

# Human Resources Policy Statement HRPS3



## Occupational Health

### 1 Statement of Intent

Middlesex University recognises that it is important employees are fit to carry out the work required of them, and ill health, disability, mental and physical status can all influence the ability to work safely and effectively.

Middlesex University recognises its responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employees so far as is reasonably practicable.

Middlesex University recognises its responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005 to treat equally disabled and non disabled employees in employment matters, and shall make reasonable adjustment to meet the needs of disabled employees.

Middlesex University accepts the health of employees has a significant impact on the University's performance, and aims to:

- reduce the effect of work on health;
- reduce the effects of health on the capacity to work;
- develop rehabilitation programmes for sick or injured employees;
- provide health education and promotion on various health and management development issues.

The University will not require any individual to disclose that they are HIV infected except in the case of students and staff involved in the performance of any exposure prone procedures. However students and staff have the opportunity to provide this information in a confidential way through disability survey forms in order to receive help and support.

The University acknowledges that no employee who is HIV infected will suffer detriment in conditions of service. Redeployment to alternative employment will only be considered at the request of the individual employee, except where they are adjudged through the standard University procedures to be medically unfit for their present post.

The University acknowledges that no student who is HIV infected will suffer any detriment in conditions of study. Transfer to an alternative programme of study will only be considered at the request of the student, except where the student is found to be medically unfit to continue a programme. Support in dealing with any resultant grant difficulties will be given.

The Occupational Health Service is able to offer vocational advice to students of the occupational health demands on their chosen vocation (subject).

### 2 Organisation & Responsibilities

#### 2.1 Executive Briefing Group (EBG)

## **Deans of School / Heads of Service / Director of Resources & Students/ Deputy Director of Resources & Students**

The EBG must ensure that the health of their employees is not adversely affected by their work. This will be achieved by:

- Complying with the requirements of the Health & Safety Policy and bringing this Occupational Health Policy to their attention via the communication and induction channels established;
- Ensuring risk assessments are conducted that consider health hazards, and providing sufficient information to employees regarding the management and self-referral process to the Occupational Health Service (OHS).

### **2.2 All Managers/Supervisors (Academic/Support)**

All management/supervisory levels must ensure that the health of their employees is not adversely affected by their work. This will be achieved by:

- Complying with the requirements of the Health & Safety Policy and bringing this Occupational Health Policy to their attention via the communication and induction channels established;
- Ensuring risk assessments are conducted that consider health hazards, and providing sufficient information to employees regarding the management and self-referral process to the Occupational Health Service (OHS).

### **2.3 Occupational Health Service**

The OHS is responsible for providing advice, guidance and support to management regarding such areas as risk assessment, health issues, return to work plans, medical referrals and for assisting Staff Development with management development.

The OHS is available for providing advice, guidance and support to employees through the self referral process.

### **2.4 Employees**

Employees are responsible for attending work in a fit and healthy state to conduct the work required of them, and are responsible for their own health.

Employees should be made aware of and take advantage of the occupational health support provided by the University and comply with the requirements of the Health & Safety Policy.

### **2.5 Students**

Students are responsible for their own health and should ensure that they are registered with a general practitioner.

Students<sup>1</sup> should only contact the OHS if they are concerned that their health is at risk from the activities they carry out as part of their course work.

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<sup>1</sup> In reference to students accessing Occupational Health; the student's respective Programme Leader shall make arrangements through the contacting and seeking advice from The University's Human Resource Service.

### **3 Arrangements**

#### **3.1 Effects of health on work**

##### **3.1.1 Pre- employment**

Pre employment screening shall be conducted to evaluate the fitness of the applicants declared health in relation to the hazards and risks of the job, environment or activities. This applies to all new employees or transfers within the Institution.

##### **3.1.2 Students Fitness to practice**

In addition to the normal student application process, all applicants to Teaching and Health Care programmes are required to complete a health questionnaire to ensure that they are physically and mentally fit to practice.

##### **3.1.3 Management referrals**

If a manager is concerned about the health of an employee he/she should consider referring the person concerned to OHS for advice. A referral should be discussed with the employee when the Absence and Ill Health Policy triggers are activated (refer to University Absence and Ill Health Policy for guidelines).

##### **3.1.4 Self-referrals**

If an employee believes their health is being adversely affected by their work they can request a referral to the OHS. The OHS will assess and provide appropriate advice regarding the nature of ill health using information from the individual, the individual's managers, the individual's GP or Consultant (with consent).

##### **3.1.5 Reasonable Adjustment**

The OHS shall work closely with employees and managers to consider how best to achieve reasonable adjustments to retain an employee who has become disabled or whose condition changes or deteriorates, so the employee is not disadvantaged in their job.

#### **3.2 Effects of work on health**

##### **3.2.1 Risk Assessment**

In line with the Health and Safety Policy the OHS shall work closely with managers responsible for risk assessments to ensure the health hazards are adequately identified and controlled.

##### **3.2.2 Health Surveillance**

In response to compliance with health and safety requirements and enhanced health and well being of employees a programme of health surveillance will be implemented based on compliance and/or risk assessment.

#### **3.3 Sick or Injured Employees**

##### **3.3.1 Attendance Management**

Responding to control of sickness, OHS are responsible for providing management with medical advice needed to enable managers to discharge their responsibilities in a way that is equitable to the employee, University and their statutory obligations.

### **3.3.2 Rehabilitation Programmes**

The OHS can provide specialist input into rehabilitation programmes that facilitate an ability to return, and continue to work after long-term or prolonged absence from work.

### **3.4 Health Promotion and Education**

It is important that health promotion and education are seen as being an integral part of the OHS. Examples of training are:

#### **3.4.1 First aid**

The University trains staff as first aiders. OHS are responsible for assisting in organising, training and updating of first aiders within the University.

#### **3.4.2 Health**

The OHS are responsible for assisting in providing education and training talks/seminars/information on a wide range of health related issues, such as diet, HIV/aids, alcohol, drugs and exercise to staff.

#### **3.4.3 Management**

The OHS are responsible for assisting the HRS in education and training talks/seminars/information on a wide range of management issues, such as attendance management and return to work interviews.

## **4 Monitoring**

### **4.1 Record Keeping**

The OHS will maintain health records to:

- Provide a baseline for the health status of employees, and to identify those with specific health needs;
- Provide an effective health surveillance system;
- Identify patterns of ill health and work areas with specific risks;
- Support management in their statutory responsibility for the notification of accidents and ill health, and for medical examinations required by law;
- Monitor the use and effectiveness of the OHS

### **4.2 Confidentiality**

The University will have information about the health of staff. Information and records will not be divulged to any non-medical staff, without the written consent of the individual. Staff have a statutory right of access to their own records.

## **5 Review Date                      March 2010**

This Policy was reviewed in the academic year 2005/2006 through consultation with the Executive Briefing Group and recognised Trade Unions. It was approved by the Executive at its meeting on 28 September 2006 and is due for review in 2010.