



Lumen Academy

Embrace Educate Empower

Work Related Stress Policy

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Document History

Version	Status		Date	Author	Summary Changes
V1			Sep 24	M Sethi	

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1. Introduction

An employee's mental and physical health can be affected by a number of factors which may or may not be work-related. Work-related stress is a significant cause of illness and is known to be linked with high levels of sickness absence and staff turnover. Work-related stress also has a negative impact on individual teams and the organisation as a whole.

This policy includes the guidance for:

1. Carrying out a preventative team/departmental work-related stress risk assessment and action plan.
2. Dealing with individual cases through a work-related stress individual action plan.

Lumen Academy's approach to managing work-related stress is based on the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) management standards for work-related stress. These standards identify six areas of risk and establish a framework for employers to use to tackle work-related stress.



2. Definition:

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines work-related stress as:

'... the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them.'

Reasonable pressure at work can be positive and help individuals to thrive. However, work-related stress can occur when pressure exceeds a person's capacity to cope. The stage at which excessive pressure leads to work-related stress will vary between individuals.

Stress is not a medical diagnosis. However, where stress is prolonged, it can lead to both physical and psychological ill health including anxiety and depression.

Work-related stress can also aggravate an existing mental health problem, making it harder to control.

3. Policy statement

It is the policy of Lumen Academy to take all reasonable and practicable steps to safeguard the health and safety of employees while at work. The academy is committed to:

- Identifying workplace sources of stress through a process of risk assessment.
- Reducing the risk of work-related stress as far as reasonably practicable through the development of good working practices, based on the Health and Safety Executive Management Standards.
- Supporting managers, supervisors and individual employees to recognise work related stress and the appropriate actions to take.
- Providing central and local support to employees who are experiencing work related stress to enable them to remain in work or support them in returning to work; and
- Defining responsibilities in relation to the management of work-related stress.

4. Responsibilities

Principal, Senior Leaders and the H&S representative

Principal, Senior leaders and the H&S representative are responsible for ensuring that arrangements for risk assessments are suitable and are communicated effectively, including a preventative team/departmental risk assessment for work-related stress. This risk assessment should use the Health and Safety Executive's management standard as a framework and follow the work-related stress risk assessment guidance accompanying this policy.

Line managers/supervisors

Line managers/supervisors have a duty to ensure that risks associated with activities undertaken are assessed, effectively managed, and controlled. They are therefore responsible for identifying, where possible, and responding appropriately to work related stress issues within their teams.

This may include:

- carrying out a preventative work-related stress risk assessment for the local area (further advice on this can be found in the guidance section of this policy;
- addressing potential causes of work-related stress;
- taking appropriate action when a member of staff indicates that they may be experiencing symptoms of work-related stress;

- proactively managing employee absence and gaining appropriate advice from HR.

Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- taking reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts or omissions;
- informing their line manager if they believe that they are experiencing work related stress or have concerns regarding other team members;
- working with their line manager to identify causes of work-related stress and possible control measures that may be put in place to manage the associated risks.

Members of staff who do not feel able to speak to their line manager, or who feel that their manager is not adequately addressing their concerns may speak directly to Principal.

Employees may also seek advice and support from their Trade Union representative or the Staff Counselling Service.

5. Useful information External resources

- HSE's management standards
- HSE information on work-related stress
- NHS advice and resources on work-related stress
- Advice and resources from the charity Mind on work and stress

6. Guidance:

(i) Completing the risk assessment and action plan (See Appendix 1)

There are four main stages to completing a work-related stress risk assessment.



Step one: Gather information and data on key stressors for our area/team

Before we start, it's helpful to gather the following types of information:

- exit interviews
- most recent staff survey results for our area (if available)
- local action plan for our area from the most recent staff survey
- notes from team meetings where stress has been discussed
- information from 1 to 1 conversations
- staff absence data
- staff reviews.

Step two: Complete the risk assessment adding in local control measure specific to our team/department/area of responsibility

Use the partially completed risk assessment template, which includes organisational level control measures, and add own more specific local control measures.

Local control measures to help manage risk could include things like team away days, flexible working, regular team meetings or an agreed process if someone is experiencing potential work-related stress.. Select and add them to your risk assessment (either as a control if already in place or as an action if identified as a control that is needed).

We can also add your own controls, unique to our area that are not included in the list.

It is a good practice to involve the team in this risk assessment process. They will be knowledgeable about the hazards involved in their work and control measures that can be implemented to reduce the risks.

Step three: Complete the action plan

Once our risk assessment is complete, think about what changes are needed. Do we need to introduce extra control measures? Add these to our action plan.

Prioritise the areas we feel have a higher level of risk; focusing on these will have the greatest impact. Some issues may require escalation whilst others may be more possible to control locally. The risk assessment will help us identify this and take appropriate action.

Both the risk assessment and action plan should be discussed with the team being assessed, as they may be able to offer valuable insights and suggestions for additional controls or the actions required.

Step four: Review the risk assessment and action plan

We recommend that staff review their risk assessment every 12 months. However, some circumstances will require a review sooner. These could include:

- increasing numbers of staff experiencing work-related stress
- increasing staff absence
- staff survey results indicating concern or an area requiring investigation
- when the team will experience, or has experienced, significant change.

(ii) Guidance on individual work-related stress risk assessment

Where a member of staff indicates that they may be experiencing work-related stress or following a period of absence due to work-related stress, an individual stress risk assessment can be undertaken. Line managers can use the individual risk assessment template (Appendix 2) as a guide to structuring their discussions with their members of staff. The template is simply a guide of suggested questions that can be used to identify concerns. The template is formulated around the six workplace work-related stressors (as specified in the Health and Safety Executive's management standard for work-related stress) and has space for additional questions to be added that might be useful or more appropriate to an individual's circumstances.

Any meeting to carry out an individual work-related stress risk assessment should be arranged by the line manager and involve the staff member and their representative if appropriate. Advice on this should be obtained through the HR manager. Line managers should schedule regular follow-up meetings with the staff member following the completion of an individual assessment to monitor and discuss any support mechanisms that were put into practice.

The flow diagram below outlines the procedure for both members of staff that have indicated that they are experiencing work-related stress symptoms or where the line manager has identified issues and for those individuals whose long-term sick leave has been attributed to work-related stress. Line managers are advised to seek advice from the HR team (Peninsula) who will be able to provide further guidance.

Signs of stress in individuals

If a member of a team is suffering from some of the following symptoms it may indicate that they are feeling the effects of stress.

Emotional symptoms:

- negative or depressive feeling
- disappointment with yourself
- increased emotional reactions - more tearful or sensitive or aggressive
- loneliness, withdrawn
- loss of motivation commitment and confidence
- mood swings (not behavioural).

Mental:

- confusion, indecision
- difficulty concentrating
- poor memory.

Changes from your normal behaviour:

- changes in eating habits
- increased smoking, drinking or drug taking 'to cope'
- mood swings effecting your behaviour
- changes in sleep patterns
- twitchy, nervous behaviour
- changes in attendance such as arriving later or taking more time off.

Please note these are indicators of behaviour of those experiencing stress.

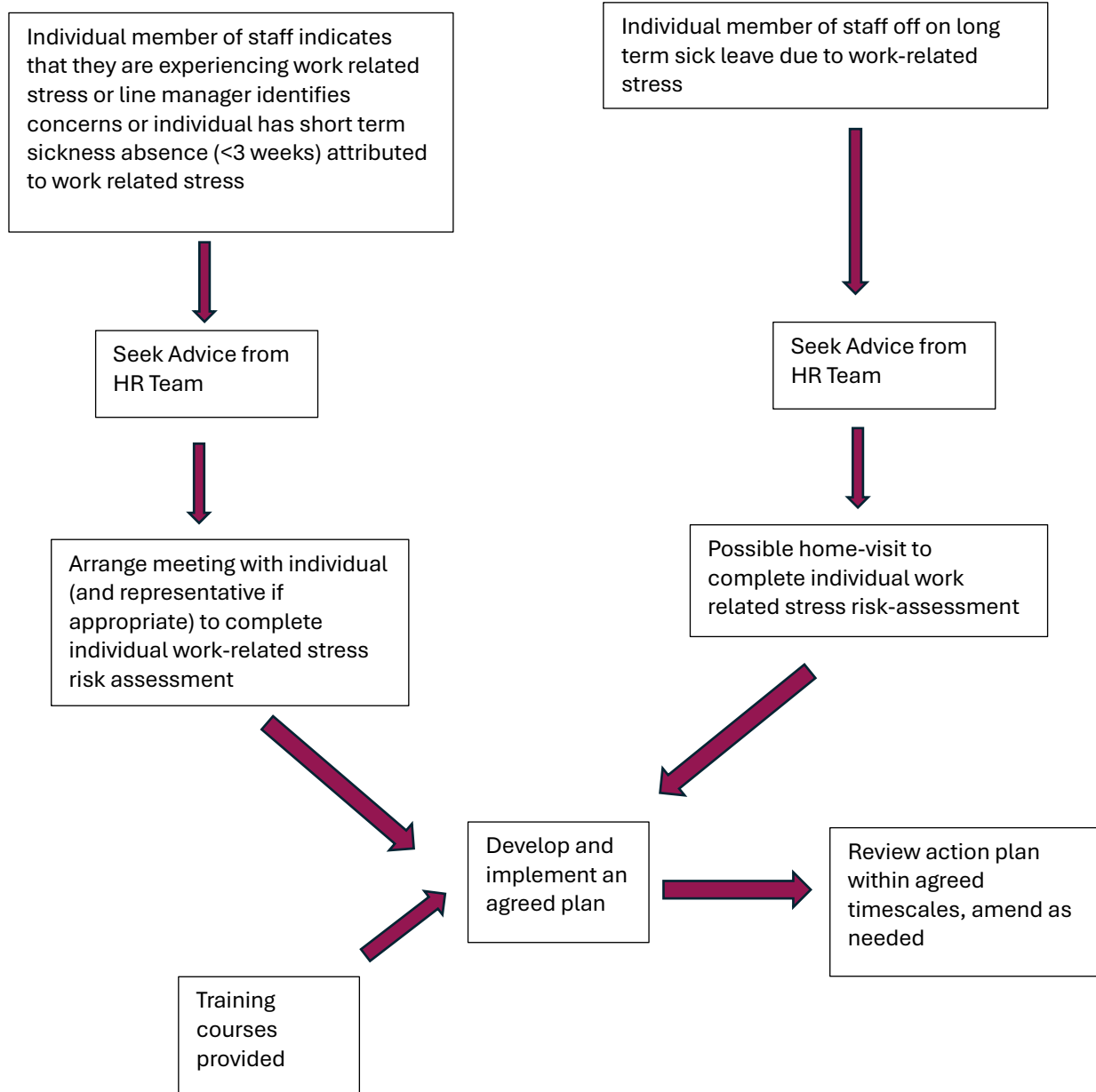
They may also be indicative of other conditions.

Signs of stress in a group:

- disputes and disaffection within the group
- increase in staff turnover
- increase in complaints and grievances
- increased sickness absence
- increased reports of stress
- difficulty in attracting new staff
- poor performance
- pupil dissatisfaction or complaints.

It is not up to the line manager to diagnose work-related stress. If you are concerned about a person, recommend they see their GP. The member of staff and manager are simply required to recognise that behaviours have changed, be aware that something is wrong and take prompt action. Take care not to over react to small changes in behaviour – action is needed when these behavioural changes continue. Use the symptoms above (both individual and group) as clues.

Flow Diagram for line Managers action:



Appendix – 1 Preventative department/team work-related stress risk assessment and action plan

Area covered: Date completed: Completed by:					
Hazards	Control measures in place	Action plan	Person responsible	Target date	Achieved (Y/N)
<p>Demands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workload and working patterns: • unachievable deadlines or amount of work • pressure to work very intensively or fast • Excessive hours expected • Inability to take sufficient breaks • Working patterns (e.g. shift work etc.) • Skills and abilities are not matched to job demands <p>Physical environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violence • Concerns over safety of work environment 	<p>Workload and working patterns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Time Regulations • Constraints to teaching availability process • Development review process available for all staff • Workload allocation principles (academic staff) • Flexible working • Staff Meetings • Range of communication tools available including video conferencing, email and messaging <p>Physical Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme of planned/routine maintenance and cleaning • Reporting processes for maintenance issues • Security Services support • Risk assessment processes in place 				

	<p>to manage risks associated with local work activities (including lone working)</p> <p>Add your own local controls relating to demands.</p>				
<p>Change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of information on change including reason for change, impact on individuals/jobs, and timescales. • Lack of consultation and opportunities for employees to influence proposals. 	<p>Change Management support and advice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications systems and processes in place (e.g., intranet, meetings and emails etc.) • Staff surveys provide opportunities for staff to raise concerns <p>Add your own local controls relating to change.</p>				
<p>Relationships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unacceptable behaviour potentially causing conflict, low morale, less cooperation and reduced productivity • Staff unaware of resources available and how to deal with unacceptable behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Behaviours model • Acceptable behaviour at work policy and guidance • Processes in place for staff to raise concerns formally and informally including: - Stand Up Speak Out guidance and Stand Up Speak Out Advocacy Service – Talk to an Advisor Service – Staff Grievance Procedure • Guidance and support from HR Business • Range of staff training available. 				

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of communication tools and social spaces in place including email, video calls, newsletters and blogs etc. <p>Add your own local controls relating to relationships.</p>				
<p>Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of support from colleagues • Lack of support from managers • Lack of understanding of support resources available to staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Mental Health First Aider • Range of support, policies and guidance from HR website /Brainbox • Regular communications to all staff using a range of methods • Employee Assistance Programme • Individuals action plan process for individuals experiencing or likely to be experiencing work related stress. • Range of staff training opportunities available including events, training and online resources <p>Add your own local controls relating to support.</p>				
<p>Control:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of control over how work is done and what work is undertaken • Lack of control over when breaks are taken 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible working accommodated on requests, where possible • Regular staff surveys carried out and action plans developed 				

<p>and working patterns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of control over pace of work • Staff do not feel encouraged to use their skills and initiative at work • Staff do not feel encouraged to develop new skills or undertake new/challenging work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development review process available for all staff • Range of staff training opportunities available. <p>Add your own local controls relating to control.</p>				
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Appendix – 2 Individual work-related stress risk assessment and action plan template

Individual work-related stress risk assessment		
Risk assessment completed by:	Individual:	Date:
Individual Symptoms and Sickness Patterns (if appropriate e.g. changes in sleeping patterns, feeling more anxious than normal, feeling low and/or uptight and any physical symptoms)		
Potential work-related stressors identified	Individual Concerns	Managers Comments
Demands		
What causes the individual to feel under unnecessary pressure?		
Are priorities clarified? Reflect on JD, if too generic ask individual to map out key aspects of the role		
Have deadlines been realistic and agreed?		
Does the individual have appropriate skills and knowledge to undertake the tasks?		
Does the individual have sufficient resources?		
Does the individual feel that the work is boring or repetitive?		
Is the individual able to take sufficient breaks ?		
Has the individual had to work very intensively?		
Control		
Is there clarity of who does what in the team?		
Has the manager provided enough guidance and support?		
Is there opportunity to develop skills?		
Does the individual feel they need more control over working patterns or the way that they carry out tasks?		
Support		
Is the level of communication appropriate with the manager, one -to -one meetings etc?		

Does the individual feel they are given supportive feedback on their work?		
Does the individual feel further team support would be helpful?		
Are there any external pressures that further support can be offered?		
Is there further training and development that the individual requires?		
Relationships		
Does the individual believe that they have been properly inducted into the role?		
Does the individual understand the key aspects of their role?		
Is there a clear reporting structure?		
Are the standards expected of individuals clearly outlined?		
Are there demands placed upon the individual that are not in line with the role?		
Are the goals and objectives clear for the team?		
Change		
Has the individual has been given opportunity to comment on change?		
Does the individual feel that they have been fully supported through change?		
Has the individual been supported through change by the team?		
Does the individual feel that further information or support is required and aware of support mechanisms?		
Other stressors		
Does the individual have other issues that might be affecting their work?		

Factors outside work: This list of questions has mainly focused on factors at work. However, there may be factors outside work, for example in your family life, which may have contributed to or added to the pressures at work. These may have made it harder to cope with demands at work that you would normally be able to cope with. You may want to share these issues with your line manager – they may be able to help at work. If

you do not feel happy telling your manager about these things, is there anyone else you can speak to such as your Principal or the HR team?

Action Plan				
Ref No	Agreed Actions	By Whom	By When	Review Date

		Date:
Signature (Individual)		
Signature Line Manager		

Reviewed By:

Monika Sethi

Sep 2024

Next Review Date:

Sep 2025

Approved by Director:

10th Sep 2024

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Monika Sethi', written in a cursive style.

Monika Sethi
Principal and Director