Safety Code of Practice:

Personal Safety & Lone Working

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**UNIVERSITY
OF SUSSEX**

Executive Summary

A Safety Code of Practice (SCoP) is a university-wide document that supports policies to provide detailed practical information on how to ensure compliance to relevant laws, standards, and regulations, and must be followed by all Faculties and Divisions.

SCOPs are supplemented by associated Guidance documents which provide additional advice and information on specific topics and are intended to assist in the development of local procedures.

This document is the seventh in the 'Process & Activity Safety' series of SCoPs and is intended to support managers and teams in drawing up local operational documents.

Health and Safety, HR Division

Safety Code of Practice – Personal Safety & Lone Working

1. Introduction

1.1   This code of practice sets out the arrangements for:

- Managing the risk of violent and/or aggressive behaviour towards members of staff at the university, where this relates to their employment.

- Managing the significant and increased risks posed by lone working at the university.

1.2   The university takes incidents relating to violence, aggression, dignity, respect, discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation very seriously. Such incidents can be reported via several routes, including the Report and Support tool. Information regarding Routes for Resolution can also be found on the Human Resources webpages.

1.3   It is recognised that lone working activities may pose a risk to personal safety of the individual and should be avoided as far as is reasonably practicable. Where such activities cannot be avoided, suitable and sufficient risk assessments must be undertaken, and adequate control measures introduced, to reduce the risks as far as is reasonably practicable.

1.4   This document is supported by HS G402 Guidance on Personal Safety and Lone Working.

2. Scope

2.1   This code of practice applies to all members of staff undertaking lone working activities, working without close or direct supervision, when working for the university, on the Falmer campus or at other locations in the UK.

2.2   This code of practice does not cover members of staff travelling outside of the UK for university business. Overseas travel guidance is available on the Health and Safety Website A-Z.

2.3   This code of practice does not apply to staff who are homeworking, unless their work activity introduces personal safety or lone working risks in addition to office type work. Home/remote working is covered in the Remote Working Framework.

2.4   For health and safety purposes, Post Graduate Researchers (PGR) undertaking activities related to their research are classified as workers, and as such, their work-related activities fall within the scope of this code of practice.

2.5   In the case of undergraduate, post-graduate taught students and students on distance learning programmes, this code of practice does not cover general study, however it does cover work or study conducted under university activity where lone working or personal safety risks are introduced. For example, on an offsite trip.

2.6   Contractors are not within the scope of this code of practice as they should be following arrangements of their own organisation.

2.7   Security arrangements are not within the scope of this code of practice and are managed by the Estates and Facilities Management Division, delivered by their selected facilities management company.

2.8   Third party occupiers at the university should have their own arrangements in place but can follow this code of practice if they chose to.

3. Definitions

3.1   <u>Personal Safety</u> – an individual's ability to go about their everyday life free from threat or fear of psychological, emotional or physical harm from others.

3.2   <u>Lone working</u> – work that is intended to be carried out alone, without direct supervision or immediate access to another person for assistance for a short period of the working day (a particular task), carrying out shift work alone, on a temporary or ongoing basis.

3.3   <u>Work related violence and aggression</u> – any incident or set of behaviours in which an employee is abused, threatened, or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work.

4. Responsibilities

4.1   <u>Vice Chancellor</u>

The Vice Chancellor has overall responsibility for health and safety at the university. They may delegate their responsibility for undertaking duties of managing personal safety and lone working through line management and identified roles. The following people have been identified as having responsibilities under this code of practice (in addition to any other responsibilities they may have under the university's Health and Safety Policy) for the management of personal safety and lone working in areas under their control at the university.

4.2   <u>Executive Deans, Executive Directors of Professions Service Divisions</u>

Must ensure that arrangements within this code of practice are implemented within the Faculty or Professional Service Division that they manage.

4.3   <u>Heads of Schools, Heads of Faculty Operations and Heads of Professional Service Divisions</u>

Must ensure that arrangements within this code of practice are implemented within the School or Professional Service Division that they manage, and that they ensure any delegated actions are addressed.

4.4   <u>Line Managers</u>

- Ensure that the arrangements within this code of practice are implemented within their area.

- Identify individuals who could be involved in work that involves lone working or has the potential to put them at risk from violence and/or aggression.

- Carry out a suitable and sufficient risk assessment covering personal safety and lone working activities. This can be through the inclusion of such risks in broader activity risk assessments, rather than 'standalone' personal safety & lone working risk assessments.

- Ensure that control measures from these risk assessments are implemented to maximise personal safety of the staff in their area, e.g. periodic checks of the effectiveness of (emergency) procedures, provision of personal safety equipment/ alarms.

- Ensure all new starters are given basic health and safety information relating to personal safety and how it can be accessed in their first month at work, ensuring this is recorded in relevant induction documentation.

- Ensure any staff under their line management are provided with sufficient time to attend training and for the implementation of personal safety procedures for which they are responsible for.

- Ensure that their team, including new workers, are made aware of personal safety provision and procedures available within their area(s) of work, including where and how to report incidents or near misses.

- Implement reasonable adjustments to support staff who are living with medical conditions or a disability, which impacts their safety whilst working alone.

- Investigate local incidents or near misses related to personal safety, and escalate support required to their local Health & Safety Coordinator and University Health and Safety Team if appropriate.

- Ensure staff are aware of support available at the university, e.g. Employee Assistance Programme, Staff Counselling or Report & Support. Information is available on the [Staff Wellbeing Hub](#).

- Where academic tutors act as student supervisors, they are responsible for the health and safety of the research assistant or research student, both undergraduate and postgraduate.

4.5   University Health and Safety Team

- Provide the code of practice and guidance on personal safety and lone working to staff, students and others who are involved in university activities, and review this code of practice every three years or after a significant change in guidance, whichever is the sooner.

- Consult with Faculties and Professional Service Divisions across the university regarding personal safety and lone working, and ensure the relevant documentation is communicated to Executive Deans / Executive Directors of Professional Service Divisions, and Health and Safety Coordinators.

- Provide advice and support to those with responsibility for managing personal safety and lone working risks to staff, students and others involved in university activities.

- Ensure that a program of personal safety training is available for staff to receive adequate and timely training.

- Consider any request for additional bespoke personal safety training made by a Faculty or Professional Service Division via the healthsafety@sussex.ac.uk inbox.

- Update staff records for attendees of personal safety training the team delivers.

- Investigate incidents, accidents or near misses relating to personal safety with support of the relevant line manager or Health and Safety Coordinator.

4.6 Estates and Facilities Management

- Ensure that contractors working for them alone, have suitable and sufficient Risk Assessments and Method Statements (RAMS) in place. Hosts of contractors should audit contractors regularly against the associated RAMS.

- Inform contractors of expected behaviours at the local induction before they begin work for the university.

- Manage security on campus and at other university premises (see Section 4.8 for Security Team responsibilities).

4.7 Health and Safety Coordinators

- Coordinate and liaise with the University Health and Safety Team regarding personal safety training and provision within their allocated areas.

- Investigate local incidents or near misses related to personal safety or lone working with the relevant line manager, and escalate support required to the University Health and Safety Team if appropriate.

- Ensure that contractors working for them alone, have suitable and sufficient RAMS in place. Hosts of contractors should audit contractors regularly against the associated RAMS.

4.8 Facilities Management Company Security Team

- Support staff and students during live personal safety or lone working incidents when the alarm is raised to them, without putting themselves in danger.

- Raise the alarm to the emergency services when determined necessary.

- Report any incidents, accidents or near misses related to personal safety or lone working to their line manager and on Sussex Direct Incident Report system.

4.9 University members of staff

- Follow local policies and procedures.

- Report to their line manager any medical conditions or ill-health which may impact their ability to work safely alone.

- Attend personal safety training as required by their line manager.

- Liaise with their line manager over any issues regarding personal safety or lone working.

- Report any incidents, accidents or near misses related to personal safety or lone working on Sussex Direct Incident Report system.

4.10 <u>Third party employers of staff who work on campus and/or on behalf of/with the university.</u>

- Have in place their own Personal Safety and Lone Working Policy, procedures and local rules.

- Ensure that contractors working for them alone, have suitable and sufficient RAMS in place. Hosts of contractors should audit contractors regularly against the associated RAMS.

- Inform contractors of expected behaviours at their local induction before they begin work for the university.

5. Requirements

5.1 Risk Assessments & Approvals

5.1.1 Risk assessment must be undertaken where staff or an individual's personal safety could be at risk, including where lone working may occur. Risk assessment should be undertaken in a pragmatic manner, considering the significant hazards associated with the activity.

5.1.2 Carrying out a risk assessment will determine the level of risk presented, and allow informed decisions to be made as to whether the activity can be appropriately managed, for example with suitable working procedures, equipment etc.

5.1.3 The risk assessment must be approved by the line manager, and depending on the level of risk presented, e.g. High risk, Head of Faculty / Executive Director of Professional Service Division approval must be requested. The risk assessment must be shared with/communicated to the staff it affects to ensure they understand and engage with the risk assessment control measures. The risk assessment template enables managers to record that staff have been informed of the risks and controls.

5.2 Physical Controls

5.2.1 Facilities

Facilities must be considered as part of the risk assessment process in terms of design and layout (e.g. reception spaces, one to one meeting rooms etc.).

5.2.2   Equipment

Depending on the level of risk presented by the lone working activity, and the outcome of the lone working risk assessment, there may be equipment provided to trace staff and/or to assist in an emergency. For high-risk activities this could be the provision of a panic alarm in a meeting room or a GPS lone working device for those who lone work out in the community. Where equipment is provided, line managers and users must ensure the device is available and in full working order, people know how to use the device and that it forms part of the pre-planning for the work activity.

5.3 Management Controls

5.3.1   Training, Competency and Supervision

Once line managers have identified potential hazards, assessed the risk and implemented appropriate control measures, they must provide staff with sufficient knowledge:

- To recognise risks associated with lone working and violence and aggression.
- On how to act when there is limited supervision.

This includes communication of the risk assessment, local procedures, and additional training for control measures such as emergency procedures or equipment provided. Staff must be monitored regularly to ensure they are following control measures.

Staff who carry out lone working activities must be provided with training in the local procedures they are required to follow.

Lone working E-Learning training is available for all staff on the University Learn Upon platform.

General Personal Safety training (inclusive of Lone Working) is available through the University Health and Safety Team, bookable via the Learn Upon platform.

Where line managers identify a need for Personal Safety training within their area for a number of staff, they may request a bespoke training course by emailing the Health and Safety inbox on healthsafety@sussex.ac.uk.

Emergency procedures must form part of the risk assessment, including how lone workers can access support when they are at risk. These procedures need to be communicated with lone workers, support staff and anyone else involved. They must be tested regularly to ensure the control measures are suitable and sufficient.

5.4 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

This section is not relevant to the scope of this code of practice.

6. Emergency Arrangements

6.1 Emergency Planning

Emergency procedures must form part of the risk assessment, including how lone workers can access support when they are at risk. These procedures need to be communicated with

lone workers, support staff and anyone else involved. They must be tested regularly to ensure the control measures are suitable and sufficient.

6.2 Spillages / Loss of Containment

Where someone lone working maybe adversely affected by a chemical spillage or loss of containment, an emergency procedure must be devised to support the individual. This must be considered through the risk assessment process. The response must be tested periodically.

6.3 First Aid

The risk assessment must consider whether it is necessary for lone workers to be trained as first aiders.

6.4 Reporting Incidents & Accidents

If there is an immediate concern for safety, staff or students can contact the 24/7 University Security Team on 01273 873333 for assistance, and to request emergency service attendance if required.

If a member of staff has been involved in an incident where they felt threatened or were assaulted, or an incident occurred whilst lone working, an incident report must be made. The report must be completed via Sussex Direct – Incident Report online system by the line manager or the person affected if they are able to do so.

Staff must inform their line manager as soon as possible so that their manager can investigate what happened and review existing risk assessments and procedures.

If violence and aggression has been experienced from a student, the Student Discipline Team should be contacted to ensure repeat incidences can be tracked and reoccurrence can be prevented.

7. Transport

If personal safety of staff could be affected by the mode of transport they use for work purposes, transport must be considered through the risk assessment process.

8. Further Information / Guidance

The Suzy Lamplugh Trust – Suzy Lamplugh Trust

Health and Safety Executive (HSE) – Lone Working

HS G402 Guidance on Personal Safety and Lone Working – Health and Safety Team Website

9. Review & Audit

The University Health and Safety Team is responsible for monitoring and reviewing this code of practice. Reviews will be carried out every 3 years. The University Health and Safety Team will also carry out periodic themed audits on Faculty and Division arrangements.

10. Records & Retention Requirements

Risk assessments and other documentation related to personal safety and lone working should be kept for 5 years following the date they are superseded by a document review. For example, if a lone working risk assessment were carried out on 1st February 2024 and was reviewed a year later on 1st February 2025, the original should be kept until 1st February 2030 before being destroyed.

11. Relevant Legislation

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 – Legislation.gov.uk

Health and Safety at Work Act (HASAWA) 1974 – Legislation.gov.uk

12. References

Please see Sections 8 and 11.

13. Appendices

This section is not relevant to the scope of this code of practice.

14. Document Control

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