

1 Stress, Bullying and Violence Policy

1.1 Introduction

Bryen Langley recognises that, whilst a degree of pressure can be a positive force, excessive stresses can have a negative effect on health and on work performance. Bryen Langley is committed to promoting good health at work and concerned to recognise and to provide suitable support mechanisms for employees suffering from the negative effects of stress.

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.

While it is recognised that everyone is likely to experience some symptoms of stress during their working lives, there may be times when excessive levels of stress from either their work or personal circumstances impact on their work. From research, the most common reasons for stress in the workplace are identified as bullying / harassment (usually by either a manager or colleague), excessive workload, poor communication and threat of redundancy.

Bryen Langley has identified its primary areas of stress and is working to mitigate the causes. The Human Resources Department has in place robust and effective procedures and assistance to help any employee who may require it.

1.2 Scope of Policy

It is the responsibility of Line Managers to monitor their employees in order to be able to recognise when a member of their team could be suffering symptoms of stress. They should then encourage them to seek advice and assistance through the Human Resources Department at the earliest possible stage.

Bullying and harassment will not be tolerated at Bryen Langley and any act of physical aggression is likely to result in dismissal where allegations are substantiated. Any allegation of bullying or harassment will be thoroughly investigated through the grievance procedure and treated as gross misconduct. More information is available in the Employee Handbook issued by the Human Resources department.

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2 Key responsibilities

Organisational Responsibility:	Responsibility allocated to:
Director(s)	Line Managers

3 Competence and Training

All Employees shall complete the Bryen Langley induction.

4 Description of What to Do

Bryen Langley will:

- Ensure, that so far as is reasonably practicable, excessive stress is eliminated from the work environment and that a generic risk assessment is completed
- provide suitable support mechanisms for individuals suffering from the negative effects of stress
- encourage a working environment where members of staff who feel they are suffering from excessive stress can approach their Line Manager/HR Manager in confidence for support
- encourage a culture where stress is not seen as a sign of weakness or incompetence
- Where members of staff are suffering from excessive stress, Bryen Langley will provide the necessary mechanisms to promote a return to full health as quickly as possible.

The generic risk assessment identifies what Bryen Langley will do at a Company level. Department level and individual level risk assessments will need to be carried out where necessary by the Line Manager of the team with additional help from the Health and Safety Advisors, as required.

Managing a stress problem

- It is important to confront and deal with the problem as soon as it has been identified. Remember that each individual will have their own reasons for being stressed. Discuss practical ways to reduce stressors
- Complete a specific risk assessment where appropriate
- Involve the employee in the decision making process – i.e. if the individual needs to see a doctor and/or take time off from work

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- Encourage the individual to contact the employee assistance helpline
- Procedures are in place to prevent harassment and bullying – these must be used where appropriate
- Seek advice from the Occupational Health/Human Resources Department, who will make referrals where necessary
- Follow the return to work procedure if a member of staff has been absent through stress. Contact Human Resources department for further details
- Review the departmental and individuals work regularly to ensure that it is reasonable.

5 What Individuals Can Do

We all experience pressure on a daily basis and need it to motivate us and enable us to perform at our best. It is when we experience too much pressure without the opportunity to recover that we start to experience stress. Individuals have a duty of care to their own health and safety at work. Employees have a responsibility for their own personal stress.

If you feel the signs of stress you should consider the following:

- Tell a manager at an early stage
- Speak to your own GP
- Speak to Human Resources
- Work with your line manager to develop a plan to tackle the stressors that is acceptable to all
- Discuss the situation with family and friends

It is also important to take action at a personal level. In addition to the physical, emotional, behavioural and mental affects described above, look for signs in your lifestyle that may add to stress. Examples of these may be: eating on the run; smoking or drinking excessively; being available to everyone; trying to do several jobs at once; no time to relax or exercise; taking work home with you; missing breaks.

Make a personal plan of how to tackle some of these issues. Helpline organisations recommend: take action; make sure difficulties/work are not the only focus of your life; do some form of physical exercise; eat a good and balanced diet; limit your alcohol intake to the government's recommended levels; take time out; seek support from others.

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6 Forms for recording

The following forms are attached to this policy arrangement:

Form:	How the form must be used:
HASF 126 Stress Risk Assessment	To be completed by the Line Manager once a member of staff reports stress to either the Health and Safety Advisors, the Human Resources department or Line Management.

7 How this policy will be reviewed

This policy shall be reviewed annually.

Alan Escudier



Director

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