



## **Lone Working Policy**

The University of Lincoln's policy is to avoid the need to work alone where possible. Where this is not possible, a risk assessment will be carried out to identify and implement measures necessary to minimise any risk.

### **Legal Requirements**

There is no overall legal prohibition on working alone, but the general duties of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act and the specific duties of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations still apply. These require the identification of any hazards, assessment of any risks involved, and devising and implementing safe working arrangements to ensure that the risks are either eliminated or adequately controlled.

### **Responsibilities of Senior Managers, Heads of Department and Deans of Faculty**

- To ensure that all their staff are aware that a Risk Assessment must to be carried out and a Lone Working Approval form signed before lone working takes place.
- To identify circumstances where staff members may be expected to operate as a lone worker, and in the case of Faculties where students may be expected to operate in their studies as a lone worker.

To ensure that Risk Assessments are carried out in their area of responsibility and to

- Identify members of their team to undertake these risk assessments and ensure they have received suitable and sufficient training.
- Ensure that the safe working arrangements identified by the risk assessment are put into place to control or minimise the risks of lone working for all of their employees, students, visitors and contractors
- To ensure that the least hazardous procedures are used in all their operations to limit the exposure to risk of the lone worker. The extent of any supervision required is a management decision; it should not be left to individuals to decide that they require assistance.
- Grant, prohibit or rescind permission to those planning to engage in lone working activities
- Ensure that information about relevant hazards and related emergency procedures is given to all employees, students, visitors and contractors undertaking lone working
- Review the arrangements periodically

- Take appropriate action when non-compliance is brought to their attention
- Check that any reported accidents, hazards or near misses by those working alone are properly investigated, monitored and appropriate action taken, particularly to remedy any identified trends.

### **Responsibilities of line managers**

Line managers, including principal investigators, laboratory managers, maintenance team leaders etc. are responsible for:

- Implementing localised control measures to avoid 'lone working' situations within buildings and geographical locations where students and staff frequently work unsupervised, e.g. the library
- Completing person specific 'Lone Working' risk assessments or liaising with persons nominated to undertake the risk assessment.

NB A person specific risk assessment needs to consider the individual(s) involved as some may be at greater risk than others, for example new mothers and pregnant women.

- Ensure all team members required to undertake lone working are involved in the risk assessment process.
- Ensuring that any areas where members of their team may occasionally work alone are considered within activity based risk assessments. This may highlight a requirement to undertake specific lone working risk assessments when required.
- Communicate any findings from the risk assessment process to the member of staff undertaking lone working activities and clarify or review if the member of staff has any concerns.
- Ensuring that the least hazardous procedures are used
- Ensuring that any identified control measures are implemented, validated and monitored
- Ensuring a Lone Working Approval Form (Appendix Two) is completed and signed by Head of Department or Dean of Faculty.
- Forwarding a copy of the Lone Working Approval Form (Appendix Two) to the Estates Services Manager or respective Campus Manager (along with an attached copy of the risk assessment) when lone working is to be undertaken out of normal working hours (normal working hours are defined as 08:00 – 18:00).
- Ensuring that people under their control are competent to carry out designated tasks. Where an individual does not have the necessary competence, ensuring they are suitably supervised or prohibited from areas or tasks beyond their capabilities

- Ensuring employees or visitors under their control are provided with suitable and sufficient information, training, instruction and supervision
- Ensure records of any training and refresher training, for employees or visitors under their control, are maintained and retained.
- Ensuring that other local arrangements, including adequate measures to deal with fire, first aid, spillages, power failures and other emergencies, are in place, especially for secure areas
- Taking appropriate action when non-compliance is brought to their attention
- To ensure that employees report and record any incidents, threats, intimidation or other potential hazards and those details of any reported incidents are then passed to Senior Managers through the University's reporting system.
- Provide suitable advice and support to the employee following such an incident, including offering the University's counselling service if appropriate.
- If lone working is a regular occurrence, monitoring the individual by:
  - Visiting during the work,
  - Reviewing the work,
  - Ensuring the scope of the agreed work is not exceeded and
  - Checking that the risk assessment remains valid

### **Responsibilities of person undertaking the Risk Assessment**

- To undertake a suitable and sufficient risk assessment following the procedures detailed in this guidance and appendices
- Communicate the results of the assessment to Head of Department/ Dean of Faculty and all staff involved with, or potentially affected by the lone working e.g. the person working alone and anyone with a role to play in ensuring their safety.
- Keep a written record of the Risk assessment available for information and audit purposes

### **Responsibilities of staff**

All members of staff are:

- To be aware of the requirements of this policy. Particularly the requirement for lone working activities to be risk assessed and authorised before taking place.
- To notify their Line Manager of the existence/intention/need for lone working so that a Risk Assessment can be carried out and to raise any specific or personal concerns relating to lone working with their line manager.
- To work with the person carrying out the Risk Assessment to ensure that all aspects of the lone working are considered.
- To follow any control measures identified by the Risk assessment

- If an employee finds themselves in a situation that could be considered as lone working, they must ensure their line manager is aware of the circumstances at the earliest opportunity.
- Take reasonable care while at work for their own health and safety and for that of people who may be affected by their acts or omissions
- Not to misuse safety equipment or Safe Systems of Work provided by the University.
- Ensure that they are familiar with the University's and their department's procedures to deal with fire, first aid, spillages, power failures and other emergencies
- Follow the agreed procedures for emergency contact, such as:
  - Providing a contact number to their line manager
  - Informing their line manager or a work colleague of the time that he or she expects to leave the premises
  - Filling out the building entry log book on starting work outside normal hours and upon leaving the building, where such a log book is present in a building, or reporting to Security Control on starting and leaving if a log book is not present in the building
- Inform their line manager immediately if there are any problems or changes to arrangements
- Keep within the scope of the agreed work and work areas.
- To report all incidents and hazards to their Line manager and through the University's reporting system