**Domestic Violence**

One in four women and one in six men will experience domestic violence at some point in their lifetime. It is therefore very likely that all workplaces, including the University, will have staff that have experienced or are experiencing domestic abuse.

Managers should be aware of the following:

* 75% of those experiencing abuse are targeted at work (including on their way to and from work).
* It is possible to use workplaces resources such as phone and email to perpetuate abuse.
* Domestic abuse can take many forms. As well as physical abuse it can include emotional, verbal, sexual or financial abuse – it is about the abuse of power and control of one person by another.
* On average, a woman will experience 35 episodes of domestic abuse before seeking help.
* Men are less likely to tell anyone about experiencing domestic violence than women.
* People experiencing domestic abuse can be subject to disciplinary action or even lose their jobs because of (for example) lateness and absence when the underlying cause is unknown. It estimated that around 2% of employed women lose their job as a result of domestic abuse, and 20% need to take time off work.
* Domestic abuse is often a hidden crime, and many incidents are not reported to the police.
* Domestic abuse can cause staff to be absent from work, late or underperform.
* Employees may wish to remain at work because they see the workplace as a safe place.

There are simple steps that managers and organisations can take to respond to this sensitive issue. Our Domestic Violence Policy sets out some practical guidelines. Advice is available from HR at all times.

There can be signs that someone could be experiencing domestic abuse. For example, sudden changes in behaviour or performance, unexplained absences or a changed appearance (such as dress) – but remember there could be many reasons for these changes. If you suspect that a member of staff is experiencing domestic abuse, you can open a conversation – simply ask someone how they are or acknowledge your observations and ask if everything is okay or if they need to discuss anything. Where necessary, signpost the University counselling services, who will be able to provide additional support.

The following organisations can provide advice and practical guidance on domestic violence:

Refuge [www.refurge.org.uk](http://www.refurge.org.uk)

Man Kind Initiative [www.mankind.org.uk](http://www.mankind.org.uk)

Men’s Advice Line [www.mensadviceline.org.uk](http://www.mensadviceline.org.uk)

Women’s Aid [www.womensaid.org.uk](http://www.womensaid.org.uk)

24 hour national domestic violence freephone helpline 0808 2000 247

[Stonewall guidance](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/help-advice/criminal-law/domestic-violence) for LGBT people experience domestic violence.