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**How to prevent work related stress**

Stress is an adverse reaction to pressure. Stress can arise for a range of reasons, some of which can be partly or mainly work related. Organisations have a duty to protect the health and safety of their staff, including mental health. Managers have a key role to play in reducing the risk of work related stress.

Stress at work can be caused by many factors, including relationships with colleagues or managers, change, demands of the role, lack of support, level of control over the working environment or the work itself and a lack of skills or time to meet deadlines. Stress affects people differently and what stresses one person may not affect another .

Managers should consider:

* As a regular part of 121 meetings or performance reviews, talking to staff members about how they are feeling, ensuring staff are aware that if they have any issues or problems they may raise them with you. Include discussions on work life balance in your regular dialogue.
* Being aware of possible signs and symptoms that a member of staff is experiencing stress. These can include higher than normal sickness absence, lateness, being withdrawn, decreased performance, increased emotional reactions, lack of motivation or confidence and mood swings.
* Reviewing workloads, deadlines and objectives to ensure that they are manageable. Tackle long hours working and excessive workloads.
* Ensuring that staff have the appropriate training and development to allow them to do their job properly.
* Providing regular feedback on performance. Ensuring that staff are clear about what is expected of them in terms of responsibilities and standards.
* Addressing promptly any issues around bullying or inappropriate behaviour.
* Ensuring effective communication, especially during periods of organisational change.
* Signposting resources for staff such as the University counseling service and wellbeing services where stress is disclosed.

Be vigilant to the possibility that staff are experiencing stress even if they are not disclosing it.