

Aberystwyth University Lone Working Policy

1.0 Purpose:

- 1.1 To provide guidance on the Aberystwyth University (AU) requirements for the assessment of Lone Working.
- 1.2 Employers have a legal duty to assess all risks to health and safety, including the risk of lone working. If the risk assessment shows that it is not possible for the work to be done safely by a lone worker, then other arrangements must be put in place.
- 1.3 Ensure the risks of lone working are assessed in a systematic and on-going way, and that safe systems and methods of work are put into place as to reduce any risks so far as are reasonably practicable.

2.0 Relevant Legislation:

- 2.1 The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
- 2.2 The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

3.0 Scope:

- 3.1 All members of AU staff who undertake lone working.
- 3.2 Lone working on and off of AU campus.
- 3.3 This policy applies to all AU staff, including temporary workers, contract workers, agency staff and students.
- 3.4 This policy does not apply generally to staff that are sole occupiers of an office during daytime working hours (approx. 9 am – 5.30 pm, weekdays). However, this may become relevant if the work activity presents a lone working hazard. It is also not applicable to student residents in their halls.

4.0 Definitions:

- 4.1 '*Lone Worker*': Lone workers are those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision. For example:
 - a) *Someone working on their own in a laboratory or workshop*
 - b) *Home workers*
 - c) *Someone working in an office on their own in an otherwise empty building*
 - d) *Someone working in remote locations*
 - e) *Mobile workers away from the workplace*
- 4.2 '*Buddy System*': The buddy system is a procedure in which two people, "the buddies", operate together as a single unit, so that they are able to monitor and help each other.

5.0 Responsibilities:

5.1 3.1 Heads of Departments:

- 5.1.1 To ensure that risk assessments of lone working are carried out by Managers and/or Supervisors – this includes risk assessments for 24 hour computer rooms and library facilities.
- 5.1.2 To ensure that this policy is communicated effectively to all managers and supervisors to whom it may apply; this includes all employees, students and visitors.
- 5.1.3 To provide a local (Departmental) lone working policy/guidance as part of their Departmental Handbooks.

5.2 3.2 Managers / Supervisors

- 5.2.1 To identify lone workers and their activities throughout the Department.

- 5.2.2 To undertake risk assessments for lone working with individuals if necessary and to ensure that lone working is considered in all risk assessments in their area of responsibility.
 - 5.2.3 Ensure appropriate records of risk assessments are kept.
 - 5.2.4 To encourage the avoidance of lone working and to put procedures into place to restrict the number of lone workers.
 - 5.2.5 To ensure that new appointees receive appropriate training in lone working where it is required as part of their work activities;
 - 5.2.6 Ensure all employees receive core health and safety training.
 - 5.2.7 To pay due regard to outcomes of the lone working risk assessment and make any management changes as necessary;
 - 5.2.8 To ensure that a review of assessments are undertaken annually or if (for example) major changes are made to the nature of work
 - 5.2.9 To ensure adequate supervision is provided. This may include:
 - 5.2.9.1 Periodic checks (direct observation)
 - 5.2.9.2 Periodic contact (e.g. telephone/radio)
 - 5.2.9.3 Contact with other lone workers
 - 5.2.9.4 Automatic warning devices
 - 5.2.9.5 General or specific alarms for emergencies
 - 5.2.9.6 Checks on lone workers to ensure they have returned to their destination upon completion. Supervisors and/or other designated members of staff should be aware of the amount of time that a lone worker will be away from site.
 - 5.2.10 To declare some activities as not permissible due to a level of risk being too high. For example, where mechanical equipment may be used in severe weather equipment or in confined spaces.
 - 5.2.11 Possibility to help implement a buddy system.
- 5.3 **Lone Workers**
- 5.3.1 To pay due regard to the outcomes of the lone working risk assessment and take responsibility for following the advice resulting from the assessment
 - 5.3.2 Avoid lone working where possible.
 - 5.3.3 Must be suitably experienced, have received appropriate instructions and if necessary, training, to the risks to which they are exposed, together with the control measures used.
 - 5.3.4 To take due care and responsibility for themselves and others affected by their work activities and cooperate with AU to meet their legal obligations.
 - 5.3.5 To request that a review of their assessment is undertaken if (for example) major changes are made to the nature of work tasks
- 5.4 **AU Health, Safety and Environment Office**
- 5.4.1.1 To provide training for risk assessments

6.0 Risk Assessment:

- 6.1 Must take the following into account as a minimum requirement:
 - a) The ability of an individual to carry out an activity safely on their own.
 - b) Fitness of an individual
 - c) Illnesses or disabilities
 - d) Social isolation
 - e) Potential of violence and for an individual to withdraw from a dangerous situation
 - f) Risks related to driving

- g) Fire safety
 - h) Existing precautionary and emergency measures.
- 6.2 Safe System of Work examples:
- a) Joint working with others on high-risk activities
 - b) Security lighting
 - c) Improvements to safety arrangements for buildings
 - d) Check-in and monitoring systems – staff are able to log in with the Security Lodge or with other staff members.
 - e) Communication systems for sharing information on risk with colleagues in other disciplines and agencies
 - f) Personal protective equipment (PPE), mobile phones and personal alarms
 - g) Emergency equipment that may be required, such as torches, maps, telephone numbers for emergency services.

7.0 Basic Procedure:

- 7.1 Departmental lone working procedures to be provided to supervisors/managers.
- 7.2 Supervisor/manager to discuss lone working requirements with each employee under their remit.
- 7.3 Supervisor/manager and employee to compile a suitable and sufficient risk assessment.
- 7.4 Procedures put into place to ensure safe lone working practices where lone working cannot be avoided.
- 7.5 Periodic risk assessment review and supervision required.

8.0 Further Information:

- 8.1 [HSE Working Alone](#)
- 8.2 [HSE Lone Workers](#)
- 8.3 [HSE Lone Workers cont.](#)
- 8.4 [HSE Lone Working](#)
- 8.5 [HSE Homeworkers](#)
- 8.6 [HSE Summary of Key Points](#)

Further information and advice can be obtained from the Health, Safety and Environment Department.