Health and Wellbeing Policy

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Version history

July 2011: Policy introduced

January 2018: Sections reordered

January 2021: Reviewed by HR; no changes made

June 2022: A new Disabled staff section (section 2) added in response to feedback from our Staff DisAbility Network

July 2022: updates approved by SLT

April 2025: reviewed in light of staff feedback and updated to reflect hybrid working and roles and responsibilities

11 June 2025: Approved by the DVC (SRBD), who was deputising for the VC, on the recommendation of the SLT

Health and Wellbeing Policy

1.   Promoting, encouraging and supporting health and wellbeing

1.1   We value the health and wellbeing of our staff and seek to support them through a number of initiatives related to wellbeing, work/life balance, health promotion and stress management.

1.2   We encourage staff to take full advantage of the support available to them to promote their health and welllbeing. This support includes:

- Our Employee Assistance programme
- Our occupational health service
- Free eye tests and discounted spectacles through our eye care voucher scheme
- Onsite free sport and fitness facilities including free gym membership and free classes
- Wellbeing resources
- Healthy food and drink choices at our catering outlets
- Detailed assessment of workstations with a variety of remedial treatments
- Our onsite sports injuries clinic
- Our family friendly policies and procedures

1.2   We provide tools to staff to help them manage their health and wellbeing and publish links to external sources of health and wellbeing support on the health and wellbeing section of the intranet.

1.3   We also offer staff access to a private health care plan through the Simply Health cash plan.

2.   Disabled staff

Our disability commitments are set out in the Disability section of our Equality and Diversity Policy. To demonstrate our commitment to disabled staff we have signed up as a Disability Confident Employer. We publish information for staff including guidance on disclosing a disability and a link to the support offered by Access to Work on our Disability Information and support webpage.

We have introduced a Reasonable Adjustments passport for disabled staff to document and transfer information about agreed reasonable adjustments relating to their disability from post to post, providing clarity and aiding transparency.

Our Disability Declaration Guidance and Form, are integrated into our HR system and confirm the points at which a member of staff can declare a disability and what action will be taken when they do, emphasising the importance of regular review and updating.

Our [disability declaration flow chart](#) summarises the declaration points and process to aid clarity and encourage declaration.

3. Mental health and wellbeing

To demonstrate our commitment to the mental wellbeing of our staff we have signed up to the [Mindful Employer Charter](#) for employers who are positive about mental health. We have introduced links to a range of staff support materials via our [Mental Health Support web page](#), including a link to the UCEA's Stress and mental wellbeing resources for Higher Education Institutions.

3.1 We have published [guidance from MIND](#) to help us effectively support and manage mental health in the workplace. We provide a suite of mental health awareness training for staff and we support fora for discussing mental health issues.

3.2 We have launched [Thrive: health and wellbeing](#), published [on our Mental Health support page](#), a collection of workshops and activities that will provide staff with the knowledge and strategies to empower and improve the health and wellbeing of themselves and their staff.

4. Work/life balance

4.1 The university is committed to promoting the work/life balance of its staff to help staff manage the demands of their work and home lives.

4.2 To assist staff, the university has a range of [family friendly policies and procedures](#), to create a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere.

4.3 Our [Hybrid Working Policy](#) emphasises the value that the University places on staff health; and recognises that hybrid working can enable staff to optimise their time and wellbeing and that carefully managed flexibility can be beneficial to staff.

5. Stress management

5.1 We recognise that stress is a health and safety issue and acknowledge the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors as well as supporting those with health, financial or home based triggers.

5.2 We realise that some stress is good for us but we need to support staff who experience excessive work related stress.

5.3 We provide staff development workshops via the HR system, for staff on managing stress and developing personal resilience and have [web based resources](#) to help staff recognise stress in themselves and others and help them to manage it in a productive way. We also provide training to line managers on how to identify stress in their staff and how to manage staff who appear to be suffering from stress, which includes our published Stress Management Standard (see 5.7)

5.4   The Health and Safety (H&S) Committee and the Senior Management team maintain an overview of stress related sickness reported through staff surveys and sickness absence data. They also monitor sickness absence for pre-cursors of stress/mental well-being issues.

5.5   The H&S Committee routinely reviews current initiatives in place at the university and develops action plans for managing and reducing sickness absence and stress.

5.6   The Health and Safety Committee receives an annual report, which includes sickness absence levels; reasons for referrals to the Occupational Health service; and reasons for staff in general contacting the confidential Employee Assistance Programme.

5.7   Our Stress Management Standard, which includes stress risk assessment forms, assists managers to comply with Health and Safety (H&S) stress legislation and helps individual managers and staff avoid or manage excessive pressure and stress; and recognise when pressure becomes stressful.

6.   Occupational Health Service

6.1   Our Occupational Health (OH) Service assists with health promotion initiatives and information for staff.

7.   Union health and safety representatives

7.1   Each of our recognised trade unions have appointed health and safety representatives, who we consult via the Health and Safety Committee.

8.   Roles and responsibilities

8.1   Line Managers

Line managers have a responsibility to take reasonable steps to look after the health and wellbeing of their staff including managing and monitoring workloads and support and encourage the wellbeing of other colleagues.

They are asked to ensure that all staff are aware of and apply relevant Policies, including our Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Policy and related Guidance on working remotely and to ensure that all staff complete mandatory training.

As set out in our Hybrid Working Policy line managers should regularly check in with team members who are working remotely to ensure that they are well and that they feel supported and connected to their team members.

8.2   Staff

Staff are responsible for taking reasonable steps to look after their own health and wellbeing and follow the University's policies and procedures.

This includes reading and applying [relevant Policies](#), including our [DSE Policy and Guidance](#); completing mandatory and other relevant training and taking appropriate breaks.

8.3   Human Resources

The Human Resources team provides an advisory role to managers and signposts sources of health and wellbeing support and guidance to managers and to staff. HR advise managers on how to review, monitor and manage sickness absence in accordance with the University's [Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure](#). A member of the senior HR team attends Health and Safety Committee meetings and provides an annual health and wellbeing report to that committee which includes an annual report of reported sickness absence data.

8.4   Health and Safety team

The Health and Safety team provides advice and support to help keep the University a safe place to study and work. This intent is set out in our Health and Safety Policy Statement, and objectives are set and monitored by the Health and Safety Committee.