****Employee Workplace Pressures Risk Assessment Tool

The Workplace Pressures Risk Assessment (WPRA) is a supportive tool, to help identify any work-related concerns and measures that would make the situation more manageable. It is designed to be completed by the employee with their line-manager, and it is based on the [HSE Management Standards](http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/).

**When to complete the risk assessment**

* To monitor work pressures proactively, for example during annual appraisals or periodically during supervision meetings. This will help to ensure that any difficulties are identified at an early stage, reducing the risk of pressures escalating to stress.
* Prior to and during a period of change or during periods of increased pressure at work (the [Team Pressures Risk Assessment](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/wellbeing/stress/riskassessment/) should also be considered).
* If an employee experiences any symptoms of stress that may be related to their work or personal stress affecting their work.
* On return to work after a period of sickness absence with stress-related illness.

**Guidance for using this document**

It is recommended that employees complete the assessment with line-managers or someone else who has influence over their work. Where this is difficult, an HR Advisor can provide guidance, or the risk assessment can be discussed with a trade union representative. The risk assessment should reflect the employee’s perspective of the situation, but the manager may wish to make additional comments.

The tool should be completed supportively, with consideration given to the appropriate time and venue for completion. The WPRA should remain confidential between manager and employee, if the manager requires guidance from their own manager or from HR, this should be discussed with the employee. Where stress triggers are identified, an action plan (which may include reasonable adjustments) must be completed and reviewed at regular intervals (see Section 2).

**Health and wellbeing support**

Recommended resources to help support with each stress trigger are included below. In addition, the [Managing Mental Wellbeing and Stress at Work Standard](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/wellbeing/safety/guidance/managing_wellbeing/) provides guidance and examples of supportive measures or reasonable adjustments in the event of stress. This includes:

* Seeking support from your [local HR Advisor](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/employment/hr/contact/businesspartnersadvisors/)
* Making a referral to [Occupational Health](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/occupational-health/)
* Seeking advice from a [Mental Health Champion](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/wellbeing/mentalhealth/mhchampions/)
* Completing [Supporting the Mental Wellbeing Training for Leaders and Managers](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/wellbeing/managers/wellbeingtraining/)

# Workplace Pressures Risk Assessment

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| **Employee name:** |  | **Name of person supporting the assessment (normally the manager):**  |  | **Date of assessment:**  |  |

**Stion1 – Risk Assessment**

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| **Potential Triggers** | **Conversation starters** | **Description of issues discussed (separate notes if required)** | **Perceived impact on wellbeing**  |
| Demands | The University provides me with adequate and achievable demands in relation to my working hours. My skills and abilities are matched to the job demands.I feel empowered to use my full skills and potential abilities at work in day-to-day tasks. I am able to achieve a sense of work-life balance. If I express concerns about the demands of my role or my work environment, they are taken seriously by my manager.   |  | **Enabling positive wellbeing** |
| **Neutral** |
| **Could be impacting on my wellbeing** |
| **I feel this is reducing my wellbeing** |
| **Mitigations to consider (these are just a guide, you may have other ideas for mitigations)****Does the employee identify impacts on their workload, required competencies or skills, work patterns or the work environment? If so, consider implementing one or more of the suggested actions below as appropriate.****Workload*** Follow [workload principles policy and plans](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/departments/strategicplanning/workloadplanningteam/) (for academics) as per university guidance.
* Develop personal work plans to ensure colleagues know what their job involves.
* Hold weekly team meetings to discuss the anticipated workload for the forthcoming week (and to deal with any planned absences).
* Hold regular meetings with individuals to discuss their workload and any anticipated challenges.
* Ensure sufficient resources are available for colleagues to be able to do their jobs (time, equipment etc.).

**Competency*** Devise a system to keep training records up to date to ensure colleagues are competent and comfortable in undertaking the core functions of their job.
* Use the [PDR process](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/learning-and-development/pdrs/) to identify and track development needs and training undertaken, then review to ensure it is effective and sufficient.
* Promote and provide training to help colleagues deal with conflict and defuse difficult situations (e.g. difficult phone calls, aggressive customers).
* Provide and promote training (formal or informal) to help colleagues prioritise, or information on how they can seek help if they have conflicting priorities.

**Working patterns*** Review working hours and/or shift work systems – have these been agreed with colleagues?
* Adjust work patterns to cope with peaks and colleague absences (this needs to be fair and agreed with colleagues).
* Consider and promote the [Flexible Working Policy](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/employment/leave/flexibleworking/policy/) for colleagues where possible.
* Consider changes to start and end times to help colleagues to cope with pressures external to the organisation (e.g. childcare, poor commuting routes).
* Develop a system to notify colleagues of unplanned tight deadlines and any exceptional need to work long hours.

**Physical environment*** Ensure your risk assessments for physical hazards and risks are up to date.
* Promote [workstation (DSE) self-assessments](https://universityofexeteruk.sharepoint.com/sites/HealthandSafetyHub/SitePages/DSE-Guidance.aspx) to current colleagues and include these in induction processes.
* Assess the risk of physical violence and verbal abuse. Take steps to deal with this using [University policy](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/employment/hrpoliciesatoz/) and in consultation with colleagues and others who can help (e.g. HR, the police, charities).
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| Control | The University encourages me to use my skills and initiative to perform my role.  I have some control over my pace of work.I feel empowered to plan and prioritise my work. I am consulted over my work timetable and have a say about when I take breaks. I am able to express my ideas and points of view. I am able to raise any concerns I have about the level of control at work.   |  | **Enabling positive wellbeing** |
| **Neutral** |
| **Could be impacting on my wellbeing** |
| **I feel this is reducing my wellbeing** |
| **Mitigations to consider (these are just a guide, you may have other ideas for mitigations)****Does the employee identify impacts on how much say they have in the way they do their work? If so, consider implementing one or more of the suggested actions below as appropriate.****Communication*** Agree systems that enable colleagues to have a say over the way their work is organised and undertaken, e.g. through project meetings, one-to-ones, performance reviews.
* Provide opportunities for discussion and input.
* Hold regular discussion to take projects forward: agree objectives and roles; agree timescales; agree the provision of managerial support, e.g. through regular progress meetings.
* Talk about the way decisions are made – is there scope for more involvement?

**Competency*** Talk about the skills people have and if they believe they are able to use these to good effect.
* How else would they like to use their skills?
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| Support | The University has policies and procedures to adequately support me, and I know how to access these.I feel supported by my line-manager and colleagues and am able to reciprocate. I have regular supervision meetings and appraisals with my line-manager. I am aware of the University’s wellbeing facilities and have the flexibility in my work arrangements to use them. I have adequate resources to undertake my job to the required standard.  |  | **Enabling positive wellbeing** |
| **Neutral** |
| **Could be impacting on my wellbeing** |
| **I feel this is reducing my wellbeing** |
| **Mitigations to consider (these are just a guide, you may have other ideas for mitigations)****Does the employee identify impacts on the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the  organisation, line management and other colleagues​?  If so, consider implementing one or more of the suggested actions below as appropriate.****Communication*** Hold regular one-to-one and team meetings to talk about any emerging issues or pressures.
* Include ‘work-related stress/emerging pressures’ as a standing item for colleague meetings and/or performance reviews.
* Ask how colleagues would like to access managerial support, e.g. ‘open door’ policies or agreed times when managers are able to discuss emerging issues or pressures.

**Competency*** Ensure training arrangements and refresher sessions are undertaken to make certain training and competencies are up to date and appropriate for the core functions of colleague’s jobs.
* Promote or set a PDR objective for managers to complete [manager training in supporting the mental wellbeing of teams](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/wellbeing/managers/wellbeingtraining/).

**Signposting and support*** Introduce [flexibility in work](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/employment/leave/flexibleworking/policy/) schedules (where possible) to enable colleagues to cope with domestic commitments.
* Talk about ways the organisation could provide support if someone is experiencing problems outside work.
* Familiarise yourself and disseminate information on other areas of support ([human resources department](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/employment/hr/contact/), [occupational health](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/occupational-health/), [EAP](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/wellbeing/mentalhealth/spectrum/), [Mental Health Champions](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/wellbeing/mentalhealth/mhchampions/) and external support such as the [NHS Talking Therapies Service](https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health/find-an-nhs-talking-therapies-service)).
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| Change | The University consults me regarding proposed changes and provides an opportunity for open discussion about the change. I am kept updated about the change in a timely manner. I am given training and support to manage any changes with my role. When the change occurs, I feel suitably equipped to deal with it.  |  | **Enabling positive wellbeing** |
| **Neutral** |
| **Could be impacting on my wellbeing** |
| **I feel this is reducing my wellbeing** |
| **Mitigations to consider (these are just a guide, you may have other ideas for mitigations)****Does the employee identify issues with how change is managed and communicated in the  organisation? If so, consider implementing one or more of the suggested actions below as appropriate.****Communication** * Ensure all staff are aware of why the change is happening – agree a system for doing this.
* Define and explain the key steps of the change.
* Establish a system to communicate new developments quickly.
* Agree methods of communication (e.g. meetings, notice boards, letters, email, feedback forums) and frequency (e.g. weekly, monthly).
* Ensure colleagues are aware of the impact of the change on their jobs.

**Consultation and feedback** * Ensure colleague consultation and support is a key element of the programme.
* Provide a system to enable colleagues to comment and ask questions before, during and after the change, e.g. for colleagues who want to raise their concerns.

**Review*** Review unit and individual work plans after the change to ensure objectives are clear and workloads are appropriately distributed.
* Complete an [Equality Impact Assessment](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/departments/inclusion/policiesanddata/eia/)

**You may also find the following resources helpful:*** Use [Mental Health Champions](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/wellbeing/mentalhealth/mhchampions/) to promote healthy working practices and raise awareness of mental health.
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| Role | My job role adequately reflects my current job description. The University ensures that the different requirements it places upon me are clear, and that these are compatible with my role. I know the standards I have to meet in my job and what I am expected to achieve.There are adequate opportunities to raise concerns about any uncertainties or conflicts concerning my role and responsibilities.  |  | **Enabling positive wellbeing** |
| **Neutral** |
| **Could be impacting on my wellbeing** |
| **I feel this is reducing my wellbeing** |
| **Mitigations to consider (these are just a guide, you may have other ideas for mitigations)****Does employee identify impacts on their understanding of their role within the  organisation or perceptions of role conflict? If so, consider implementing one or more of the suggested actions below as appropriate.****Communication*** Hold team meetings to enable members to clarify their role and discuss any role conflict.
* Display team/department targets and objectives to help clarify unit and individual role.
* Hold regular one-to-one meetings to ensure individuals are clear about their role and know what is planned for the coming months.
* Develop suitable [induction arrangements](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/new/induction/) for new colleagues – make sure all members of the team understand the role and responsibilities of the new starter.

**Competency*** Use the [PDR process](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/learning-and-development/pdrs/) to define and discuss role and set objectives.
* Agree specific standards of performance for jobs and individual tasks and review periodically.
* Introduce personal work plans which are aligned to the outputs of the team.
* Introduce or revise job descriptions to ensure the core functions and priorities are clear.
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| Working relationships | There is a supportive team atmosphere and dynamics between team members are good. The University promotes positive behaviours at work to avoid conflict and ensure fairness in the workplace.The University has policies and procedures to prevent or resolve unacceptable behaviour. I feel that managers deal appropriately with reports of unacceptable behaviour.  |  | **Enabling positive wellbeing** |
| **Neutral** |
| **Could be impacting on my wellbeing** |
| **I feel this is reducing my wellbeing** |
| **Mitigations to consider (these are just a guide, you may have other ideas for mitigations)****Does the employee identify impacts on promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour​?  If so, consider implementing one or more of the suggested actions below as appropriate.****Policy and processes*** Speak to HR and refer to [HR policy](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/employment/hrpoliciesatoz/) for preventing and dealing with unacceptable behaviour and [grievance and disciplinary](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/employment/conditions/terms/disciplinary/) procedures for reporting incidents – communicate these to colleagues.
* Ensure colleagues are aware of [Speak Out](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/about/speakout/) and [Dignity and Respect](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/about/speakout/support/dignityandrespectadvisors/) processes to report unacceptable behaviour.

**Communication and competency*** Encourage good communication and encourage appropriate training to aid skill development (e.g. listening skills, confidence building).
* Select or build teams which have the right blend of expertise and experience for new projects.
* Discuss how individuals work together and how they can build positive relationships.

**Support and reward*** Identify ways to celebrate success (e.g. informal lunches).
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| Personal stress | I feel able to inform my manager if I am experiencing personal stress that is impacting on my work.I am familiar with the University’s supportive HR policies (for example, leave and flexible working policies), and am confident of my manager’s support in applying these if required.  |  | **Enabling positive wellbeing** |
| **Neutral** |
| **Could be impacting on my wellbeing** |
| **I feel this is reducing my wellbeing** |
| **Mitigations to consider (these are just a guide, you may have other ideas for mitigations)****Does the employee identify impacts in not feeling able to voice concerns about stressors outside of the workplace or do they disclose a lack of knowledge of processes and support available? If so, consider implementing one or more of the suggested actions below as appropriate.****Support**Hold regular one-to-one meetings to check on the employee’s wellbeing and to monitor if they are coping with their work tasks.Explore and discuss together HR policy which may be helpful such as the [Flexible Working Policy](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/employment/leave/flexibleworking/policy/), the [compassionate](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/employment/leave/personal/compassionateleave/), [emergency](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/employment/leave/personal/emergencyleave/) and [carer’s](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/employment/leave/personal/carersleave/) leave policies.Promote and signpost to internal and external support using the [Occupational Health](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/occupational-health/) and [Wellbeing](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/wellbeing/) web pagesConsider encouraging the employee to complete a [Wellness Action Plan](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/wellbeing/mentalhealth/wap/) |

# Action Plan

This must be completed where difficulties or concerns at work have been identified. Examples of reasonable adjustments or other supportive measures can be found in the Managing Mental Wellbeing and Stress at Work Standard. Your HR Advisor/Business Partner can provide further guidance if required.

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| **Action(s) to be implemented**  | **Who is going to action this?**  | **Timescale** |
| **1.****2.****3.****4.****(add more if required)** |  |  |
| **Review date:**  | **Employee’s signature:** | **Manager’s signature:** |

# Action plan reviews

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| First Review**Date:**  |
| **Action (numbered points in Action Plan)** | **Evaluation of action** | **Any ongoing requirement or identified need for additional measures** | **Review Date** |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Employee’s signature:** | **Manager’s signature:**  |
| Second Review**Date:**  |
| **Action (numbered points in Action Plan)** | **Evaluation of action** | **Any ongoing requirement or identified need for additional measures** | **Review Date** |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Employee’s signature:** | **Manager’s signature:**  |

**Additional reviews can be completed if required.**