



Stress Policy

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Green Templeton College University of Oxford

Stress Policy

Introduction

Green Templeton College is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of employees and recognises that workplace stress is a health and safety issue, and acknowledges the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors.

This policy will apply to everyone in the college. Managers are responsible for implementation and the college is responsible for providing the necessary resources.

The college recognises that it has a duty to take action to reduce stress and where reasonably practicable to eliminate ill health which is caused by work related stress. Where it is believed an employee is showing signs of stress we have in place systems to discreetly monitor and assess individuals. Where appropriate, the college will seek to provide the necessary occupational health assistance and counselling programmes required.

Definition of stress

The Health and Safety Executive define stress as “the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them”. This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress which can be detrimental to health.

The HSE has identified six key ‘Management Standards’ that represent a set of conditions that reflect high levels of health, well-being and organisational performance. These management standards provide a practical framework which organisations can use to minimise the impact of work-related stress.

The Management Standards summarised:

Demands – Staff are able to cope with the demands of the job.

Control – Staff are able to have a say about the way the work is done.

Support – Staff receive adequate information and support from managers and colleagues.

Relationships – Staff are not subjected to unacceptable behaviours, e.g. bullying or harassment at work.

Roles – Staff understand their roles and responsibilities.

Change – Staff are involved in and consulted about any organisational changes.

The checklist is intended to provide managers and staff with guidance on the practical steps they can take to identify and address potential sources of workplace stress. It is hoped that this proactive approach will mitigate the occurrence of potentially harmful levels of stress.

Policy

- The college will identify all workplace stressors and conduct risk assessments to eliminate stress or control the risks from stress. These risk assessments will be regularly reviewed.
- The college will consult with staff representatives on all proposed action relating to the prevention of workplace stress.
- The college will provide training for all managers and supervisory staff in good management practices.
- The college will provide confidential counselling for staff affected by stress caused by either work or external factors.

Responsibilities

Line Managers

- Conduct and implement recommendations of risks assessments within their jurisdiction.
- Ensure good communication between management and staff, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes.
- Ensure staff are fully trained to discharge their duties.
- Ensure staff are provided with meaningful developmental opportunities.
- Ensure duties allocated are current and relevant to the member of staff.
- Ensure staff receive the *resources* in a timely fashion that are needed to undertake their duties
- Monitor workloads to ensure that people are not overloaded.
- And also:
- Monitor working hours and overtime to ensure that staff are not overworking. Monitor holidays to ensure that staff are taking their full entitlement.
- Attend training as requested in good management practice and health and safety.
- Ensure that bullying and harassment is not tolerated within their jurisdiction.
- Be vigilant and offer additional support to a member of staff who is experiencing stress outside work e.g. bereavement or separation.

HR Manager and Health and Safety Officer

- Arrange specialist advice and awareness training on stress.
- Provide or organise training and support to managers in implementing stress risk assessments.
- Support individuals who have been off sick with stress and advise them and their manager on a planned return to work.
- Refer to workplace counsellors or specialist agencies as required.
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of measures to reduce stress.
- Keep up to date with any changes and developments in the field of stress at work.

HR Manager

- Give guidance to managers on the work related stress policy.
- Help monitor the effectiveness of measures to address stress by collating sickness absence statistics. Stress audits to be conducted.
- Advise managers and individuals on training requirements.
- Provide continuing support to managers and individuals in a changing environment and encourage referral to occupational workplace counsellors or other persons such as another manager where appropriate to provide support.

Employees

- Communicate with line managers to help ensure that workload is effectively managed, tasks are achievable and any training needs are requested.
- Inform managers of any resourcing issues, time constraints or other barriers that are currently affecting ability to achieve workload.
- Raise issues of concern with line manager, HR, safety officer or staff representative.
- Support colleagues by sharing information and knowledge and by working cohesively as a team.
- Take responsibility for managing own stress, by gaining knowledge and self-awareness in order to identify and ease factors that may affect or increase personal stress levels.
- Accept opportunities for stress management training or counselling when recommended.

Health and Safety Committee

- The Health and Safety Committee will oversee the policy and other measures to reduce stress and promote workplace health and safety.