



St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London

Policy on Managing Violence & Aggression / Violent Incidents

HSPG 13
(Version: 3)



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Policy on Managing Violence and Aggression Incidents

1. Statement of Policy

Employers are required by the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act to do what is reasonably practicable to ensure the health and safety of staff and students. This includes taking steps to reduce the risk to staff and students from violent incidents. There is also a requirement to report injuries to staff which result from acts of non-consensual physical violence under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995, as amended 2013. This document should be read in conjunction with 'Dignity at Work' and 'Study without Harassment' policies.

The University will endeavor to reduce the threat of violence and will aim to provide a secure environment for staff and students. This will be achieved in a variety of ways including physical means (e.g. controlled entry, secure areas) and providing information and training for those at particular risk. The importance of supporting staff who are victims of aggression is also recognised.

Recording of violent incidents is an important step towards understanding the nature and extent of the problem and reports will be reviewed in order to see if more can be done to lower the risk.

Disciplinary measures are outside the scope of this policy, but are dealt with elsewhere and any violent act may lead to disciplinary action. For students this will be the Student Disciplinary Procedure and for staff it may be one of the following; Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedure, Grievance Procedure, Procedure for the Suspension of Staff or Capability Procedures.

2. Organisation and Responsibilities

2.1 Faculty / Professional Service Managers

- Will, in conjunction with the Health & Safety Officer, consider the risk of violence in all general risk assessments;
- Where control measures are identified that are reasonably practicable then line managers will endeavor to implement the measures;
- Where an assessment has identified training as necessary for staff at risk of violence then the line manager will co-operate with the Health & Safety Officer in making arrangements for staff to attend such training;

- Will encourage staff to report violent incidents to the Security Supervisors.

2.2 Health & Safety Officer

- Will work with Faculty / Service Managers and others who may be involved to ensure that all general risk assessments take account of the risk of violence to people on premises used by the University;
- Will liaise with Faculty / Service Managers and others to advise and assist with the selection and implementation of appropriate control measures to reduce the risk of violence;
- Will prepare and review policy on a regular basis, every two years or whenever any change deems it necessary;
- Will ensure that publicity is given to the existence of this policy and the forms for recording and reporting violent incidents;
- Will collect and review forms for reporting and recording violent incidents. Where immediate action is appropriate will advise the relevant manager. Will ensure that reported incidents are brought to the attention of the health and safety committee;
- Where a violent incident is reportable to the Health and Safety Executive will make the report.

2.3 Human Resources Manager - Operations

- Will endeavour to support staff who are victims of violent attack. This support may include, at the discretion of the Human Resources Manager - Operations, counselling.

2.4 Investors in People (IiP) and Staff Development Manager

- Will liaise with line managers and the Health & Safety Officer, as necessary, to ensure that identified training needs are met.

2.5 All staff

- Will report violent incidents in which they are personally involved;
- Where they have knowledge of violent incidents in which students, contractors or members of the public are involved, will report these incidents on the appropriate form.

2.6 All students

- Should be encouraged to report violent incidents in which they are involved or witness.

2.7 University Health and Safety Operational Sub-Committee

- Will periodically review violent incident reports and consider where further action to reduce risk may be possible and appropriate.

3. Arrangements

3.1 The Security Supervisors will ensure:

- Where general risk assessments are carried out violence will be one of the risks considered. If it is reasonably practicable to do more than control measures will be implemented;
- Physical control measures e.g. protective screens, limiting access, etc. will be used in preference to other means of control e.g. training;
- Staff identified as especially at risk will be given training in dealing with potentially violent situations;
- Forms will be available to record and report violent/ aggressive incidents and these will be kept in Security offices;
- Publicity will be given to the existence and use of the violent incident forms. This will be by use of the health and safety notice boards, by items in the University Newsletter and by bringing this policy to the attention of all staff;
- The violent incident forms will be collected and reviewed by the Health & Safety Officer and will also be reviewed periodically by the University Health and Safety Committee with a view to identifying further measures which can be taken to reduce risk;
- Where violent incidents are reportable to the Health and Safety Executive under the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995, as amended 2013 the Health & Safety Officer will make the required report.

Appendix 1

Definition of Violence

For the purposes of this policy the following definition of violence is taken from the Health and Safety Executive. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines work-related violence as:

“Any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work “

This can include verbal abuse or threats as well as physical attacks.

For the purposes of this policy a modified definition is needed

“Any incident in which any person, staff, student or member of the public is abused, threatened or assaulted by any person on premises occupied by the University”

This may take the form of verbal abuse or threats as well as physical attacks. It covers abuse, threats, or physical or psychological aggression exerted by people against a person at work. There may be a racial or sexual dimension to the violence. Violence to staff is an occupational safety and health issue and should be dealt with at the organisation's level. It is not an individual's problem.

An act of violence generally arises in a situation where there is very high or suppressed tension or pressure and where personal matters are at stake. Conflict that has not been resolved appropriately can escalate to violence. Workers in the education sector can find themselves victims of violence because aggressors see them as 'representatives' of the institution or system. Students, ex-students, parents, visitors, or intruders might initiate violence against staff in the education sector. It is not only lecturers who are suffering violence at work, but also teaching assistants, security staff, maintenance staff, cleaners, catering staff, admin and technical staff, other support personnel and students.

Report form for Violent / Aggressive Incidents

Complete ALL SECTIONS and pass form WITHOUT DELAY to the University Health & Safety Officer. This form may be filled in by anyone who has been involved in or witnessed a violent or aggressive incident.

Date of Incident _____ Time of incident _____

Where did incident occur? _____

Exact location of incident _____

Person or persons suffering violence/aggression (use back of form if necessary)

Surname _____ Forenames _____

Title (Mr., Mrs., Ms) _____ Home telephone number _____

Address _____

Date of birth _____ Male / Female _____

Status (Staff, student, visitor, contractor, etc) _____

Type of Incident

Please tick the following which apply:

Verbal abuse ☐ Physical abuse ☐

Threatening Behaviour ☐ Racial abuse ☐

Sexual abuse ☐ Other ☐

If Other, please specify _____

Was there any damage to property? If yes, please provide more information.

Describe fully the violent or aggressive incident. Include any information that led up to the incident occurring. Please continue on a separate sheet if needed.

Identity of aggressor(s), if known, or description if not known _____

Was a weapon used, if so what? _____

Nature of injuries suffered (if any) _____

What action was taken after the incident (e.g. police called, complaint made, etc?)

Name and address of witness _____

Were there any factors which contributed towards this incident?

Any other relevant information _____

Name of person completing report _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Please ensure that all Personal and Witness Statements are completed on the next pages.

Personal Statement

Security Incident No:

Name _____

Date _____

Statement

Witness Statement

Security Incident No:

Name _____**Date** _____

Statement

Completed form sent to (please tick appropriate boxes)

| | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Health & Safety Office | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Student Services | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Human Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Security | <input type="checkbox"/> |

To be completed by investigating panel from SMUC

For analytical purposes leading to disciplinary action, consider the following:

Is aggressor known to have been involved in previous incidents? (give details)

Had any measures been taken to prevent an incident of this type occurring? Is so why did they fail? _____

What more could be done to prevent a similar incident from occurring? _____

Any other relevant information _____

Action Taken

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