



Lone Worker Policy

Policy Statement

- Where an individual's role requires them to work alone, both the individual staff member and their manager have a duty to assess and reduce the risks which lone working presents.
- This policy should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Children policy.

Purpose

- This policy is designed to raise awareness of the risks presented by lone working, to identify the responsibilities each person has in this situation, and to give guidance on how to manage such risks.

Scope

- This policy applies to all staff who may find their self working alone at any time whilst undertaking duties for The Access Project, including both paid and voluntary staff.

Definition

- Within this document, 'lone working' refers to situations where staff in the course of their duties work alone or are physically isolated from colleagues and without access to immediate assistance.
- This last situation may also arise where there are other staff in the building but the nature of the building itself may essentially create isolated areas.
- This particularly refers to situations when staff members may find themselves working alone with students when no other staff members are present.

Mandatory Procedures

- Staff should avoid working alone whenever possible.
- If conducting a one-to-one tutorial, staff should aim to have the tutorial take place in either:
 - A public place, such as a local coffee shop
 - A communal area in their place of work, e.g. the staff canteen
 - An office with other people present
- Staff should never be working with students at their home or the student's home.
- If staff must carry out a tutorial with just the student and tutor present, staff should ensure a colleague is made aware of where they are conducting a tutorial, when they are conducting a tutorial, and how long the session is likely to last.
- If staff are on their own with a student, staff should reduce risks by propping the door ajar (as long as this does not contradict other Health and Safety guidance, for example Fire Safety).

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- Staff should not be transporting students or other service users under any circumstances.
- Staff should have a telephone with them whenever they are lone working.
- Staff working alone must ensure they are familiar with the building's exits and alarms.
- Staff should sit nearest the door when lone working with a student.
- In buildings where staff may be working with students in relative isolation, there should be an agreed system in place to alert colleagues in an emergency.
- When there are concerns regarding specific lone working staff must inform The Access Project or other identified person when they will be working alone, giving accurate details of their location and following an agreed plan to inform that person when the task is completed.
- If a member of staff does not report in as expected, an agreed plan should be put into operation, initially to check on the situation and then to respond as appropriate.
- Staff should take reasonable precautions when working alone – see appendix 1.
- Staff should never work alone if they are concerned about risks to themselves or others in the situation.
- Should an incident occur, the reporting and de-briefing involving an identified person should follow as soon as possible after the incident and no later than 24 hours after such incident. Staff should report any incidents that place themselves or the students at risk to The Access Project safeguarding lead, Jennifer Guerin.

Monitoring and Review Monitoring and Review

- The ongoing implementation of the Lone Working Policy will be monitored through feedback from staff to The Access Project management team.
- Any member of staff with a concern regarding these issues should ensure that it is discussed with their Programme Coordinator, line manager, or with Sian Earl.
- The policy will be reviewed annually, unless changing circumstances require an earlier review.

For further information, please see the Appendices below.

Appendix 1 – Reasonable precautions for personal safety Personal Safety

- **Be aware of the environment**
 - Know what measures are in place where you work: if in your place of work, check out alarm systems and procedures, exits and entrances, and the location of the first aid supplies. If in a public place, e.g. a coffee shop, ensure you know where the exits are.
 - Make sure that your mobile phone is in good working order
 - If your work takes you into areas which are isolated, poorly lit at night or known for high crime rates arrange to check in when the visit is over.
 - If a potentially violent situation occurs, be aware of what might be used as a weapon against you, and of possible escape routes.
- **Be aware of yourself**
 - Think about your body language. What messages are you giving?
 - Think about what you are wearing. Is it suitable for the task? What signals does it send out?

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- **Be aware of other people**
 - Take note of their non-verbal signals.
 - Be aware of their triggers.
 - Don't crowd people – allow them space

Appendix 2 – Assessing risk

Potential risks that individuals could be exposed to during lone working for The Access Project include (but are not limited to):

- Being the recipient of physical, emotional or sexual abuse
- Being accused of perpetrating physical, emotional, sexual, or neglectful abuse
- Neglecting one's own duties to safeguard children

When undertaking risk assessments, the following should be taken into consideration:

- the environment – location, security, access
- the context – nature of the task, special circumstances, likely outcomes
- the individuals concerned – indicators of potential or actual risk
- history – any previous incidents in similar situations
- any other special circumstances

Due the variety of locations used for tutorials, The Access Project will be unable to assess each individual location for risks. However staff members are expected to follow the guidance in this policy when assessing the location and always ensure they are aware of exits.

The tutorial tasks themselves are unlikely to present any significant risk to staff or students as they should be focused on working through academic tasks, e.g. completing questions set by the tutor, reviewing past exam papers, etc.

The Access Project will provide tutors with any information regarding students that they are working with that might suggest the student poses a risk to themselves or others, in line with the appropriate safeguarding policy.

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