# Individual Stress Risk Assessment

| **Date:** |  | **Department:** |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Employee:** |  | **Line Manager:** |  |
| **Job title:** |  | **Job title:** |  |

Is there an occupational health (OH) report for this employee? **Yes/No**

If there is an existing OH report reference should be made to it. If not, you should make an [OH referral](https://www.brookes.ac.uk/staff/working-at-brookes/health-safety-and-wellbeing/occupational-health/appointments-and-referrals)\* if:

* an employee has been off work for more than 2 weeks with work-related stress or a related mental health condition
* the employee has a disability[[1]](#footnote-1) noting that the university must make reasonable adjustments[[2]](#footnote-2) for people who have a disability
* you feel that you need additional guidance or information relating to the impact of work on health to be able to determine appropriate actions.

\*Note: Before a referral is made you should discuss the need for a referral with the individual concerned.

## Sickness absence over the last 6 months:

| **Start date** | **Days absent** | **Reason for absence** |
| --- | --- | --- |
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| **Overview of role:** |
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## Individual assessment

The following section lists some factors that can lead to work-related stress. It can be useful to spend some time thinking about these and to make some notes in advance of the meeting to inform discussion.

| **Risk factors**  (for further information see [attached notes](#_i492296i2l1z)) | **Is this an area of concern?** | **Nature of concern & how it impacts individual wellbeing** | **Any other impact e.g. service delivery, student welfare** | **What could help prevent or manage the risk?** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Resources & communication** - I don’t feel appropriately informed or equipped to do my role | yes/no |  |  |  |
| **Control -** I don’t feel I have enough say in how things are done | yes/no |  |  |  |
| **Balanced workload/ Demands -** I don’t have an appropriate work-life balance /  I have an excessive or inadequate workload | yes/no |  |  |  |
| **Job security** - I feel insecure in my job/role | yes/no |  |  |  |
| **Change -** I feel negatively impacted by change | yes/no |  |  |  |
| **Work relationships -** I experience poor or unsupportive relationships with colleagues or managers/ I experience discrimination, bullying or harassment | yes/no |  |  |  |
| **Job conditions -** I am exposed to dangerous, unpleasant or unmotivating working conditions/ my concerns are not addressed/ I have a lack of opportunity to progress | yes/no |  |  |  |
| **Role -** I am not clear about roles & responsibilities/ there are conflicting/unclear requirements | yes/no |  |  |  |

## Any other work-related risks/concerns identified?

| **What is the risk?** | **Nature of concern & how it impacts individual wellbeing** | **Any other impact e.g. service delivery, student welfare** | **What could help prevent or manage the risk?** |
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**Are there any personal/external factors that could be impacting work?** (examples might include health concerns (self or others), financial/legal concerns, family/relationship concerns. Note: the [confidential helpline](https://sites.google.com/brookes.ac.uk/employeeassistanceprogramme/confidential-helpline) provided with the Employee Assistance Programme provides confidential emotional support and practical guidance by phone 24/7, 365 days a year if you do not wish to discuss your personal circumstances)

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## Action Plan

The action plan should seek to address **the areas of concern** identified above. It should be developed in consultation with the employee to ensure that identified actions will address the concerns raised. It should also take into account any OH advice.

| **Issue to be addressed** | **Action to be taken** | **By whom** | **By when** | **Progress** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
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## Phased return to work?

It may be appropriate for staff who have been on extended periods of sick leave to have a Return to Work Plan and/or a Phased Return To Work. Further information about return-to-work plans and phased return-to-work can be found in the [Policy for managing absence from work due to ill-health](https://www.brookes.ac.uk/staff/working-at-brookes/employment-policies/absence/managing-absence-from-work-due-to-ill-health)

Is a return-to-work plan and/or phased return-to-work plan to be considered? **yes/no/not applicable [link to plan as applicable]**

## Individual actions/Engaging with wellbeing resources

The University’s [policy for the prevention and management of work-related stress](https://www.brookes.ac.uk/staff/working-at-brookes/employment-policies/stress) recognises the duty of care it has towards its staff and the legal duty it has to identify, assess and respond to occupational causes of stress. It also notes the responsibility of every employee to take reasonable care of their own health and wellbeing and to take advantage of opportunities for counselling, training or other relevant activities when recommended.

There is [guidance](https://www.brookes.ac.uk/staff/working-at-brookes/health-safety-and-wellbeing/wellbeing/stress-management/tips-for-managing-personal-stress) available to support individuals to reflect on the individual actions they might take to support their wellbeing and engage with the available wellbeing resources. It is recognised that someone may well not wish to disclose every aspect of this process, however, as part of the risk assessment discussion you should seek to discuss the examples provided and seek to capture some individual actions below, where applicable.

| **Focus** | **Activities** | **Timeframe** | **How will I know if it has helped?** |
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## Review

It is important to have regular check-ins to check how things are going,

**Dates for follow-up meetings:**

**Review meetings**

To discuss:

* Have identified actions been progressed?
* Have any adjustments/actions helped?
* Do you feel you are supported? What if anything could improve support?
* Check awareness of wider help & support available

If work continues to be affected, consider referral to Occupational Health if not already in progress.

# Main risks related to WRS and associated examples of good practice Appendix 1

| **What are the risks?** | | **What is good practice? (**As far as is reasonably practicable\*) |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Resources & communication** | **People don’t feel appropriately informed or equipped to do their roles** | **People are informed and equipped to do their job:** -They know what is happening in the team and wider organisation  - They receive regular and constructive feedback  - They have adequate training/guidance for all aspects of their role  - They have the necessary equipment and resources to do their jobs effectively |
| **Control** | **People don’t feel they have enough say in how things are done** | **People feel they have an appropriate sense of control:** - They have some freedom to work in a way that suits them (autonomy)  - They have a say/involvement in decisions that most impact them  - They have an opportunity to make suggestions and share ideas  - They have input/influence over individual objectives and performance targets  - They are not subject to excessive supervision  - They are encouraged to use their skills, abilities and initiative to do their work. |
| **Balanced workload/**  **Demands** | **People don’t have appropriate work-life balance / have excessive or inadequate workloads** | **Jobs are realistic and manageable and people are supported to address any workload concerns so they can cope with the demands of their jobs:** - They do not work excessively long hours or routinely work unsociable hours  - They do not feel that work (incl work-related travel) interferes inappropriately with home/personal life (work-life balance)  - They are not routinely subjected to unrealistic deadlines and generally feel they have sufficient time to do their work well  - Jobs are designed to be within the capabilities of colleagues.  - They are not overloaded by technology and/or other systems/processes  - They are supported to manage their time/workload  - Concerns about workload/demands are listened to and addressed. |
| **Job security** | **People feel insecure in their jobs** | **People feel a level of security in their jobs and that where any changes impacting job security are made, such as restructures, these will be handled considerately:** - There is adequate and timely colleague consultation on changes and opportunities for colleagues to influence proposals.  - People involved in restructures/change are provided with adequate support to adapt to the changes  - There is not an over-reliance on temporary contracts  - They feel that their skills and roles are developed so that they do not become 'redundant' in the future |
| **Change** | **People are negatively impacted by change due to lack of understanding/ engagement/ notice etc** | **People feel that wider organisational change is well managed and efforts are made to mitigate potentially negative impacts of change**:  - Timely information is provided to enable people to understand the reasons for proposed changes.  - There are opportunities to input and influence proposals before decisions are finalised  - If necessary, colleagues are given training to support any changes in their jobs.  - Colleagues are aware of timetables for changes and the potential impact of any changes to their jobs.  - Colleagues have access to relevant support during changes. |
| **Work relationships** | **People are negatively impacted by poor or unsupportive relationships with colleagues or managers/ experience discrimination, bullying or harassment** | **People experience collaborative and supportive relationships at work and are not subjected to unacceptable or inequitable behaviours**:  - They experience a conducive attitude and behaviours from their line manager (see leadership and management framework)  - Systems are in place to enable and encourage managers to support their staff and this is role-modelled by senior managers  - Social support from colleagues and a generally positive and supportive climate within their team  - People are encouraged to share information and recognise others' efforts and achievements.  - Inter-personal conflict within teams is addressed promptly and effectively  - Clear standards of acceptable behaviour  - There are policies and procedures to prevent or resolve unacceptable behaviour  - They and their line managers have an awareness of systems and support available to address concerns such as bullying. |
| **Job conditions** | **Exposure to dangerous, unpleasant or unmotivating working conditions/ concerns are not addressed/lack of opportunity to progress** | **People experience a decent, safe physical working environment and conditions that support overall job satisfaction, motivation and engagement:**  - They are not exposed to any physical hazards or risk of violence  - The working environment is appropriate for the work and takes into account individual needs such disability, neurodiversity.  - They can spend time on work that is interesting, sufficiently challenging and personally rewarding/meaningful  - They can use their strengths and further develop their skills and expertise  - There are opportunities to progress/achieve career aspirations  - There are systems and support in place where they have to deal with difficult situations or people  - They feel that their pay and benefits are fair compared with others and the work they do |
| **Role** | **Roles & responsibilities not clear, conflicting/ unclear requirements on people** | **People understand their role and responsibilities:** - They have clear and specific job goals  - They have relevant information to support them in understanding their role and responsibilities  - They have a wider understanding of the goals and priorities of the team/department and how they contribute to these  - They are clear on who is responsible for what within their team/department  - As far as possible, the different requirements placed upon colleagues are compatible.  - Systems are in place to enable colleagues to raise concerns about any uncertainties or conflicts they have in their role and responsibilities |

\*The term "reasonably practicable" refers to the standard of care that employers and duty holders are expected to meet when ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of their employees and others affected by their activities. According to the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and other related regulations, employers and duty holders are required to take all reasonably practicable measures to ensure the health and safety of individuals in the workplace. This means that they must do what is reasonably feasible and within their control to eliminate or minimize risks to health and safety. Determining what is "reasonably practicable" involves considering the level of risk, the severity of potential harm, the availability of resources, and the state of knowledge and technology at the time. Duty holders are expected to take a proportionate and balanced approach, weighing the costs and efforts of implementing control measures against the potential benefits in reducing risks.

1. a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This wide-ranging definition includes conditions that are difficult to see e.g. dyslexia, epilepsy, diabetes, learning difficulties, some mental health conditions, as well as many that we might not necessarily think of as a disability e.g. cancers, long-term back injuries and arthritis. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. A reasonable adjustment is a change to a working arrangement, equipment, physical feature or policy that enables a disabled person to overcome substantial barriers to work. ([ACAS guidance on reasonable adjustments at work](https://www.acas.org.uk/reasonable-adjustments#:~:text=Reasonable%20adjustments%20are%20changes%20an,different%20way%20to%20do%20something)) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)