



AC/Nov17 ( 09)

# Safety Code of Practice

November 2017

Author	Operations Manager	Intended target group	Principals, Business Managers, Academy Staff
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# Lone Working Policy



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# **1. POLICY STATEMENT AND**

# INTRODUCTION

The Academy Committee recognises that there may be an increased risk to the health and safety of employees whilst working alone. This policy sets out our approach in both identifying these risks and managing them adequately.

Lone working is not covered by any specific legislation, but the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 apply. This legislation states that “It shall be the duty of every employer to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all of his employees. It shall be the duty of every employee while at work to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and of other persons who may be affected by his/her acts or omissions at work”.

## 2. DEFINITION

A lone worker is an individual who spends some or all of their working hours working alone without direct supervision. This may occur

- during normal working hours at an isolated location within the normal workplace
- when working outside normal business hours
- working off site at any time
- working at the weekend

The core day time working hours (Monday to Friday) generally fall between 7am and 6pm during term time. Working hours outside of term time generally fall between 7am and 5pm.

People at risk may include anyone who comes on the site/facility alone during closure times.

## 3. RESPONSIBILITIES

Working alone is not in itself against the law and it will often be safe to do so. However, the law requires employers to consider carefully, and then deal with, any health and safety risks for people working alone.

The overall responsibility for lone working at a DBMAC facility/site falls with the Principal.

Employers are responsible for the health, safety and welfare at work of all their workers. Employers also have responsibility for the health and safety of any contractors or self-employed people doing work for them. These responsibilities cannot be transferred to any other person or organisation, including those people who work alone.

Employers and employees therefore have a duty to themselves and others with regard to safety where there is an increased risk to the health and safety of employees when they work remotely from other colleagues or other persons inside or outside of core working hours.

Everyone that works or uses any DBMAC facility/site should consider all aspects of lone working and co-operate with any procedures outlined for the DBMAC facility/site to enable duties or worked related activities to be performed with a view to minimising risk, or health and safety concerns.

Lone working differs from situations where people work unaccompanied, with a means of communication available. However, in certain situations where individuals work unaccompanied, it may be necessary to adopt a similar approach to lone working in order to control the risks to the unaccompanied worker. Examples of factors that may need to be taken into account are given below.

Examples of employees who may be classed as lone workers include,

- Staff with responsibility for opening up and closing buildings
- Staff working outside core or normal working hours
- School staff working during holiday periods
- Staff working in an isolated part of the building
- Staff working in an environment away from the school

Consideration therefore needs to be given to the potential risks faced by lone workers, as follows:

- A commitment to supporting staff both in establishing and maintaining safe working practices
- Recognising and reducing risk by adopting a systematic approach to undertaking regular risk assessments extending to regular reviews
- A commitment to the provision of appropriate support for staff
- A clear understanding of responsibilities
- The priority placed on the safety of the individual
- A commitment to providing appropriate training for staff
- Equipment for communications, personal alarms, etc. made available if required

## **4. CONTROL MEASURES**

It is important to ensure that suitable and sufficient control measures are identified and put in place. A summary of suitable controls would be as follows:

- Are effective lines of communication established, communicated, understood and monitored?
- Emergency procedures have been identified and staff are aware of these and are clear about the action to be taken if necessary
- Staff have received the appropriate training to enable them to undertake lone working
- Have lone workers been given all the necessary information (copy of the policy or procedures) to enable them to carry out their job safely?
- Consideration has been given to the procedures for fire evacuation and first aid procedures
- Employees stop for regular breaks and, if possible, change activity after prolonged periods
- Employees must inform their line manager of any relevant medical conditions
- Have clear procedures been established which the lone worker can follow, as identified in the Lone Worker Policy?

## **5. PROCEDURES**

Any specific procedures for a DBMAC facility/site is the responsibility of the Principal who has responsibility for ensuring that all reasonable and suitable procedures are in place (if required) for lone working. Where it is deemed necessary, risk assessments for situations requiring lone or unaccompanied working maybe required where there is a risk identified.

All aspects of personal safety should always be considered during the risk assessment and any remedial or action points identified should be considered during any implemented plans.

Any DBMAC facility/site specific procedures must also ensure that all necessary personnel are fully aware of any precautions or specific methods of work to be followed, including any action to be taken in the event of an emergency.

## 5.1 Content for procedures

Lone working must only be carried out following authorisation of the Principal. Principals who work alone must seek the authorisation of the LAC Chair and should discuss their pattern of lone working with the Executive Principal. It is the responsibility of the individuals concerned to ensure all necessary precautions or work methods are adhered to at all times.

Any person who becomes aware of circumstances involving lone working, where existing control measures may not be fully effective, must inform the Principal, or the Health and Safety lead for the DBMAC facility/site.

Risk assessments should cover all work currently undertaken alone (or proposed to be), where the risk may be increased by the work activity itself, or by the lack of on-hand support should something go wrong. Once all job roles involving lone working have been identified, the following factors should be considered:

- **Risk of violence** - All jobs involving an element of lone working will be assessed for a risk of verbal or physical threats, or violence. The priority will be those involving face-to-face dealings with venerable students, members of the public and/or cash handling
- **Plant and equipment** - Plant and equipment used by lone workers will be assessed to ensure that it is suitable for use by one person
- **Working at height** - Working at height will not be undertaken when working alone
- **Chemicals** - Any existing, or planned use of chemicals will be considered with regards to their suitability for use by those working alone
- **Access and egress** - Some lone working may require access to locations that are difficult to access or exit. Assessments will consider whether these tasks are suitable to be carried out by one person

## 5.2 Assessing the risks

The employer has a duty to assess risks to lone workers and take steps to avoid or control risks where necessary. This must include:

- Involving workers when considering potential risks and measures to control them
- Taking steps to ensure risks are removed where possible, or putting in place control measures, e.g. carefully selecting work equipment to ensure the worker is able to perform the required tasks safely
- Instruction, training and supervision
- Reviewing risk assessments periodically or when there has been a significant change in working practice

This may include:

- Being aware that some tasks may be too difficult or dangerous to be carried out by an unaccompanied worker
- Where a lone worker is working at another employer's workplace, informing that other employer of the risks and the required control measures
- When a risk assessment shows it is not possible for the work to be conducted safely by a lone worker,

addressing that risk by making arrangements to provide help or back-up

Appendix 1 - Questions to consider when identifying specific hazards of lone working, this document is available to help with overall management of lone working.

## 5.3 Factors to consider for lone working

There are a number of factors you should consider when implementing DBMAC facility/site specific procedures

- Opening and closing times
- Access arrangements and security
- Communications
- Emergencies
- Duties
- Training needs or monitoring
- Tools and equipment
- Inside or outside conditions
- Awareness of surroundings

There are a number of factors that should be taken into account when authorising lone working or unaccompanied working.

- The nature of the tasks involved
- The nature of any substances involved
- The nature of any tools or equipment involved
- Means available for raising an alarm in the event of an emergency
- Any known medical conditions of persons involved
- The level of knowledge, qualifications and experience of any persons involved
- The vicinity involved
- The time of day involved
- The means available for periodically checking the well-being of any persons involved
- Advise someone that they are in school if possible
- Lock the doors at night

These are not exhaustive lists and individuals will be expected to report all situations to the Principal or health and safety lead for the DBMAC facility/site which leaves them open to any health and safety issues so that the risk can be assessed and control measures applied where necessary.

## 5.4 High risk activities / tasks

If any tasks are identified as high risk to personal protection, wellbeing or safety concerns, then all DBMAC facilities/sites are required to ensure this work is not undertaken by a lone person and arrangements should be made to undertake this work with appropriate support or supervision.

Risk assessment should help employers decide on the right level of supervision. There are some high-risk activities where at least one other person may need to be present. Examples include:

- Working at height;
- Excessive manual handling;

- Working with substances that are hazardous to health including flammables;
- Working in a confined space, where a supervisor may need to be present, along with someone dedicated to the rescue role;
- Working with electricity including near exposed live electricity conductors and undertaking Portable Appliance Testing;
- Dealing with unpredictable partners and stakeholders.

## **5.5 Contractors / visitors**

Where there is risk identified for contractors/visitors to the DBMAC facility/site, the same procedures and processes are applicable as they are working/visiting a facility/site for which the DBMAC and Principals have responsibility. All contractors/visitors are expected to follow any lone working procedures for the specific facility/site they are working or visiting.

## **5.6 Special events**

It is noted that throughout the school calendar year, events take place before/during and after school (such as sports events, opening evening, parents evening, meetings). Lone working must always be considered by the event organiser and the Principal should ensure lone working arrangements are covered during planning.

Any staff members meeting parents or visitors should plan these in a communal area or common space to minimise lone working risks.

## **5.7 Raising staff awareness**

The DBMAC expects all Principals, senior and responsible staff to promote actively lone working policies and procedures to improve awareness, minimise risks and promote good working practices.

The Senior Leadership Team, Middle Managers, Subject Team Leaders and all staff are responsible for the detailed adoption and implementation of the Lone Working Policy in their respective workplaces and ensuring in particular that they follow a safe approach to their working practices.

Approved by

Audit Committee \_\_\_\_\_

Date 15 November 2017

Verified by Company Secretary : M D Jackson

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> November 2017

## **Appendix 1- Questions to consider when identifying specific hazards of lone working**

Question	Consideration
Does the workplace present a special risk to alone worker?	Due to the environment, location, contents, unfamiliarity etc.
Does the activity present a special risk to alone worker?	Equipment, process, substances, location, time, members of public, handling cash etc.
Is there a safe way in and out for one person?	In the course of normal work and in the event of an emergency etc.
Can the equipment be adequately controlled and handled by one person?	Manual handling, operation of essential/emergency controls etc.
Can all goods, substances and materials be safely handled by one person?	Flammables, toxins, pathogens etc.
Is the working environment appropriate?	Heating, lighting, ventilation etc.
Are the welfare facilities adequate and accessible?	Toilet, washing, drinking water etc.
Does the lone worker have first aid facilities or access to them?	First aid kit, first aider, eye wash station, etc.
Does the lone worker have access to a suitable means of communication, or other means of summoning assistance if required?	Telephone, mobile, radio, inactivity alarm etc.
Is there a risk of violence associated with the work activity or location?	Previous history of verbal threats, violence, interaction with public, etc.
Is the lone worker more at risk due to their gender or inexperience	Maturity, familiarity with procedures, knowledge and experience, particularly young and new workers
Has the employee received sufficient information, instruction and training to enable the work to be undertaken safely whilst alone?	Is the employee competent? Is the emergency plan appropriate?
Has the employee received specific training in how to respond to foreseeable emergencies that may arise in the course of their work alone?	Fire safety, spills, electrical shut down etc.
Is the worker medically fit to undertake the work alone?	Health checks, health monitoring?
What arrangements are in place to provide adequate supervision?	Periodic visits, use of local security staff, signing in/out, periodic contact arrangements, open diaries, CCTV, inactivity alarms, 'permits to work'
Are there contingency plans in place should an alert or alarm be raised by a lone worker? Are these plans well known and rehearsed?	Would you or your colleagues know what to do, who to contact?
Are clear written procedures established? (Limits set as to what can and cannot be done whilst working alone, when to stop work and seek advice etc.)	What activities should be prohibited?

## Appendix 2 - Vulnerable employees that may be at a higher risk from lone working

Group	Additional Considerations for lone workers
<p><b>New and Expectant Mothers</b></p>	<p>The School’s duty of care extends to the unborn child as well as risks to the mother herself. Therefore assessments must include the risk to any unborn child or child who is still breast-feeding.</p> <p>Consideration must also be given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impaired mobility may make the mother more prone to slips, trips and falls (especially in the later stages of pregnancy).</li> <li>• Impaired ability to carry out physically strenuous work</li> <li>• Increased likelihood of back injuries</li> <li>• Entitlement to more rest breaks</li> <li>• Risk of early labour or miscarriage</li> </ul>
<p><b>Young People Aged Under 18</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible lack of experience and immaturity</li> <li>• Possible inability to concentrate for long periods</li> <li>• Entitled to more frequent rest breaks</li> </ul>
<p><b>Disabled People</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobility problems and visual impairment may make unassisted evacuation difficult</li> <li>• Potential difficulties in raising the alarm when assistance is required</li> <li>• Unable to hear alarms</li> </ul>
<p><b>Contractors</b></p>	<p><b>Contractors must be given the same level of consideration as employees when carrying out a risk assessment.</b></p> <p>Contractors are at additional risk because they are unfamiliar with aspects of the school, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Layout and environment</li> <li>• Emergency procedures</li> <li>• Adjacent activities and hazards</li> </ul>