**FRAMEWORK POLICY STATEMENT FOR**

**OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH**

**1. Introduction**

1.1 Occupational Health (OH) has been defined by the Health and Safety Commission as embracing:

* The effect of work on health
* The effect of health on work
* Rehabilitation and recovery programmes
* Helping the disabled to secure and retain work
* Managing work related aspects of illness and helping staff to make informed choices regarding life-style issues

1.2 The OH service at Oxford Brookes University (OBU) aims to work collaboratively with management and employees to reduce the likelihood of harm to health and to promote the well-being of employees to enable them to work safely and productively and to:

* Identify health problems and fitness for work issues at an early stage
* Monitor the health of OBU employees
* Promote employee wellbeing and healthy living

1.3 OH cannot replace an individual’s General Practitioner (GP) who remains the primary carer. All employees and students need to be registered with a GP

**2. The Statutory Framework**

2.1 The Health and Safety at Work Act (HASAW 1974) states that employers should ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, give consideration to the health, safety and welfare at work of its employees. The Management of Health and Safety Regulations (1992) builds on the HSW Act to require that employers:

* Make sufficient assessments of the risks to the health and safety of employees (Reg 3)
* Gives due consideration to employee’s capabilities and levels of training, knowledge and experience to undertake tasks (Reg 11)

2.2 Employers are required to undertake risk assessments of both physical and psychological hazards.

**3. Purpose**

3.1 This document sets out OBU’s policy and arrangements to deal with workplace health concerns arising from the University’s activities or premises.

**4. Principles**

4.1 OBU is committed to ensuring that the potential for ill health or injury arising from University activities or premises is reduced at source to the lowest level that is reasonably practicable. It recognises that this duty of care for its staff covers both mental health and physical health at work. It also applies in certain circumstances to its students.

4.2 OBU aims to ensure the early identification and management of occupational ill health and to enable staff to raise, discuss and resolve issues through the involvement of and consultation with Safety Representatives.

4.3 OBU aims to develop a framework to ensure that managers and employees are aware of the nature, causes and effects of ill health. We need to achieve this by the provision of information and guidance in the form of university policies and through the use of risk assessment to identify risks to health and to establish appropriate health checks. OBU provides training, support and health education to inform managers and staff about the issues.

4.4 OBU will ensure that employees whose health is identified as particularly at risk at work are provided with appropriate management and advice while recognising the need for confidentiality to be maintained.

4.5 OH practitioners will work collaboratively with both managers and employees to ensure the effective use of the OH service. A clear and shared understanding of the legal and professional obligations of both practitioner and employer, together with the sensitive handling of confidential information are keys to achieving this.

4.6 OBU will monitor the scale of occupational ill health and the effectiveness of its measures to reduce it.

4.7 OBU provides competent specialist OH advice and services to employees and managers. This support is extended to student in situations where they are carrying out activities that could pose a risk to their health as part of their coursework.

4.8 The OH service will ensure that medical information relating to employees is treated by the OH service in strict confidence in line with medical ethics and data protection requirements.

**5. Professional Standards**

5.1 The OH service is nurse led. OBU employs two OH Advisers who have recordable qualifications on the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Register as “Specialist Practitioner” (Occupational Health Nursing).

5.2 OH Physicians contracted to provide medical advice to OBU employees are members of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine and will have Specialist Physician status.

5.3 OH Practitioners are employed by OBU and associates / contractors are required to work within their Professional Code of Conduct and are accountable to the Professional Body

5.4 OH practitioners employed at OBU are guided by the ethical codes of conduct and the requirements of clinical governance agenda.

**6. Responsibilities**

6.1 Deans, Heads of Department and Managers

6.1.1 Managers must ensure that the health of staff is not adversely affected by their work. They must:

* Ensure that work activities and premises are assessed and designed so far as is reasonably practicable so that they will not lead to ill health
* Ensure that employees are advised of the risk and provided with appropriate training
* Respond to ill health as it arises among their employees
* Ensure that there are appropriate work plans for employees at significant risk
	1. Employee Responsibilities

6.2.1 Employees are responsible for their own health and safety and for taking advantage of the OH support provided by the University.

* + 1. Student Responsibilities

6.3.1 Students are responsible for their own health and safety and should ensure they are registered with a General Practitioner. Students should contact the OH service if they are concerned that their health is at risk from activities they carry out as part of their coursework.

6.4 Senior OH Adviser

6.4.1 The Senior OHA is responsible for the development of OH policy, standards, provision, arrangements and contract management in the delivery of the OH services to managers and employees of OBU. These services include:

* OH policy and guidance development
* Fitness for work assessments
* Health surveillance
* Clinical services
* Health education/promotion
* First aid arrangements
* Data management

**7. Health Records**

7.1 The OH service is responsible for the safe keeping of confidential employee health records in line with the OH Records Retention Policy.

**8. Complaints**

8.1 Employees or Managers who have concerns about the OH Service they have experienced should seek to resolve these in the first instance with the practitioners (OH Administrator, Occupational Health Advisers, OH Physician or Counsellors) concerned.

8.2 If they are not satisfied with the response by the practitioner this should be put in writing to the Senior OH Adviser or to the Director of HR through the employee’s Line Manager who will formally:

* Advise the HR Director that a complaint has been made (if it is lodged with the Senior OH Adviser)
* Consult with the appropriate Professional Body
* Investigate the complaint – this may be carried out internally or externally
* In some cases it may be appropriate for a complaint to be investigated by an appropriately qualified external professional
* Provide a written response to a complaint within ten working days

 **9. Legislation**

9.1 OH practitioners will take account of the following legislation when giving health advice. OH protocols will ensure compliance with relevant OBU policies including:

* Access to Medical Reports Act 1988
* Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
* Equality Act 2010
* Management of health ad Safety at Work Regulations 1992
* Working Time Directive Regulations 1998
* Human Rights Act 1998
* Race Relations Act 1976 & Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
* Sex Discrimination Act 1975

**10. Policies and Guidance**

10.1 This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following linked documents:

* Managing Absence from Work Due to Ill-health
* Policy for the Prevention and Management of Stress in the Workplace
* Occupational Health Records Policy
* Occupational Health Policy for Workplace Health Surveillance
* Hepatitis B Immunisation Policy
* Policy for the Management of Health Concerns in Food Handlers

Oxford Brookes Health and Safety Notices:

* OBUHSN-10 First Aid Facilities and Arrangements
* OBUHSN-11 Accident, Incidence, Dangerous Occurrence and Disease Reporting and Investigations
* OBUHSN-19 Hazardous Substances
* OBUHSN-20 Noise
* OBUHSN-23 Skin Management
* OBUHSN-31 Working Alone Safely
* OBUHSN-32 Safe Use of Display Screen Equipment
* OBUHSN-34 Manual Handling
* OBUHSN-36 Risk Assessment
* OBUHSN-38 Travelling and Working Overseas
* OBUHSN-39 Respiratory Policy

NB: This list is not exhaustive. For OBU Health and Safety Manual and full list of policies <http://www.brookes.ac.uk/services/hr/health_safety/docs/>

**Date of next review:** June 2017