress issues, return-to-work plans, and medical or counseling referrals by contacting the Occupational Health Service.
- 3.4 Cases are referred to the Occupational Health Physician by the Occupational Health Adviser where necessary.
- 3.5 In response to medical and fitness-for-work referrals, the member of staff will be fully informed of any information being disclosed and signed consent requested as appropriate. The Occupational Health Adviser or physician issues a written response to managers and Human Resources with a copy to the member of staff.
- 3.6 Occupational health records are held in the Occupational Health Service and are not available to other members of the University.
- 3.7 The Occupational Health Service will advise on development of policy and procedures to assist in effective Sickness Absence management.
- 3.8 'Fitness to Work' screening is in place in line with Human Resources recruitment policy and, further referral to the Occupational Health Service may be necessary. Please note that all medical questionnaires will be returned confidentially in a sealed envelope directly to the Occupational Health Service.
- 3.9 Occupational health surveillance is organised by the Occupational Health Service based on risk assessment.
- 3.10 The Occupational Health Service will liaise with other bodies and departments in identifying appropriate health promotion activities.
- 3.11 Students may contact the Occupational Health Service if they are concerned that their health is at risk from activities they carry out as part of their coursework. Students should ensure that they are registered with a general practitioner but may also use the services of the Student Health Service.
- 3.12 Occupational health staff liaise as appropriate with Safety Advisers, in Safety Services eg in relation to advising on the need to report a notifiable disease under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR).