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**BIRMINGHAM NEWMAN UNIVERSITY**

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**Lone Working Procedure**

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**1. Introduction**

This procedure provides a framework for assessing and managing the risk to staff that work alone. It describes the management standards operating within Birmingham Newman University and outlines corporate and individual responsibilities for ensuring safe working practices.

Working alone increases the potential risk of harm for both staff and students. Many staff and students will work alone at some period during their working time at Birmingham Newman University or at other locations where they deliver courses. In the majority of cases they do so without significant risk.

**2. Scope**

This procedure applies to all staff of Birmingham Newman University, including part time staff, and casual workers, volunteers and researchers for which there is a duty of care. Specific duties are placed on managers who are responsible for people that are Lone Workers. The discharging of such responsibilities will be supported by the University through the provision of appropriate resources and training to ensure the procedure is carried out effectively.

**3. Lone Workers**

Lone Workers are those people who work by themselves without close or direct supervision, on the Birmingham Newman campus, or at another location.

They are, but not exclusively:–

- Staff who ordinarily work outside core hours as part of their normal duties, e.g. cleaners, security, porters, maintenance, caterers, bar staff etc.
- Staff working on campus, after normal core hours, in the evening, at night, or weekends
- Staff working at a location away from the campus or other University premises, including remote working, overseas travel, and research.

Individuals working alone in offices, where they are normally employed are unlikely to be at significant risk provided appropriate precautions are in place; however, this will not necessarily always be the case. Working alone may introduce or increase hazards, for example:

- Provision of First Aid
- Lack of assistance if required
- Sudden illness
- Violence and or unwanted behaviour from others
- Emergencies and failure of services

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Working alone can increase the risks to the Lone Worker, and may introduce additional specific risks that will require management action, following an assessment of the hazards.

#### **4. The Legal Position**

There is **no legal prohibition on working alone**. The HSAWA 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999 apply.

There are circumstances when the law requires at least two people to be involved in the work. These include:

- Entry to confined spaces (for example, storage tanks, manholes, boilers, these will also require a Permit to Work) and are normally maintenance staff.
- Young person(s) under the age of 18 years working with a specific machine must be supervised by a person with thorough knowledge of the machinery (for example food mixers and slicing machinery)

It is the responsibility of the line manager to ensure that its Lone Workers are not at any more risk than other staff whilst conducting their duties. This may require additional risk management controls as a precautionary measure to take account of the work content and unforeseeable emergencies, for example, fire, equipment failure, illness, accidents, violence, working off-site etc that may arise as a consequence of working alone.

#### **5. Management Responsibilities**

##### **5.1 Risk Assessments**

It is a corporate responsibility for employers to carry out a Risk Assessment to identify the hazards a Lone Worker may be exposed to in order to control those risks. Line managers, with support advice from the Health & Safety Manager, must ensure an appropriate Risk Assessment is completed for staff working alone. This may take the form of a generic assessment for a specific work area or may require an individual assessment depending on the nature and arrangements for the lone working.

##### **5.2 Approval noted**

In particular, where an employee is working at a predetermined location or venue off the main university campus, then the line manager must ensure that approval for lone working has been noted to authorise the lone work activity. This is to ensure the line manager responsible for the Lone Worker has obtained a copy of the Health and Safety Policy, and statement of security arrangements from the owners, or persons responsible for the premises where the staff member will be located.

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**5.3 Working Time Directive**

The line manager is responsible for ensuring The Working Time Directive (WTD) is complied with, in regard to the travel time taken to and from the location where the work takes place, as this forms part of the working day. **Guidance on both the Working Time Directive and H&S requirements are available from Human Resources Health & Safety.**

**5.4 Medical Suitability**

The lone worker's line manager must take account of individuals that are required to work alone and have declared a medical condition that may inhibit or may make them unsuitable for working alone. Where there may be a concern, advice should be sought from Human Resources, as the employee may need to be referred to an Occupational Health Physician before lone working can be authorised.

General advice on health-related issues and suitability may be obtained from the Human Resources Department.

**6. The Lone Worker Responsibilities**

Under the HASAWA 1974 Part 1 section 7. The Lone Worker has a duty in law to co-operate with their employer in all matters relating to Health and Safety procedures, this is in order for the employer to comply with their statutory duties.

The Lone Worker must: –

- Comply with the lone working arrangements
- Attend identified Health and Safety training relating to Lone Working which may include personal safety training, as referred to in training and supervision.
- Ensure that any students for whom they are the supervisor, and who is expected to work alone is competent and safe to do so and has been advised of any risks associated with the work they have been tasked to carry out.
- Ensure they understand how to use a personal alarm and ensuring they keep it with them at all times
- Take reasonable care for their own safety in accordance with the HASAWA and not take unnecessary risks or actions which may jeopardise their safety and inform their line manager of any relevant medical conditions.

**7. Training and Supervision**

Training is particularly important where there is limited or no supervision of the Lone Worker. In such cases the:

- Lone Worker should be sufficiently experienced to fully understand the risks and precautions that may be required (refer to Risk Assessment)

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- Lone Worker should be competent to deal with unusual or new circumstances beyond their training or specialism, and know when to stop and seek advice
- The line manager responsible for the lone worker should set limits on what may or may not be done whilst working alone (refer to Risk Assessment)
- Where appropriate, arrangements should be made to ensure that the Lone Worker can contact their department to confirm that they have reached their place of work safely, and at the completion of their duties have returned safely
- Specialist training will be offered to staff, identified as Lone Workers, and their line managers on personal safety.

The extent of the supervision required depends upon the risks identified by a Risk Assessment, and the ability of the Lone Worker to identify and handle Health and Safety issues. Staff new to the job and or they may need to be accompanied until a satisfactory level of competence is achieved.

If identified in risk assessment action plans, the line manager and or the Health and Safety Manager may visit the location where the lone worker carries out their duties to observe the conditions in which the Lone Worker operates.

### 8. Related Policies

This procedure should be read in conjunction with related policies and guidance to ensure full Health & Safety compliance for lone working. This is not an exhaustive list of policies and includes the:

- Security Policy
- Staff Driving at Work Procedure
- Personal Protective Equipment Procedure
- Working Time Directive Policy
- New and Expectant Mothers Procedure
- Staff Manual Handling Procedure
- Staff Overseas Travel Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Remote Working Framework
- Research Ethics Policy (Committee)

**This Lone Working procedure supersedes all previous Lone Working procedures and shall be reviewed at no less than 3 yearly intervals**

<b>Presented to Health and Safety Committee:</b>	<b>July 2024</b>
<b>Ratified by University Management Team:</b>	<b>September 2024</b>