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NDCN Safety Policy 008: **Out of hours and lone working policy.**

2. Scope of Policy

This policy details the arrangements and responsibilities for the management of lone working and out of hours working within NDCN, note that local rules may apply

The objectives of this policy are to put into place procedures for the management of:

- Lone workers.
- Access and egress to workplaces outside normal working hours.
- Supervision of university workers outside normal working hours.
- Assessing the hazard of an activity and reducing the risk to the lowest achievable level.

This policy applies to all university workers, in particular, to managers and supervisors of staff and students and those who actively control contractors engaged on university business.

3. Introduction

It is part of every employer's responsibility to make adequate arrangements for the supervision of workers at all times. This must take into account not only the task but also the abilities and experiences of those who may be undertaking the work.

4. Definitions

Lone Workers

Staff (university and NHS), visiting academics, students, contractors engaged in university work and who work by themselves either in low traffic area or at such hours that there is no one within earshot (i.e. a call for help would remain unanswered).

Normal working hours*

07:00-19:00 hours, weekdays only (does not include bank holidays, or weekends).

* Certain building core hours will differ, please check local rules.

Out of hours

Any time outside of normal working hours.

Hazardous Areas

Areas where workers may be exposed to risks which are greater than those normally encountered within low risk environments such as offices. These areas include Laboratories.

5. Policy statement

The Department and Supervisors will assess and control the risks for workers who are lone working, or working out of hours.

In accordance with the above the Department will:

- Assess and categorise the risks associated with lone working.
- Assess and categorise the risks associated with out of hours working.
- Provide adequate controls based on these assessments.

Examples of such controls could include the provision of:

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- Suitable training.
- Occupational Health fitness assessments for workers.
- Suitable emergency equipment and emergency arrangements.
- Adequate supervision.
- Adequate staffing to undertake the work safely.
- Defined work activities including written safe systems of work.

Staff will adhere to the following local rules:

- Inform and receive permission from an authorised person for any out of hours/lone working.
- Will read and understand the risk assessment associated with the work they will be doing.
- Sign in to and back out of the department when working out of hours.
- Know appropriate emergency procedures.

6. Categories of Work

All lone working or work activities undertaken out of hours must be subjected to a risk assessment by the line Manager/Supervisor. The assessment should initially allocate the activity to one of the following three categories (See appendix 1 for examples):

- Low Risk Activities
- Medium Risk Activities
- High Risk Activities

Low risk activities

- Can only be undertaken by persons authorised to do so by the line manager/supervisor.
- Work falling within this category is deemed to be safe to be undertaken out of hours.

Medium risk activities

- Can only be undertaken if there is at least one other person who is competent to make safe any work being undertaken and is also familiar with any emergency procedures, either in the same room or in an adjoining room. Workers must be authorised in writing by the line manager/supervisor.

High risk activities

- Can only be undertaken if there is at least one other person who is competent to make safe any work being undertaken and is also familiar with any emergency procedures in the same suite. Workers must be authorised, in writing, by the Head of Department or a senior supervisor.
- Suitable additional emergency arrangements, such as the provision of adequate first aid or fire safety measures must be in place.
- The Head of Department or Director of the building must approve the work.

7. Authorised Persons

Only authorised persons may enter hazardous areas outside core hours.

Authorised persons may include members of faculty, postgraduates, technicians, visiting research workers and persons of equivalent status who:

- Are directly associated with the hazardous area.
- Must be familiar with the layout of the building.
- Must be familiar with any emergency procedure.
- Have received a copy of, and understand, any applicable local safety rules and emergency arrangements.

All other persons unless accompanied by an authorised person must have been given written authorisation by their supervisor to enter the hazardous area out of hours. Supervisors must ensure that they are fully aware of all the above points and the risk assessment for the work, before issuing authorisation.

8. New Members of Staff and DPhil students

New members of staff and DPhil students will only be given core hour access until they have been working in the Department for at least one month and have:

- Demonstrated a suitable level of competence.
- Obtained written authorisation from their supervisor.
- Agreed to only undertake low /medium risk work.
- Shown they are familiar with the University and local safety policies and emergency procedures.

Requests must be directed to the relevant person for the area.

- West Wing Level 5 or 6: contact NDCN Facilities team.
- Wolfson: contact NDCN Facilities team.
- FMRIB: contact Sue Field or FMRIB Director for higher risk activities.

9. Undergraduates

Undergraduates are not permitted outside core working hours (7am-7pm). However, they can work out of hours if their project supervisor or another experienced member of the group is present.

10. Out of hours procedure

➤ **Signing in and out**

The Out of Hours register is used in case of a fire alarm to establish if anyone is missing from the assembly point.

Anyone working out of hours must sign up in the folder that can be found at the entrance of their floor/building and sign out upon leaving.

Any visitors coming in with an authorised person must also be signed in and signed out and must be supervised at all time.

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➤ **Lone working**

Where possible lone working should be avoided, however, there are instances when staff and students will require to lone work.

Lone workers must make use of a “Buddy system” to ensure that someone is always aware of their location whilst at work. The buddy must be able to promptly raise alarm in case of concerns.

The Buddy system relies on work colleagues who are familiar with the work place and share similar access to restricted areas.

- a) The lone worker must inform a work contact group of their intention to lone work, specifying the location and expected finishing time.
- b) A contact person amongst the group must acknowledge this communication.
- c) If working in a research group with only 1 member (the lone worker), the buddy system will be extended to another research group.
- d) Upon completion of the work the lone worker must send another message to inform the contact person(s) that they have left the building.
- e) If the lone worker has not been in communication within 15min after the expected finishing time, the contact person must try to get in touch with the lone worker by telephoning them.
- f) If the user is not contactable, then OUH Security Services must be informed immediately by ringing 01865857727 (A&E Office; Day & Night).
- g) The contact person must be able to give the location of the person lone working, this includes building, floor and room/area description.

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➤ **Emergency contacts:**

For urgent matters call the Facilities Team on call phone: 07521 161 549

For Security matters call the OUH Security team: 4444 (from OUH phone) or

11. Summary of requirements for categories of work

Risk category	Lone working	Authorisation	Additional emergency procedures
Low risk	Yes	Yes Line manager, supervisor, member of faculty	Buddy system if lone working
Medium risk	Yes	Line manager, supervisor, member of faculty	Buddy system if lone working
High risk	No	Head of department, senior supervisor	Strictly no lone working, people must work in pair.

12. Examples of locations, hazards and the appropriate control measures

Risk category	Activity	Hazard	Control measure
Low	Office Based-Lone Working	Illness	If Known illness then consideration should be given to restricting working hours alone to periods of less than one hour
		Fire	Evacuate as per local fire policy, report to security on 4444
		Intruder in the building	Report to security on 4444 never tackle an intruder.
Medium	Laboratory/workshop	Illness/fire/ Intruder in the building	As above
		Un-planned events	Workers must be familiar with emergency procedures e.g. chemical/biological spills
High	Working within specialised area or with specialized substance e.g. radiation Liquid Nitrogen, large quantities or highly toxic chemicals.	Illness/fire/ intruder in the building	As Above
		Un-planned event	Workers must be familiar with emergency procedures
		Potential long term effects	Continuous knowledge of COSHH form, engineering controls, PPE, medical surveillance

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		Failure control measures	Regular Maintenance, and routine testing
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