



Lone and Out of Hours Working Policy

St George's, University of London

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Document History Table

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1. Introduction

This guidance has been produced to assist in the development of plans for those who may need to either work alone or work outside normal working hours and who may face higher risks than normal e.g. those working with hazardous chemicals, biological agents or equipment where there is a high likelihood of harm occurring or the work while safe under normal conditions could have serious consequences should an abnormal situation occur.

Lone working could also include data analysis in between laboratory activities or entering the liquid Nitrogen store or other confined space.

2. Definition of Lone Working or Out of Hours working

Lone workers are defined as those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision. While many individuals work alone in offices, this definition is intended to apply to those working with hazardous agents or equipment as stated above.

Out of hours working is defined as working either between 19.00 and 07.30 Monday to Friday and at any time during the weekends and bank holidays.

Undergraduate students are not permitted to work outside of normal hours 09.00 – 17.00 without direct supervision.

Post-graduate students may work outside the normal hours of 09.00 – 17.00 with the written permission from their supervisor. The student's supervisor or nominated deputy must be readily contactable in an emergency.

3. Safe Working arrangements for Lone / Out of hours Workers

Where a person may need to work alone or out of hours, it is the responsibility of the individuals' line manager / supervisor to ensure that a suitable and sufficient risk assessment is completed and that this is communicated to the individual.

Planning

It is important to plan ahead of any work taking place and ensure that foreseeable incidents or accidents are considered. The following points should be taken into account, it is however not an exhaustive list. Depending on the nature of the work there may be additional considerations needed due to very specific circumstances that may occur.

Medical conditions

In some cases there may be a need for people's fitness to be considered. This may be due to a person being pregnant, having a condition such as diabetes or asthma or restricted mobility or a heart condition that could affect their ability to leave an area if an emergency occurs.

Lone working during normal hours within SGUL

- Does the work involve hazardous materials that could cause injury?
- Does the work involve hazardous equipment that could cause injury?
- Are there people nearby who can supply aid if an injury occurs?
- How will aid be summoned if there is a failure of critical equipment in use e.g. high speed or ultra-centrifuge, microtome, microbiological safety cabinet?

Out of Hours working within SGUL

- Does the work involve hazardous materials that could cause injury?
- Does the work involve hazardous equipment that could cause injury?
- How will aid be summoned if an injury occurs?
- How will aid be summoned if there is a failure of critical equipment in use e.g. high speed or ultra-centrifuge, microtome, microbiological safety cabinet?
- What happens if you become ill?

Special Activities

- Work with Radionuclides

People are not permitted to work with radionuclides without either the local Radiation Protection Supervisor (RPS) or the university Radiation Protection Officer (RPO) being on-site.

- Work with ACDP Biohazard Group 3 Agents

A competent second person must be readily available on site if work is being undertaken with Biohazard Group 3 agents.

Special arrangements may also need to be made for the use of certain biohazard group 2 agents.

Risk Assessment and Procedures

All projects must have a risk assessment undertaken. The forms for undertaking [general risk assessments](#), [COSHH risk assessments](#) are available on the Safety, Health, and Environment [webpage](#).

Activities that could lead to problems should be identified on the risk assessment and spill procedures and emergency procedures put in place. The procedures should be clear and easy to follow and if necessary a laminated sheet should be produced and placed in an easily accessible place.

It is advisable that the procedures are written in clear English and do not include multiple sub-points.

4. Training and Supervision

Following completion of the risk assessment, procedures must be produced and then communicated to all the individuals involved in the work.

The persons undertaking the work must have the hazards and risks involved in the work clearly explained to them. The precautions that they are required to undertake to stay safe and the limits of the work which can be undertaken must also be clearly explained.

Individuals must be trained in the safety precautions required. This may range from knowing how to shut down equipment, dealing with spills, knowing the fire exits within SGUL, who and how to contact in an emergency.

In some cases, supervision may be difficult due to the fact that lone working is taking place, however line managers / supervisors must make checks to ensure that staff or post-graduate students involved in lone / out of hours working are safe. The level of supervision will relate to the amount of experience individuals have of certain procedures. Line managers / supervisors must ensure that people are aware that while similar work may previously have been conducted, each situation has its own risks.

5. Registering for Lone Working / Out of hours working

Working out of hours within SGUL

Staff and post-graduate students should notify security that they are working out of hours. This can be done as follows

A. Telephone

Staff and post-graduate students can telephone ext 2841 to notify security that they are working on site out of hours, providing their name, extension number and their location. If the telephone is busy individuals should try again at the earliest opportunity. Staff and post-graduate students must telephone security on ext 2841 when they have finished working so that security are aware they are leaving the site and they are signed out of the out of hours log.

B. In person

Staff and post-graduate students should sign the log held in the Security Control Centre behind reception after 18.00 if they are intending to stay on site after hours. Once individuals

have finished working, they should sign out so that security are aware they are leaving the site.

6. Emergencies and Accidents

Lone working during normal hours within SGUL

If a situation arises which the worker feels that they could be in danger, they should leave the area and go to the nearest occupied office or lab. Should this not be possible, they should close the door and summon help via the telephone by calling 0909 on an internal phone or 0208 725 0909.

Out of Hours working within SGUL

If a situation arises which the worker feels that they could be in danger, they should leave the area and go to the nearest office or lab. Depending on the nature of the emergency, they should close the door and summon help via the telephone by calling 0909. If the emergency involves the spillage of material, they should evacuate the area and summon help from either security 0909 or the number given on their emergency plan.