

## STRESS RISK ASSESSMENT - A GUIDE FOR MANAGERS

*THIS GUIDANCE HAS BEEN BASED ON THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON THE HSE WEBSITE [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)*

<b>Guidance on hazards and control measures to consider when undertaking a stress risk assessment</b>		
<b>Existing Workplace Hazards</b>	<b>Nature of risk</b>	<b>Control measures to consider</b>
<b>Work Demands</b>	<p><b>How much work is there?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the staff member comfortable with the amount of work?</li> <li>• Are there set time scales for workload – are these too much / too little time to achieve?</li> <li>• Is the intensity of the workload too great for the individual?</li> <li>• Is there consistency and clarity in the job role?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If insufficient resources seek guidance from Senior Management or help employee with advice on priorities</li> <li>• Consider renegotiating deadlines if able</li> <li>• Can workloads be covered when staff are absent</li> <li>• Adjust work pattern to cope with peaks (need to be fair and agreed with employee).</li> <li>• If people are ‘under loaded’, think about additional tasks / responsibilities.</li> <li>• Develop personal work plans to ensure that staff know what their job involves.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Is the individual able to do his/her job?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have they received appropriate training in order that they can do the role effectively?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review training needs</li> <li>• Ensure training records are up to date to</li> </ul>

		ensure employees are competent and comfortable in undertaking the core functions of their job.
	<p><b>Communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the employee feel comfortable in raising concerns?</li> <li>• Does the employee feel that they are kept informed about current business needs / developments / reasons for some actions taken?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage staff to talk at an early stage if feeling that they are unable to cope</li> <li>• Take time to talk to the team regularly &amp; update them on business aspects.</li> <li>• Take time to understand the challenges the team are facing</li> <li>• Discuss ways of sharing work sensibly and agree way forward</li> <li>• Gain understanding and commitment to unplanned tight deadline &amp; need to work additional hours etc.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Environment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there any issues regarding the work environment that is impacting on how effectively the employee can do their role?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure risk assessments are up to date</li> <li>• Consider environmental factors that may impact on efficiency of work demands.</li> </ul>
<b>Control</b>	<p><b>Are staff enabled to have their say?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the member of staff feel that they are involved in deciding what work they do, and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can you consider giving staff more control by enabling them to plan their own work, and make decisions on how their work should be</li> </ul>

	<p>when and how they do it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the work repetitive or does the staff member have a variety of activities to complete?</li> <li>• Are the working hours flexible?</li> <li>• Can the staff member decide when to take breaks?</li> </ul>	<p>completed?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can tasks be varied if repetitive to make the day more interesting?</li> <li>• Can they make their own decision on when to take a break?</li> <li>• Can their working hours be flexd?</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Skills and abilities?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the staff member feel that their skills are being used appropriately?</li> <li>• Is there room to develop new skills for the employee if wanted?</li> <li>• Is the staff member encouraged to use their initiative?</li> <li>• Does the staff member feel that they are considered when planning the work?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees may feel more engaged if able to use a variety of skills to get tasks completed</li> <li>• Are employee's skills being used to full potential?</li> <li>• Consider how employees can be part of work planning – assign projects / give objectives and goals.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Supervision</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is work regularly monitored? Does the employee feel this is too much / too little?</li> <li>• Does the Manager regularly meet with the staff member to see how work is going?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only monitor employees output if essential.</li> <li>• Encourage employees to share with managers how work is going and raise any concerns at an early stage.</li> </ul>
<b>Support</b>	<p><b>How supportive are you?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the staff member feel they are being</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Give support and encouragement to staff,</li> </ul>

	<p>offered adequate managerial support with new work issues, everyday work issues or personal issues if needed?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the staff member feel that they are well supported from their colleagues?</li> </ul>	<p>even when things go wrong.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Encourage staff to share any concerns with you</li> <li>○ Hold regular team meetings to discuss and pressures / issues</li> <li>○ Hold one to one meetings to talk about any emerging issues / pressures</li> <li>○ Ask them how they would like to access managerial support – open door / agreed one to one sessions etc.</li> <li>○ Ensure Local induction programmes are undertaken for new staff</li> <li>○ Review on-going training needs</li> <li>○ Guide staff if have conflicting priorities.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Team / working time</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do staff feel that you support a healthy work / life balance?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage staff to take their annual leave at regular intervals</li> <li>• Ensure staff have appropriate breaks in a working day</li> <li>• Consideration for flexibility in working hours if have domestic situations / commitments</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Listening</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do staff feel that you listen to them?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure you listen and agree a plan of action when staff are discussing issues with you.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Encourage staff to do their bit – ie see if they can come up with a solution so that you can agree a way forward together.</li> <li>▪ Identify if there are any supportive measures available through the organisation if an individual is experiencing personal issues – find other resources e.g. counselling / occupational health / Human Resources</li> </ul>
<b>Relationships</b>	<p><b>Relationships within the team / Unacceptable behaviour</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Are there any issues concerning workplace relationship conflicts within the team for the employee?</li> <li>○ Are there problems with bullying / harassment? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Is the staff member aware of the support /policies regarding how to raise concerns about staff behaviour?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ensure staff are aware of the policies and support available regarding bullying / harassment / disciplinary / grievance so that they can be signposted if the situation arises.</li> <li>○ Consult with HR for advice and guidance</li> <li>○ Consider teambuilding activities to help the team to work together</li> <li>○ Consider a team social event</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Does the organisation care?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the employee feel that the organisation as a whole (managers and colleagues) are caring / trusting?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Develop ways of encouraging team achievements and recognising the contributions of all team members.</li> <li>○ Develop skills in the team for listening /</li> </ul>

		coaching / mentoring if appropriate. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify ways to celebrate success.</li> </ul>
<b>Role</b>	<b>Role ambiguity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the staff member clear about what is expected of them?</li> <li>• Does the staff member have a clear work plan which has been agreed with their manager?</li> <li>• Is the staff member encouraged to talk to managers at an early stage if unclear of priorities of task to be undertaken?</li> <li>• Is the staff member struggling with multiple / conflicting roles/duties?</li> <li>• Does the individual understand how their role fits into the overall business aims?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure staff have clear job descriptions and clear work plans which enables them to understand exactly what their role is.</li> <li>• Encourage staff to communicate at an early stage if unsure about aspects of their role / nature of a task</li> <li>• Meet with staff regularly so they are clear about what is expected of them</li> <li>• Review work plans at least annually – check if they understand what is expected of them if roles change.</li> <li>• Give guidance / advice on any work conflicts – may need to negotiate if expected to meet deadlines for different projects.</li> <li>• Display team objectives to help clarify the role of individuals and organisation aims.</li> </ul>
	<b>New staff members</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure new staff members receive a comprehensive induction to the team and the teams they will be interacting with.</li> <li>• Make sure other staff understand the role and</li> </ul>

		responsibilities of the new recruit.
<b>Change</b>	<p><b>Change Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do staff feel that they receive adequate and regular communication and consultation about organisation change when occurring?</li> <li>• Do staff feel they understand why organisational change needs to occur?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate regularly and at all stages when change is likely to / in the process of occurring.</li> <li>• Ensure you communicate even if there is nothing to tell – sometimes it is easy for people to think the worst if nothing is said. It is better to communicate that there is no news to tell at present than say nothing at all.</li> <li>• Communicate new developments quickly to avoid spreading of rumours</li> <li>• Where possible, involve employees in the change management process / get their ideas so that change is accepted more readily.</li> <li>• Consider impact on role and ensure this is clarified after a change process so that there are no role ambiguity issues arising.</li> </ul>