

Executive (HSE) Stress Helpline on 0845 6081818 or from the HSE Stress microsite <http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/index.htm>.

5. Who is at risk?

5.1 Every individual will react differently to stress – what is a stimulating challenge to one person may be a depressingly daunting task causing a negative stress reaction for another. There are, however, some common risk factors which managers should be aware of in monitoring stress levels in their staff. Those who are most at risk from suffering negative stress reactions are those who:

- Have a negative self-image
- Lack self-confidence
- Have difficulty saying 'no'
- Are perfectionists
- Are inflexible
- Need to be the best
- Need to be constantly recognised
- Have unrealistic expectations of their own ability
- Compare themselves inappropriately with others
- Take on responsibility for other people's problems
- Have a need for complete control
- Dislike change.

5.2 Employees who consider they are having an adverse reaction due to stress at work are encouraged to advise your Line Manager (or, if this would not be appropriate another senior member of staff) as soon as reasonably practicable.

5.3 Each reported case will be dealt with on its own merits, with the Academy enlisting professional support where required.

5.4 To reduce the risk of employees suffering ill-health as a result of undue stress at work, an assessment of the risks associated with stress will be undertaken as part of the General Risk Assessment procedure and all reasonable steps taken to control such risks.

6. Assessing the Risk

6.1 The Academy conducts a general risk assessment in which managers identify risks to health & safety, and put in place control or prevention measures. If this identifies a specific concern regarding stress, a more detailed stress risk assessment is conducted which would highlight general stress factors and recommend what actions or control measures should be put in place.

6.2 A combination of work pressures and problems in an employee's personal life can cause situations that they struggle to cope with. Counselling services provided through the Academy or their own GP may help to alleviate those pressures.

7. Prevention

7.1 The Academy operates three levels of measure for the prevention and handling of stress:

7.1.1 Primary Prevention Measures

The Academy recognises that good management systems can do a great deal to avoid the major causes of stress. To this end the Academy seeks to maintain the following:

- Clear Academy objectives, as set out in the Strategic Plan
- Clear Operational plans for staff and job descriptions for individuals
- Clear policies and procedures including those which focus on wellbeing and safety such as Health & Safety, Sickness Absence and Family Leave
- A supportive management structure
- Effective consultation and communication with staff
- Appropriate training and development of staff
- Effective Human Resource policies and in particular effective recruitment policies to ensure that staff joining us have the correct skills for a job, or are capable of developing those skills

7.1.2 Secondary Prevention Measures

Training The Academy will aim to provide stress-related training and health & wellbeing activities at regular intervals.

Management Action Managers have a crucial role in identifying and preventing stress. It is the role of all Line Managers to:

- Listen to staff who are expressing concerns and be supportive
- Carry out regular consultation with their staff both individually and as a group
- Regularly assess the volume of work and difficulty of tasks placed on individual staff
- Ensure staff have realistic goals and deadlines
- Ensure staff are capable of carrying out the tasks they have been given
- Support effective time management for staff
- Avoid work overload and under-load
- Referral to Occupational Health may be advisable and would follow discussions with Personnel and the member of staff about their health and the purpose and benefits of such an assessment

7.1.3 Support

Where an employee has a concern regarding any aspect of their employment which is having an adverse impact on their Health and Wellbeing they can raise their concern either informally through the Grievance Policy. These concerns will then be investigated with

feedback given to the employee and any appropriate corrective action taken. Where the employee's concern is not directly work-related but is impacting on their Health and Wellbeing the Academy via Occupational Health, can arrange for the employee to attend counselling or will support the individual while they are attending counselling. Alternatively the Academy can put the employee in touch with relevant external agencies who will be able to provide specialist advice. The timescales involved will be dependent on individual circumstances.

8. What to do if stress results in illness

8.1 The Academy will do all it can under the preventative measures above to avoid a staff member becoming ill through stress, whatever its causes. However where an employee is unable to work, or to work to full capacity, through stress the situation will be dealt with sensitively and fairly with reference to the Attendance Policy.

8.2 The Academy has a duty to take reasonable care not to expose staff to working conditions that may cause injury or illness. If the employee thinks that they are suffering from stress they should also consider seeking medical advice.