



Lone Working Policy

Policy Statement & Scope

The Students' Union recognises that the varied nature of our approved onsite as well as offsite activities, as well as the operational hours that some job roles are required to cover, can result in regular or occasional lone working.

This policy acknowledges that for some staff, and in certain circumstances, lone working may be quite normal. However, because the situation of lone working may increase the likelihood of harm, staff and management are required to consider lone working risks as part of their risk assessments.

This policy sets out the reasonable and practicable actions that will be taken to mitigate specific risks which may arise from staff lone working.

Introduction – *'Lone Working or 'Lone Worker'*

Under this policy a lone worker, is defined as a member of staff who, for significant periods of their working time, is engaged in activities which places them in a situation without direct contact with other staff, or without direct supervision.

Some examples of this include:

- People required to work separately from others, e.g. Facilities Staff
- People working outside 9-5 or at weekends, e.g. Bar Staff
- Staff away from their normal work base.

It might also include staff who find themselves lone working and who may not easily be able to notify others if they needed assistance in the event of a fire or other emergency.

A member of staff, who requests to work at home rather than remains in their normal workplace (and consequently may be on their own), does **not** meet the definition of a lone worker under this policy.

Responsibilities

Senior Managers – are responsible for ensuring that reasonable and practicable controls are in place for their staff that may be exposed to lone working hazards in their area(s) of responsibility.

Managers - are responsible for considering the lone working hazards for their staff and ensuring that reasonable and practicable controls are in place and documented as part of individual lone working or generic risk assessments.

All Staff – are responsible for following correct controls in accordance with their training and risk assessments and to report to their line manager any concerns which they believe lone working may be exposing them or others to.

Working Hours and Lone Working

Under this Policy there is no direct correlation between working hours and lone working. Most staff are likely to work 'office hours' i.e. 9-5pm or thereabouts, but many colleagues start earlier, work into the evening or work at weekends. There are also certain operations of the Students' Union – such as the Bar which is open late into the evening and at weekends.

Staff working at these times are not necessarily lone working – although they are more likely to do so simply because there will be much fewer people around.

Lone Working Risk Assessments

Under this Policy Lone Working when an individual is identified as Lone Working, their case must be considered as part of a risk assessment process alongside the other potential hazards to our staff.

As with any risk assessment, managers must ensure that suitable and sufficient control measures are in place to reduce the risks to an acceptable level. It is important to put the real risk into real perspective in terms of what could go wrong.

As a result, the risk assessment must

- Assess whether the activity can be safely carried out by a single person
- Assess whether the staff concerned are suited (and medically fit) to work alone
- Ensure that there are facilities, systems and equipment to enable lone workers to deal with hazardous or emergency situations
- Ensure that there are appropriate arrangements for communicating with lone workers.

Lone working should be considered as part of the normal workplace risk assessments, as this will help managers and staff to gauge the 'lone' risk alongside the actual work which is being undertaken.

The Students' Union also has an employee taxi account scheme available for staff working late to ensure they get home safely. Further details on this scheme can be requested from the Bar & Retail Manager.

This Policy is not to stop or prevent lone working – unless the potential hazard is too great but to ensure that reasonable controls are put in place.

Lone Working Guidance

If you think about it, many of us are frequently 'alone' either in our home lives or when at work and there is sometimes a misconception that lone working is against the law - it isn't. The law just expects us as a responsible employer to take steps to consider and minimize the risks that could arise when anyone is lone working just as we do with any other work activity.

Lone Working at York St John Students' Union



Many of our staffs work a pattern of office hours or '9 to 5' but increasingly through both flexible working as well as the need to provide a service to our students and customers across the day, we have staff who will find they regularly work alone.

At the Students' Union we consider a Lone Worker as anyone who for significant periods of their working day, is engaged in activities which places them in a situation without direct contact with other staff, or without direct supervision.

Some examples of this include:

- People required to work separately from others, e.g. Facilities Staff
- People working outside 9-5 or at weekends, e.g. Bar Staff
- Staff away from their normal work base.

Managers Responsibility

We must always risk assess 'lone working' activities and this is the responsibility of the line manager. The best method is to assess it as part of the normal workplace risk assessment, as this will help to gauge the 'lone' risk alongside the actual work.

Managers must also consider whether an activity can be safely carried out by a lone worker or whether it needs two people or some form of direct supervision.

If the activity can be safely done alone the following table will help provide useful information on what to consider when assessing 'lone working' risks:

Prompts to help Managers complete a Lone Working Risk Assessment

| TOPIC | QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER |
|----------------------|--|
| WORKPLACE | Does it present a particular risk, due to the environment, or the location, is it indoors, outdoors, familiar or not familiar to staff etc.? |
| PERSON | Is the individual more vulnerable for any reason? Consider any known medical conditions or disabilities etc |
| TASK | Can the task be reasonably done alone or does it present a particular risk e.g. equipment, process, substance, time, location? |
| ACCESS | Can the workplace be entered / exited easily? |
| OTHERS | Is there a possible risk from others for any reason e.g. potential for abuse or violence? |
| INFORMATION/TRAINING | Does the individual have appropriate training and information to undertake the activity alone? |
| SUPERVISION | What arrangements are in place e.g. regular checks, Security, signing in / out, scheduled contact times, CCTV, permits to work etc.? |
| EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE | Are First Aid facilities available, and can help be easily summoned e.g. by phone/mobile phone, radio, alarm etc.? |
| EMERGENCY PROCEDURES | Does the individual know what to do and how to summon help in an emergency e.g. in case of fire, accident or security issue? |

Risk Control Once you have assessed the risk you can then decide what controls are needed. Use the following to help you with this:

| Examples of Controlling Lone Working Risk | Is it ok to work 'Alone' and why? | Controls |
|--|--|---|
| Task – Offsite – at other sites or sports facilities | Yes, because: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The activity is regularly undertaken and is mostly inside 2. The member of staff is experienced 3. First Aid provision is available 4. There are clear procedures in place to call for emergency assistance via Ambulance, or University Security. | Ensure: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff are trained not to try to deal with trespassers onto University property but to immediately call for assistance by Security or the Police. |
| Task – Office/Computer Work During the day | Yes, because: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The activity is low risk 2. The member of staff is experienced 3. Means of communication are available 4. Assistance is readily available | Ensure: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All staff are aware of Emergency procedures and that contacts are provided e.g. Reception on '0' or Security on 6444 |
| Task – Working late e.g. past 6pm or at the weekend and it is apparent other staff / students are not around | Yes, because: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The activity is regularly undertaken 2. The member of staff is experienced 3. Means of communication and assistance are available | Ensure: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The individual informs Security of their arrival/location and again when they leave the building. 2. If possible secure the front door to the building or office door. 3. The individual immediately contacts emergency or concerns Security on 6444 if they need first aid or have concerns about their personal safety. |
| Please note that the examples provided within this matrix do not constitute a full and comprehensive set of potential lone working situations. | | |

Some suggestions for staff to consider before lone working

To keep yourself safe you should talk to your manager or supervisor about lone working situations – particularly if you think that things could be done to make things safer for yourself or others.

The following sort of questions should help you and your manager to make sure that the right sort of controls is in place to protect you. You have a responsibility for your own safety so you must speak to your manager about any queries or concerns.

| | |
|--|---|
| <i>Before you start</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be realistic - do you think you need help & others around?• Do you need any other training or experience?• What resources e.g. equipment, materials do you need?• Do you have the right clothing do you need e.g. to keep you warm and dry. What about other Personal Protective Equipment ('PPE')?• Have you checked the security of the area e.g. if you need to can you shut the front door as you would at home?• Do you need medication, food, drink etc.?• Is the environment an issue e.g. too hot / cold, wet, windy? |
| <i>Does anyone know you are there?</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do you have procedures that must be followed e.g. 'logging in / out' book?• Have you contacted a Supervisor or Security who can check if they haven't heard from you? |
| <i>If it goes wrong?</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do you know what to do in an emergency e.g. first aid, fire, or a personal security issue?• Do you know who and how to call for help if something happens? |