**UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX**

**Strategic Mental Health Stress Risk Assessment -COVID-19 pandemic**

**SMHRA-C-19**

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| **Description of activity / area being assessed** | **University of Essex Strategic Mental Health Risk Assessment against the additional risks that the Covid-19 Pandemic has presented.**  **(This is intended for the Advanced, Enhanced, and Sustained Protection levels)** | | **Location(s)** | **University of Essex Colchester, Southend and Loughton Campuses and Work from home locations.** |
| **Manager responsible** | Lara Carmel  Director of Workplace Health Safety and Wellbeing | **Signature & date** | **Lara Carmel 25/01/2021 updated 13.04.2021**  **Reviewed 21/09/2021**  Director of Workplace Health Safety and Wellbeing | |
| **Assessed by (name & role)** | Lara Carmel | **Signature & assessment date** | **Lara Carmel 25/01/2021 updated 13.04.2021 and 21/09/2021** | |

**UOE Strategic Mental Health Stress Risk Assessment**

The University is committed to providing a positive work environment. It aims to:

* reduce the risk of occupational stress through development of good working practices, based on the HSE Management Standards
* identify and address occupational factors that can contribute to employee stress through a process of risk assessment; and
* create an enabling environment where positive relationships promote well-being for all participants, and which allows individuals to experience a sense of belonging.

**Additional considerations during the COVID-19 pandemic**

The COVID-19 pandemic is likely to have caused a level of understandable anxiety in everyone regarding their own and others’ physical and mental wellbeing, the long-term impact of which is unlikely to be clear for some time. Fears and uncertainties about the COVID-19 infection can be exacerbated by work pressures and demands; the pandemic has resulted in staff having to change to new ways of working to carry out their usual tasks and new tasks, as well as balancing this against many conflicting demands (internal and external). Increased demands, coupled with a reduction in the amount of control an individual has in these unprecedented times, stress is reported to be on the increase for many staff. .

The University will support all staff who are feeling anxious due to the pandemic, to ensure they do not feel overwhelmed by work tasks or become incapacitated by their emotions. Support will be given to all staff to enable them to continue to think under pressure, maintain resilience and to develop creative solutions to dilemmas whilst taking into account the impact of individual circumstances on their ability to balance home and work responsibilities.

The SMHRA-C-19 will enable the UoE to:

* Identify potential hazards.
* Identify who might be harmed and how.
* Assess the risk and decide if it is currently causing stress.
* Record the findings and decide on any action required to eliminate or reduce stress.
* Regularly review the assessment over time.

This SMHRA highlights what the UoE can do to reduce harm to a member of staff. It will help to:

* Identify any potential stressors that might be experienced by those working on our campuses, from their homes or other locations aboard or in the UK (field work, in external companies, hospitals etc) during the pandemic.
* Take into consideration the impact of lockdowns on our mental health and the continuing need to socially distance and self-isolate – (GOV requirements) that would previously have been advised as a practice hazardous to mental wellbeing.
* With respect to good emotional wellbeing, identify what measures can be put in place to support a member of staff’s mental health, ensuring that pressures from work remain a motivator not a stressor.

**About COVID-19**

COVID-19 is a life-threatening illness. To date (7/09/2021), over 133,483 individuals have died in the UK within 28 days of a COVID + test result. Each of these cases is a personal tragedy where the consequences of the disease have been catastrophic. COVID-19 impacts individuals in very different ways, with some people remaining asymptomatic and, according to Public Health England, “for most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a [mild illness](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection)” especially amongst younger age groups where the consequences of contracting the disease are typically less severe. Given the spectrum of consequences that can result from contracting the disease, this risk assessment has determined that the most appropriate rating of the risk consequence of COVID-19 is a “major” consequence on the University of Essex risk assessment.

New variants have emerged within the UK with the Delta variant (VOC-21APR-02) being the most recent and prevalent variant of Corona virus. These new variants have been shown to have a higher transmission rate. The University will continue to take a precautionary approach to managing the pandemic in the best interests of our staff and The transmission risk of the virus will be reduced if we avoid close contact with others, wash our hands, wear a face covering , keep our distance from others, and reduce our social contacts.

In addition, to the measures above we strongly encourage that everyone regularly on campus should test twice a week using rapid lateral flow test kits or by using the testing centres on each of the three campuses. using theLFD COVID testing twice a week when on campus as well as getting vaccinated against COVID-19.

We strongly encourage that everyone in our community is fully vaccinated against COVID (subject to any underlying medical conditions). Vaccination is now available to all people over the age of 16. We are running vaccination clinics on all three of our campuses. As of 19/09/2021, 82.4% of the UK population over 16 years of age has received both dose of the Coronavirus vaccine[[1]](#footnote-1).

**Managing underlying mental health conditions**

If you are managing an underlying mental health condition you may need additional help.

* People and Culture can offer individual advice and can make you aware of the policies and support regarding the options available, especially if your difficulties are related to child or other caring responsibilities, or if you are having difficulties getting in to work, reaching work remotely or whilst you are furloughed.
* If referred by your manager, Occupational Health can assist in evaluating fitness for work, support required, and advise on any adjustments that may be required to assist your to do your job.
* In the first instance should you wish not to go down the formal referral process to be referred to OH, to discuss your mental health concerns. You could instead utilise the support of the Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA) within the University. They have been trained to act as a point of contact for people with mental health concerns to provide support and guidance as well as signposting to other supports services to colleagues within the University. A list of MHFA can be obtained through OH.
* Discuss with your manager undertaking an individual stress risk assessment. The stress risk assessment document below can be used as guidance for common sources of stress. Alternatively, this document can be used to assist in developing a team stress risk assessment.
* Request a review with your GP or Mental Health Team.
* Utilise the online external websites as listed below. They often have helplines, particularly [Mind](mailto:https://www.mind.org.uk/media-a/6020/22078_work-from-home-wap.pdf).
* [The Samaritans](https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/if-youre-having-difficult-time/) are there for you to phone or email 24 hours per day and they can talk to you about any problem, no matter how big or small.
* Sadly, you or someone you know may have lost someone close through Coronavirus. [Cruse Bereavement](https://www.cruse.org.uk/get-help/coronavirus-dealing-bereavement-and-grief) care offers a range of support specific to COVID 19.

**If you or someone you know is at risk of immediate harm due to their difficulties in managing their mental health, seek emergency support by calling 111, the Crisis Team, an ambulance or go to A&E where immediate support can be provided.**

**University of Essex Strategic Mental Health Risk Assessment against the additional risks that the Covid-19 Pandemic has presented. (This is intended for the Advanced, Enhanced, Sustained and Targeted Protection levels)**

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| **RISK AREA: DEMANDS – Includes issues such as workload, work environment and work patterns.**  Issues to consider: Difficulty in achieving work life balance, working over contracted hours, work overload/under-load, peaks in demands, staff working beyond their capabilities, conflicting priorities, working environment at home or on campus (noise, ventilation, lighting etc.), potential exposure to violence/aggression, lone working/night work, shift systems, home-schooling, increased personal responsibilities. |

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| **STANDARD:** | **INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT** |
| Members of staff feel able to cope with the demands of their job  Systems in place to respond to staff individual concerns. | Members of staff communicate they can meet the demands of their role.  Staff concerns are responded to without delay and are made aware of support resources |
| **POSSIBLE ISSUES** | **ORGANISATIONAL CONTROLS** |
| Conflict of demands of work and personal responsibilities | * Regular one to ones with line managers to highlight any conflicts and concerns * Regular University communications setting out flexible approaches to managing competing demands. * Flexible working * Workplace coaching service |
| With some staff off work, self-isolating or furloughed then it is possible that the workload of others may have increased | * Regular one-to-ones with line managers to highlight any conflicts and concerns and to re-prioritise workload as necessary * ‘Clear the decks’ approach to ensure prioritisation across work areas and teams * Support provided to use technologies to work remotely |
| Increased working from home may lead to stressors from others working in the home and others schooling from home  Isolation from others if living alone.  Isolation from colleagues | * Remote meetings in place by zoom and phone * DSE assessments carried out * Technology and desk equipment provided for roles * Support for managers to hold team meetings remotely * Regular University communications setting out flexible approaches to managing competing demands including no loss of pay when managing home schooling during lockdown periods * Guides on how to use technology to keep in touch with colleagues |
| Changes to workload and ways of working | * Flexible working of location and hours of work allowed for staff to meet the conflicting demands. * Line managers able to redesign priorities to address current environment and capacity of staff to undertake the duties required * Support provided through professional development programme for specific skills needed. |
| Display screen equipment at home  Poor internet  New musculoskeletal pain | * Guidance available to support working and managing remotely[it.helpdesk@essex.ac.uk](mailto:it.helpdesk@essex.ac.uk) * DSE policy [Display Screen Equipment](https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/equipment-safety/display-screen-equipment) * [Working from home](mailto:https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/working-from-home/working-from-home-during-covid-19) |
| Home schooling children | * Resources available to support home schooling <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/supporting-your-childrens-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19> * [Parents Support Network](mailto:https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/forums-and-networks/parents-support-network) * Flexible working of location and hours of work allowed for staff to meet the conflicting demands |
| Furloughed staff | * Specific [professional development programme](mailto:https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/professional-development-and-training) available * Secondment opportunities to work in other areas of the University * University communications to raise awareness and understanding of furlough scheme |
| H&S controls on campus | * [Health and Safety](mailto:https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/covid-19/keeping-safe-on-campus) support Covid-19 keeping safe on campus |
| Poor work environment either on campus or at your remote working location. | * Advice can be gained through [WHSW](mailto:https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/working-from-home/working-from-home-during-covid-19) on how you can set up workstations remotely. * Advice can be gained from [ITS](mailto:https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/it-services/working-remotely-from-home-or-off-campus) on how to use technology to support remote working * Equipment provided as required by roles. |
| Workload  Concerns with increasing workload  Feeling exhausted due to little downtime from work  Not felt able to take annual leave to rest or have a break  Overextended – working additional hours to meet demands in the evenings and weekends  Lack of control over work.  Fixed deadlines occurring in different parts of the year  Conflicting work demands | * Regular one-to-ones with line manager to identify issues and any changes that can be put in place. * Prioritisation of work discussed in departments and sections under the clear the decks approach. * [Individual and Team Stress and Resilience Assessments to identify specific stressors](mailto:https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/managing-people/stress-management-guidance-for-line-managers) * Flexibility and influence over how to manage workload. * University approach to managing annual leave during the pandemic with leave encouraged and extended. * Support from teams to identify areas of continuous improvement * Self - assessment of own working style and practices with help from a mentor, coach or CBT therapist. * Ensure annual leave taken and agree when and how much early on, with line manager |
| **SUPPORT AVAILABLE** | |
| **INTERNAL** | **EXTERNAL** |
| * [Work Related Stress](https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/health-and-wellbeing/work-related-stress) * [Counselling and Support Services](https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/health-and-wellbeing/counselling-and-support-services) * [Silvercloud for Staff](https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/health-and-wellbeing/silvercloud-for-staff) * [COVID-19: Managing your Mental Health and Wellbeing during the Pandemic](https://moodle.essex.ac.uk/mod/page/view.php?id=683072) * [Managing Staff Mental Health Webinar](https://moodle.essex.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=14569) * [COVID-19: Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing for Managers during the Pandemic](https://moodle.essex.ac.uk/mod/page/view.php?id=683073) [Occupational Health Referrals](https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/managing-people/occupational-health-referrals) * [Building Resilience](https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/health-and-wellbeing/building-resilience) * [Building Resilience during Lockdown Webinar](https://moodle.essex.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=14569) * [Working from home guidance for managers](https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/working-from-home/working-from-home-managers) * [Working from home guidance](https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/working-from-home/working-from-home-managers) * [Working from home during COVID-19](https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/working-from-home/working-from-home-during-covid-19) * [Parent Support Network](https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/forums-and-networks/parents-support-network) * [COVID-19](https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/covid-19) * [How to come onto our campuses](https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/covid-19/how-to-come-onto-our-campuses) | * [Mind](mailto:https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/coronavirus-and-work/) * Advice for [managers](mailto:https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/coronavirus-and-work/tips-for-supporting-yourself-and-your-team/) and [staff](mailto:https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/coronavirus-and-work/tips-from-mind-staff/) regarding working from remotely. This covers managing staff remotely, supporting those who are [home schooling and working.](mailto:https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/coronavirus-and-work/supporting-staff-caring-for-children/) * [Advice](mailto:https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/coronavirus-and-work/support-if-youre-furloughed/) for [furloughed staff](mailto:https://www.businesshealthy.org/supporting-furloughed-workers/) * Advice on working with blurred boundaries between home/remote place and work, with staff in some organisations reporting feelings of [burnout.](mailto:https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/coronavirus-and-work/dealing-with-burnout-when-working-from-home/) * <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/coronavirus/looking-after-your-mental-health-while-working-during-coronavirus> |

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| RISK AREA: **CONTROL – How much say the person has in the way they do their work.** Issues to consider:  Employee opportunities to participate in decision making, influence how work is done, consistent structure/routine within roles, control over workload deadlines and breaks, underutilisation of skills, lack of development opportunities, impact of Government policies. |

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| **STANDARD:** | **INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT** |
| For members of staff to feel they have appropriate control over their work and can raise concerns if there are issues. | For members of staff wherever possible to be consulted about their workload, pace of work, changes to their working environment and changes to working practices |
| **POSSIBLE ISSUES** | **ORGANISATIONAL CONTROLS** |
| Rapid changes in Government and University policy and procedures affecting day to day working related to COVID 19 | * UoE organisational policies and guidance in relation to working during the COVID-19 pandemic. * Regular communications from Director of People & Culture |
| Unpredictability of work activities | * Training staff that have to undertake a job or role that they have previously not undertaken. * Regular conversations with line managers to identify issues early. * Regular University communications about priorities and changing patterns of work through different levels of protection |
| For some of us, working remotely can bring a sense of isolation. Sometimes our attention wanders, or we miss being with the people in our teams.   It is important to recognise these challenges and not to let them spiral.  In some cases, the home is too small or crowded (or is too challenging in other respects) to be suitable for remote working. | * People & Culture policies to support family commitments. * Professional development programmes available to build new areas of expertise and skills * EDI staff and student networks * Peer Exchange Network, Learning Lounge to connect with colleagues. * WHSW run health promotion activities * Training in leadership and management so that managers and HR staff who advise HoDs and HoSs on individual cases are open to flexible arrangements and job sharing etc * Regular one-to-one meeting with managers to identify challenges early |
| **SUPPORT AVAILABLE** | |
| **INTERNAL** | **EXTERNAL** |
| * [Flexible Working](https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/employment-policies-procedures/flexible-working) * [Managing Anxiety when Returning to Campus Webinar](https://moodle.essex.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=14569) * [Managing your Wellbeing during Lockdown Webinar](https://moodle.essex.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=14569) * People and Culture can offer individual advice and can make you aware of the policies and support regarding the options available, especially if your difficulties are related to caring for someone or childcare | [Mind](mailto:https://www.mind.org.uk/media-a/6020/22078_work-from-home-wap.pdf) give guidance on developing a wellness recovery plan for staff with a focus on taking control of what you are able to control.  Working from home or remotely can be very rewarding. Many colleagues have told us they feel more productive or have more autonomy in the way they choose to work. Not commuting can also save us time, stress and energy which we can then spend in other ways. |

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| RISK AREA: **RELATIONSHIPS -** Issues to consider:  Prejudice (e.g. sex,, race, religion), team dynamics and relationships, welcoming new starters into teams, departure of colleagues (e.g. retirement, change of job), interpersonal difficulties, bullying and harassment, verbal abuse, threat of violence, victimisation, humiliation, ridicule, malicious gossip, dealing with individuals with complex issues. |

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| **STANDARD:** | **INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT** |
| Staff indicate that they are not subjected to unacceptable  behaviours, e.g. bullying at work; and systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns. | UoE promotes positive behaviours at work to avoid conflict and ensure fairness.  Employees share information relevant to their work.  The organisation has agreed policies and procedures to prevent or resolve unacceptable behaviour.  Systems are in place to enable and encourage managers to deal with unacceptable behaviour  Systems are in place to enable and encourage staff to  report unacceptable behaviour. |
| **POSSIBLE ISSUES** | **ORGANISATIONAL CONTROLS** |
| Virtual meetings and tired staff can exacerbate poor working behaviours with staff becoming defensive and short tempered  Pressures over tight deadlines  Lack of procedures to resolve workplace conflict  Virtual e-presenteeism - staff feeling that they need to be on screen continuously to demonstrate they are engaged but not being able to carry out task due to exhaustion and a possible disconnect with the UoE | * Online meeting protocols in place for participants and chairs of meetings * Properly spacing meetings within a day and declining those meetings which tip the balance of the day by agreeing with colleagues to share cover for these * Training in use of Zoom, Panopto and other supporting technologies * Workplace Coaching Service * Counselling services * Equality and diversity policies and training * Support for team development available through People & Culture * Support for individuals available through People & Culture * Zero tolerance to bullying and harassment, including of teachers by students and by groups of students * Report and Support * Harassment Advisory and Support Service * Employee Voice staff surveys, pulse surveys, and listening exercises to capture staff experience * How We Work at Essex essential training * Organisational stress risk assessments, team stress risk assessments and individual stress risk assessments. Advice on how these can be undertaken is through People and Culture and WHSW. * Support from People & Culture to help staff return to the workplace after a period of absence. Phased return to work plans through WHSW. * Support for managers on absence management * Trade Union and junior staff representation on key committees. Also probationary ASER and ASE staff. * Students to be obliged to take a ‘Responsible Student Evaluations’ training course online before they can complete an anonymous SAMT questionnaire |
| Lack of procedures for staff to report concerns  Failure to act on stress indicators e.g. rising staff absence, turnover of staff,  Failure to conduct (and report on) exit interviews when staff leave.  Inconsistent approach to dealing with unacceptable behaviour  Anxious/disgruntled students give unfair metrical ratings on SAMTs and make borderline-abusive comments (anonymously) on SAMTs |
| **SUPPORT AVAILABLE** | |
| **INTERNAL** | **EXTERNAL** |
| [Report and Support Service](https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/emergencies-security-and-safety/report-harassment)  [Coaching for Success](https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/professional-development-and-training/coaching-for-success)  [Coaching Essentials for Managers](https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/professional-development-and-training/coaching-essentials-for-managers)  Future Leaders  Strategic Leaders  [Employee Assistance Programme](https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/health-and-wellbeing/counselling-and-support-services)  [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/diversity-and-inclusion/equality-and-diversity-policy-and-strategy)  How We Work at Essex Training  [Sickness Leave](https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/taking-leave/sickness-leave) | External networks and supporting resources are available –   * Advance HE * Vitae * Athena Swan |

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| RISK AREA: **CHANGE -** Issues to consider:  Restructuring, constant change, change management, communication of change, employee consultation, new technology, anxieties about employment status e.g. redundancy, space allocation, remote working and dual learning |

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| **STANDARD:** | **INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT** |
| Staff indicate that the UoE engages them  frequently when undergoing an organisational change; and  systems are in place locally to respond to any individual  concerns | UoE provides staff with timely information to enable them to understand the reasons for proposed changes and provides opportunities for staff to influence  proposals.  Staff are aware of the probable impact of any changes to  their jobs/roles. If necessary, staff are given training to support with  any changes in their jobs.  Staff are aware of timetables for changes; and  Staff have access to relevant support during changes. |
| **POSSIBLE ISSUES** | **ORGANISATIONAL CONTROLS** |
| Furlough | * University communications raising awareness of the furlough scheme * Professional development programme for colleagues on Furlough * Working practices pulse survey to identify key challenges |
| Changes to job role and expectations | * Managing Structural Change policy * Consultation with Union and staff representatives * Training in managing change * Learning and development programme * speedy, live, real-time IT support for staff who experience technical problems (instead of them having to join students a queue in order to get some suggestions and information links via email). * Support for role transitions * Regular communication from senior leadership |
| Fears about job security  Poor communication – uncertainty about what is happening  Not enough time allowed to implement change  Inexperience/fear of new technology  Lack of skills for new tasks  Not enough resource allocated for change process | * Support for using new technologies – resources, training, one-to-one guidance. * Regular University communications from Director of People & Culture * Reports to Senate from Director of People & Culture * Financial planning and sustainability as part of planning round as well as January stock-take of resources. * Clear timetables for decisions about financial sustainability and business continuity. |
| **SUPPORT AVAILABLE** | |
| **INTERNAL** | **EXTERNAL** |
| [Building Resilience](https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/health-and-wellbeing/building-resilience)  [How to come onto our campuses](https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/covid-19/how-to-come-onto-our-campuses)  ITS support pages  Learning Lounge  Peer Exchange Network | NHS resources   * <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/7-simple-tips-to-tackle-working-from-home/> |

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| RISK AREA: **ROLE -** Issues to consider:  Role ambiguity – an employee not having a clear picture of their objectives, the scope and responsibilities of their job and their co-workers’ expectations of them, role conflict e.g. conflicting demands |

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| **STANDARD:** | **INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT** |
| Staff indicate that they understand their role and responsibilities, and that of their colleagues | Employee Voice surveys confirm that colleagues understand their roles and responsibilities.  Staff retention is high and exit interviews confirm colleagues understand their role |
| **POSSIBLE ISSUES** | **ORGANISATIONAL CONTROLS** |
| Changing priorities mean that colleagues are not clear in terms of their objectives | * Regular University communications to be clear about priorities and changing circumstances * Flexibility in terms of how work is managed in the short and medium term. * Regular team connections through meetings and shared goals. * Well trained managers |
| The pandemic results in short term work plans rather than long term which can result in colleagues feeling unsure what is expected of them. | * Business continuity is supplemented by longer term goals and planning * Achievements are recognised and celebrated. |
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| **SUPPORT AVAILABLE** | |
| **INTERNAL** | **EXTERNAL** |
| [Workplace Coaching Service](https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/professional-development-and-training/coaching-for-success)  [Learning and Development programme](https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/professional-development-and-training/coaching-for-success)  Recognition events by role/area |  |

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| **SUPPORT/INDIVIDUAL FACTORS -** Issues to consider:  Staff support – colleagues/peer support & managers, supervision – management or other, appraisal, constructive feedback & advice when things go wrong, team make up, emotional support e.g. it is acceptable to feel vulnerable and receive adequate support for individuals to feel listened to, adequate induction, individual differencee.g. staff who thrive on tight deadlines, others may need time to plan, personal issues e.g. family or domestic problems, bereavement |

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| **STANDARD:** | **INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT** |
| Staff indicate that they receive adequate information  and support from their colleagues and managers  Processes are in place locally to respond to any individual staff  concerns. | UoE has policies and procedures to adequately  support staff  Processes are in place to enable and encourage managers to  support their staff.  Processes are in place to enable and encourage staff to  support their colleagues.  Staff know what support is available and how and when  to access it.  Staff know how to access the required resources to do  their job; and  Staff receive regular and constructive feedback |
| **POSSIBLE ISSUES** | **ORGANISATIONAL CONTROLS** |
| Isolation from working from home | * Support for managers to work with teams remotely * Regular University communications * Workplace Coaching Service * Regular conversations with managers identify issues early and put in place actions. * EDI staff and student networks |
| Impact of illness and bereavement on the individual and their family | * Counselling services * Support from WHWB |
| Impact of COVID on resources and staffing within the department | * Prioritisation of workload under the ‘clear the decks’ approach * Regular conversations with managers to identify issues early * Support identified through planning round. * Flexible working arrangements in place for all team members * Addressing inequality within the department /team with respect to workload issues and mitigations of these |
| **SUPPORTING RESOURCES** | |
| **INTERNAL** | **EXTERNAL** |
| New staff Inductions provided at University Department and section level  Individual needs Mandatory training on, and active support of diversity and inclusion  Strong process for reasonable adjustment through [referrals to Workplace Health Safety and Wellbeing W](https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/managing-people/occupational-health-referrals)  [Sickness Absence management](file:///C:\Users\sh18041\Downloads\sickness_absence_policy.pdf) training through P&C in  Structured and supported return to work system provided through WHSW  Complaints Grievance and disciplinary procedures in place through P&C  [CPID Covid-19 Mental Health Support for employees](mailto:https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/culture/well-being/supporting-mental-health-workplace-return)  This guide outlines considerations and provides advice for employers, people professionals and people managers on how employee mental health can be supported as lockdown and social distancing measures continue, as employees continue to work from remotely in the longer term and we begin to face the consequences of the economic downturn. | <https://everymindatwork.com/covid-19-how-to-manage-your-mental-health/>  <https://www.yourcovidrecovery.nhs.uk/>  <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/7-simple-tips-to-tackle-working-from-home/>  <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus/mask-anxiety-face-coverings-and-mental-health/>  <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/coronavirus/looking-after-your-mental-health-while-working-during-coronavirus>  [How to Sleep Better IAPT Webinar](https://moodle.essex.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=14569)  [How to Cope with Stress IAPT Webinar](https://moodle.essex.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=14569)  [Relaxation Skills IAPT Webinar](https://moodle.essex.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=14569) |

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| RISK AREA: **Feelings of anxiety related to COVID Pandemic** |

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| **STANDARD:** | **INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT** |
| Staff have available resources to address anxiety, concerns and issues. Staff report that they are listened to and supported. | Staff pulse surveys indicate that staff are able to discuss anxieties with managers and colleagues, mental health first aiders and WHSW |
| **POSSIBLE ISSUES** | **ORGANISATIONAL CONTROLS** |
| Anxieties due to;   * repeated lockdown * boredom and restlessness * isolation from friends, family and living alone * addictions developing * getting over the virus * worry about health in self or others * relationship difficulties in the home * concerns regarding the environment you live in * poor sleep, not waking feeling rested * increased fatigue * eating less healthily * taking little exercise due to Government restrictions * Availability of COVID vaccines * Concerns over having the COVID vaccine | * One off 30-minute sessions for advice on managing anxiety during the pandemic with our OH CBT consultant. These sessions can be booked direct through OH; you do not need a referral from your line manager. * Mental and physical wellbeing events and resources are available * University communications promote opportunities to join community – arts, health, sports. * Individual support and team support offered to those working on our campuses bespoke training available to teams on [reducing Anxiety while working in a pandemic.](mailto:https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/health-and-wellbeing/building-resilience)   The UoE is encouraging all staff members to have the COVID19 vaccine which,evidence has shown can reduce the risk of contracting and transmitting COVID 19 |
| Bereavement of friends and family - not going to funerals not being able to visit loved ones in hospitals | * Support from WHWB including CBT appointments |
| Worries about children’s mental health and missing education | * Support from WHWB including CBT appointments |
|  | |
| **INTERNAL** | **EXTERNAL** |
| Internal  [Silvercloud for Staff](https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/health-and-wellbeing/silvercloud-for-staff)  [Managing Anxiety when Returning to Campus Webinar](https://moodle.essex.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=14569)  [Managing your Wellbeing during Lockdown Webinar](https://moodle.essex.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=14569) | External  <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/coronavirus/looking-after-your-mental-health-while-working-during-coronavirus>  <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus/mask-anxiety-face-coverings-and-mental-health/>  Mind provide information on where to go for support for [bereavement](mailto:Information%20on%20where%20to%20go%20for%20support%20for%20bereavement,%20and%20suggestions%20for%20helping%20yourself%20and%20others%20through%20grief.), and suggestions for helping yourself and others through grief.  [Mind provide a young people](mailto:https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/for-children-and-young-people/coronavirus/) and COVID hub for parents and young people. |

1. https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/ [↑](#footnote-ref-1)