

BioEscalator Laboratory Safety Policy 0003: Out of Hours/Lone Working Policy

Cross reference to University Policy Statements: Risk Assessment S5/08 & Supervisors' Responsibilities S1/09 Biological Health & Safety S5/09

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1) Introduction

It is part of every employer's responsibility to make adequate arrangements for the supervision of workers at all times. This must take into account not only the task but also the abilities and experiences of those who may be undertaking the work. It should help employers understand what they need to do comply with their legal duties towards lone working and out of hours working under:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974;
- The management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

This policy details the arrangements and responsibilities for the management of lone working and out of hours working.

2) Definitions

Lone Workers: those university workers or (see below) who work by themselves without close or direct supervision.

Normal working hours: 05:30-21:00 hours, weekdays only (does not include bank holidays, or weekends).

Out of hours: any time outside of normal working hours.

University workers: staff, visitors and contractors employed by the University (or by Oxford University Estate Services).

Tenants: third party who occupy the BioEscalator.

Hazardous Areas: are areas where workers may be exposed to risks which are greater than those normally encountered within low risk environments such as Offices. These areas include Laboratories, and workshops.

3) Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to put into place procedures for the management of:

- Lone workers
- Access and egress to workplaces outside normal working hours
- Supervision of university workers outside normal working hours
- Assessing the hazard of an activity and reducing the risk to the lowest achievable level.

4) Application

This policy applies to all university workers and tenants, in particular, to managers and supervisors of staff and those who actively control contractors engaged on University business.

5. Policy Statement

The University and Supervisors will assess and control the risks for workers who are lone working, or working out of hours.

In accordance with the above the University will:

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- Assess and categorise the risks associated with lone working
- Assess and categorise the risks associated with out of hours working
- Provide adequate controls based on these assessments.

Examples of such controls could include the provision of:

- Suitable training
- Occupational Health fitness assessments for workers
- Suitable emergency equipment and emergency arrangements
- Adequate supervision
- Adequate staffing to undertake the work safely
- Defined work activities including written safe systems of work

Staff will adhere to the following local rules:

- Inform and receive permission from an authorised person for any out of hours/lone working.
- Will read and understand the risk assessment associated with the work they will be doing.
- Sign in to and back out of the BioEscalator department when working out of hours.
- Know appropriate emergency procedures.

6) Categories of Work

All lone working or work activities undertaken out of hours must be subjected to a risk assessment by the line Manager/Supervisor. The assessment should initially allocate the activity to one of the following three categories (See appendix 1 for examples):

- Low Risk Activities
- Medium Risk Activities
- High Risk Activities

Low risk activities

- Can only be undertaken by persons authorised to do so by the line manager/supervisor.
- Work falling within this category is deemed to be safe to be undertaken by lone workers.

Medium risk activities

- Can only be undertaken if there is **at least one** other person who is competent to make safe any work being undertaken and is also familiar with any emergency procedures, either in the same room or in an adjoining room. Workers must be authorised in writing by the line manager/supervisor.

High risk activities

- Can only be undertaken if there is **at least one** other person who is competent to make safe any work being undertaken and is also familiar with any emergency procedures in the same suite. Workers must be authorised, in writing, by the head of BioEscalator or a senior supervisor.
- Suitable additional emergency arrangements, such as the provision of adequate first aid or fire safety measures must be in place.
- The Head of BioEscalator must approve the work after consultation with the local Health, Safety & Environment Advisor.

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7) Authorised Persons

Only authorised persons may enter hazardous areas outside open hours. Authorised persons may include members of faculty, postgraduates, technicians, visiting research workers and persons of equivalent status who:

- are directly associated with the hazardous area
- must be familiar with the layout of the building
- must be familiar with any emergency procedure
- have received a copy of, and understand, any applicable local safety rules and emergency arrangements.

All other persons unless accompanied by an authorised person must have been given written authorisation by their supervisor to enter the hazardous area out of hours. Supervisors must ensure that they are fully aware of all the above points and the risk assessment for the work, before issuing authorisation.

8) New Members of BioEscalator Staff and Licensees

New members of staff and licensees will only be given core hour access (5.30am to 9pm) until they have been working in the BioEscalator for at least one month **or** have:

- demonstrated a suitable level of competence
- obtained written authorisation from their supervisor
- agreed to only undertake low /medium risk work
- shown they are familiar with the local safety policies and emergency procedures.

The supervisor needs to email the BioEscalator Business Manager and Laboratory Manager explaining why the member of their team (I.e. BioEscalator staff or licensees) requires out of hours access.

9) Out of Hours Access for Maintenance and Emergency Works

All work must be carried out or under the direct supervision of FM Estates. In medium and high risk areas it is subjected to a risk assessment and, where appropriate, a written safe system of work provided, e.g. using the 'Permit to Work'.

10) Summary of requirements for categories of work

Category	Lone Working	Authorisation	Additional emergency Procedures
Low risk	Yes	Yes Line manager, supervisor, member of faculty - verbal	No
Medium risk	Yes	Line manager, supervisor, member of faculty - written	NO
High risk	No	Head of BioEscalator, senior supervisor – written	YES

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11) APPENDIX 1: Example of locations, hazards and the appropriate control measures.

Risk Category	Activity	Hazard	<i>CONTROL MEASURE</i>
Low	Office Based-Lone Working	Illness	If Known illness then consideration should be given to restricting working hours alone to periods of less than one hour
		Fire	Evacuate as fire policy, call the fire & rescue service on 999.
		Intruder in the building	Report to security services on 89999, never tackle an intruder.
Medium	Laboratory	Illness/fire/ Intruder in the building	As above
		Un-planned events	Workers must be familiar with emergency procedures e.g. chemical/biological spills
High	Working within specialised area or with specialized substance e.g. Liquid Nitrogen, large quantities or highly toxic chemicals.	Illness/fire/ intruder in the building	As Above
		Un-planned event	Workers must be familiar with emergency procedures
		Potential long term effects	Local engineering controls, PPE, medical surveillance
		Failure control measures	Regular Maintenance, and routine testing

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12) APPENDIX 2: Summary of Out-of-Hours/Lone working.

<i>Category/Hours</i>	<i>Core Hours</i> <i>Monday to Friday: 05:30-21:00</i>	<i>Out-of-Hours</i> <i>Monday to Friday including bank holidays: 21:00-05:30</i>
BioEscalator Staff	Access allowed	Access requires a risk assessment and written approval by line manager/supervisor.
BioEscalator Licensees	Access allowed	Access requires a risk assessment and written approval by line manager/supervisor.

Notes:

1. You must sign the out-of-hours log book between 21:00-05:30 Monday to Friday including weekends and bank holidays.
2. You must sign the out-of-hours log book at weekends and bank holidays in addition to note 1.
3. You must inform Oxford University Security Services (OUSS) on 01865 (2)72944 to let them know you are working out of hours and also when you leave the building. OUSS will check on you every hour.