|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Title: | Lone Working |
| Type: | Policy/Guidance |
| Date: | 04/11/2020 |
| Author/Role: | Lilian Andoh  Faculty Business Manager (Safety Lead) |
| Distribution: | All Staff (via School safety leads and School Heads) |

**SUMMARY**

The following procedures detail the responsibilities and arrangements relating to lone working by staff and UG/PGT & PGR students in the Faculty of Social Science & Public Policy, and provide a checklist to assist in the production of a risk assessment including lone working and safe system of work.

**Definition:**

HSE definition: “Lone workers are those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision.” Lone working could occur both out of hours where support would be reduced and during the normal working day.

**Background:**

There are few specific legal prohibitions on lone working e.g. confined spaces. However, the process of competent risk assessment will identify certain circumstances where the risks involved are not able to be adequately controlled, and where lone working is therefore, not acceptable. This document identifies typical work scenarios where this might be the case. Where lone working does take place on University premises, the arrangements which must be made are described below. A lone worker checklist is provided in appendix 2.

**Responsibilities**

The Head of Departments (academics & students) and Head of School Administration (professional services) are responsible for ensuring that supervisors and line managers are following the policy/procedure outlined in this document. Therefore, the Heads are responsible for following the requirements for staff and students and individual staff/student are responsible for following instructions and controls.

All individual members of staff/student have a responsibility for following the requirements in this document, and any specific control measures listed in the risk assessment, to ensure their own safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| The following list is intended to provide guidelines for line managers/ research supervisors and safety officers when considering lone working arrangements for staff/student. | |
| NO | **Reasons why work cannot be conducted while alone:**   1. risk control measures for the activity cannot be implemented if an individual is working alone, e.g. footing a ladder 2. worker is under 18 years old (Young Person) 3. when emergency procedures rely on the presence of others e.g. operating emergency stop buttons, implementing/assisting spill procedures, responding to monitor alarms 4. some hazard-specific activities must not be carried out while alone (legal requirement, or are considered too hazardous) |
| POSSIBLE | 1. Activities that can ONLY be carried out once emergency procedures and additional control measures have been put in place (see table 1 below) |
| YES | 1. Activities that can be carried out safely whilst working alone but with an awareness of the general emergency procedures to be considered where applicable (see table 1 below) |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 1** | | |
| **Activity** |  | **Additional control measures** |
| Young persons (under 18) | 2 |  |
| Lifting or moving heavy loads | 1 |  |
| Interviewing members of the public/research participants in their home or isolated locations where the interviewee is not vetted and/or the interviewer is vulnerable | 1 |  |
| Work with:   * large volumes of hazardous liquids, e.g. corrosives, flammables * asphyxiants, e.g. carbon dioxide * substances that react violently, e.g. explosives, toxic gas evolved   decanting cryogenic substances | 3 |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** |  | **Additional control measures** |
| Work above or near water e.g. tanks, ponds, rivers, canals etc. | 5 | Only once controls identified after a detailed assessment of local conditions. |
| Interviewing members of the public/research participants in their home or isolated locations | 5 | If interviewee vetted and/or interviewer not vulnerable  Lone worker to inform line manager/research supervisor of when lone working is to be undertaken, supply a contact number and location in case of an emergency.  Regular contact, or ‘buddy check in’ as a robust control measure in these scenarios.  e.g. texting or calling every so often. |
| Activities that include a risk of violence   * reception work * events e.g. exhibitions, social events * leaving or traveling between work locations (e.g. out-of-hours) | 5 | Lone worker to inform line manager/research supervisor of when lone working is to be undertaken, supply a contact number and location in case of an emergency. Lone worker should also Include length of expected work and check in with line manager/supervisor post-work. |
| Undergraduate and postgraduate-taught laboratory project work | 5 | Strong justification required - Students are encouraged to follow the local lab rules and procedures and ascertain the nature of the laboratory work to be undertaken in advance. Consultation should be made with lab managers, technical staff etc. prior to submission of a risk assessment. |
| Isolated/remote locations   * storeroom, plant room, cold room, clean room, interview room * riverbank, moorland, seashore | 5 | Lone worker to inform line manager/research supervisor of when lone working is to be undertaken, supply a contact number and location in case of an emergency (Regular contact, or ‘buddy check in’ as a robust alternative control measure).  If in campus, lone worker to inform security staff of their presence and location by using the signing-in books (where these exist). Lone worker should inform security of the length of expected work and ensure they check in post work. |
| Checking equipment/experiments left running for extended periods (i.e. unattended) | 6 |  |
| Work with microscopes/analytical equipment | 6 |  |
| Laboratory work involving cleaning and low risk material preparation | 6 |  |
| Office-based work | 6 |  |

For research and teaching labs, it is advised that staff should follow the existing lab policy/protocols.

In many situations e.g. typical office work, the activity can take place without additional precautions or with minor adjustments to working practices. In offices, for example, the risk of accidental injury is very low. The main perceived risk may be to personal safety and security, either from intruders in the building, or from walking alone to use public transport, particularly if this is late at night or in the dark. Basic precautions can be taken, such as locking the office door, keeping to well-lit areas, not taking short-cuts.

At all times, staff and students should use existing, recognised building practices for access and egress. This includes the use of signing-in books (where these exist) or other means of keeping records of who is in buildings out-of-hours.

**Lone workers should be aware of procedures in emergency situations:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Lone Worker Emergency Procedures**  Arrangements for normal working hours may be different or need to be supplemented when working out-of-hours | | |
|  | **Normal working hours** | **Additional procedures for out-of-hours work** |
| **How to contact Security**  **(see Appendix 1 for details)** | Ensure the lone worker has the local number for contacting Security internally and if using a mobile phone  If a panic button is installed staff must know how/when to use it and what to expect as a response. | Ensure that passenger lift alarms/telephones are responded to out-of-hours  Access to the building is controlled, e.g. by swipe card  Consider personal security and transport arrangements when leaving the workplace late at night |
| **How to raise the alarm on discovering a fire** | As displayed on fire action notices |  |
| **Evacuation procedures** | As displayed on fire action notices | Ensure normal evacuation routes are available out-of-hours, i.e. some routes may be locked-off for security reasons.  On leaving the building the lone worker must report to the fire brigade or Security, if in attendance. |
| **Accidents/Incidents** | How to report accidents and incidents (including non-injury incidents).  [Airsweb](https://internal.kcl.ac.uk/about/ps/safety/emergency/accident-and-incident-reporting) | Next day if not practical out-of-hours  [Airsweb](https://internal.kcl.ac.uk/about/ps/safety/emergency/accident-and-incident-reporting) |
| **First aid arrangements** | Location of the nearest first aid box.  How to contact the nearest first aider. | Ensure nearest first aid box is available (e.g. not locked away).  Are there first aiders available? Identify alternative first aid provision. Contact security if in doubt. |

**APPENDIX 1**

**Security contact details for each campus**

|  |
| --- |
| For day to day campus and residence please see [here](https://internal.kcl.ac.uk/about/ps/estates/reception-security/Security/Contact-Us)  Emergency Contact Information:   * For KCL premises at either Strand, Waterloo, Guy’s, or Denmark Hill campus call 0207 848 2222 (ext. 82222) * For NHS Trust premises call:   + Guys -  0207 188 6600 or 0207 188 6611   + St Thomas’ -  0207 188 6622 or 0207 188 6633 * See the [Emergency contacts page](https://internal.kcl.ac.uk/howto/contact/emergencies)for further information. |

**APPENDIX 2**

**Lone worker checklist**

This checklist is an aide-memoire to assist in the production of an activity-based risk assessment and safe system of work. It is not exhaustive and should be developed and refined further for specific circumstances.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Section 1: The workplace and work risks | | | | | | | | | |
| Question | | Yes | | No | | N/A | | Comments | |
| 1. Does the workplace present any special risks to a person working alone? | |  | |  | |  | |  | |
| 2. Is there safe access and egress? | |  | |  | |  | |  | |
| 3. Can all equipment to be used during the lone working be safely handled and used by a lone person? | |  | |  | |  | |  | |
| 4. Can all substances (considering properties, quantity, and frequency of use) be handled safely and used by a lone person (including accidental release/spill of harmful substances)? | |  | |  | |  | |  | |
| 5. Can any manual handling that may be carried out be safely done by a lone person? | |  | |  | |  | |  | |
| 6. Is there a risk of violence? | |  | |  | |  | |  | |
| 7. Are persons of increased vulnerability working alone at a higher risk? | |  | |  | |  | |  | |
| 8. Are there adequate arrangements for travel to and from the work? | |  | |  | |  | |  | |
| 9. Are adequate first-aid facilities available? | |  | |  | |  | |  | |
| 10. Is there a need to train the lone worker in first aid, hostile awareness, self-defence etc.? | |  | |  | |  | |  | |
| 11. In an emergency can help, including internal (such as first aiders) and external (such as emergency service personnel) find and reach the lone worker easily? | |  | |  | |  | |  | |
|  | | | | | | | | |
| **Section 2: Communication and Supervision** | | | | | | | | |
| **Question** | **Yes** | | **No** | | **N/A** | | **Comments** | |
| 12. Are there arrangements for regular contact between the lone worker and the supervisor? |  | |  | |  | |  | |
| 13. Will supervisors periodically visit the lone worker? |  | |  | |  | |  | |
| 14. Are automatic monitoring and warning devices appropriate and used (e.g. personal movement or inactivity alarms, radio panic alarms, etc)? |  | |  | |  | |  | |
| 15. Is there easy access at all times to communication with the "outside world" and emergency services? |  | |  | |  | |  | |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Section 3: The lone worker** | | | | |
| **Question** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** | **Comments** |
| 16. Does the lone worker have any medical condition that increases the risk of working alone? |  | NO |  |  |
| 17. Does the lone worker have any medical condition such that any foreseeable emergencies may impose additional physical and mental burdens which are unacceptable? |  | NO |  |  |
| 18. Is the lone worker sufficiently experienced? | YES |  |  |  |
| 19. Is the lone worker provided with adequate information about the risks involved with the tasks and the precautions to be taken? | YES |  |  |  |
| 20. Is the lone worker provided with suitable training to allow the premises, equipment, any substances, and protective equipment to be safely used? | YES |  |  |  |
| 21. Is the lone worker provided with suitable training to allow them to deal with any foreseeable emergencies? | YES |  |  |  |

Lilian Andoh

SSPP Faculty Health & Safety Committee

November 2020