Standard Operating Procedure for Lone and out of hours working (Office and Laboratory based)

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Date: 20.05.2014

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Date: 28.09.2016

**Approved by**
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Position: DfH Research Manager  
Signature:  
Date: 25.07.2017

**Amendment Chronology**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version number</th>
<th>Effective date</th>
<th>Reason for amendment</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>25.05.2014</td>
<td>First issue</td>
<td>Donna Ghezzi</td>
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<td>Links updated, general procedure updated, office and lab based procedure updated.</td>
<td>Samantha Warren</td>
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1 ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>DH Exec</td>
<td>University of Bath, Department for Health, Executive Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>DL</td>
<td>Development Lead (SOP); anyone with previous experience of the procedure / completing the procedure being described, who will take the lead in drafting the SOP or delegating specific section of the SOP to the appropriate person.</td>
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<tr>
<td>DG</td>
<td>Development Group (SOP); A group of approx. 2-4 personnel who are responsible for helping develop, maintain and improve the SOP system, consists of other suitably experienced members.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICH GCP</td>
<td>International Conference on Harmonisation – Good Clinical Practice</td>
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<td>SOP</td>
<td>Standard Operating Procedure; Specifies what should be done, when, where and by whom</td>
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<td>UoB DH</td>
<td>University of Bath, Department for Health</td>
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<td>UoB</td>
<td>University of Bath, Department for Health</td>
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2 PURPOSE
The purpose of this SOP is to describe good practice for any member of research staff who is engaged in lone working.

3 SCOPE
This SOP applies to any member of research staff who is engaged in lone working.

4 RESPONSIBILITIES
All research staff must read and sign at the end of this SOP to say that they have read, understood and will follow the appropriate sections of the following three documents before any lone working commences:

The UoB lone working policy:

The UoB lone working guidance documents:
http://www.bath.ac.uk/hr/stayingsafewell/lone-working.bho/index.html
The PI is responsible for ensuring the individual research staff who will be engaged in lone working have access to reasonable training and equipment if needed (e.g. a work mobile phone may be provided if staff members are working off site, or it may be agreed that staff are happy to use their personal phones). Individual research staff members are responsible for ensuring that they have notified their line manager of any training and equipment they consider might be needed.

5 PROCEDURE - Please note HIGHLIGHTED procedures apply to either high risk situations or to working in laboratories on the weekend or bank holidays.

5.1 General procedure

All computer equipment must be password protected.

Staff must always let their line manager or other appropriate nominated person know where and when they are working alone, and report in at the end of the lone working session. The process for this depends on whether working on or off campus, and is outlined in sections 5.2 and 5.3.

UoB security is available 24 hours a day; internal phones are present in all offices and laboratories in the Department. If working off site, the worker must keep a charged mobile with them and know how to obtain assistance in an emergency.

If working on campus, staff should already know how to respond in an emergency e.g. note fire exit routes, evacuation and invacuation procedures. Staff must ensure that they are up to date on these procedures. If working off site, staff should ascertain emergency exits from research rooms before research activity commences.

Appropriate sections of the personal safety guidelines supplied by the UoB will be used by lone workers to maximise safety at work.

5.2 Lone working on Campus

When working outside standard hours (taken to be outside 8 am to 6pm weekdays or on days when the UoB is ordinarily closed for business, such as Bank Holidays) following procedure must be in operation:

Office based:

- If the staff member is already in the building when standard hours end, intends to arrive outside standard hours, or unexpectedly needs to arrive outside standard hours, they will notify the security office of this by emailing security-office@rt.bath.ac.uk.
- This email should include details of where you are, how long you expect to be there, and who will be with you (e.g. are you meeting a member of the public)?
- Line manager or relevant person will also be copied into this email.
The staff member will ensure to carry their staff card with them at all times (e.g. to allow access between restricted corridors).

**Laboratory based:**

Working in laboratories out of hours is only allowed with a specific prior written permission form signed by the Principal Investigator. A copy of this form is available from the Lab Technicians. This form will allow the named user to carry out specified activities in the named laboratories out of normal working hours.

When carrying out high risk testing (e.g. VO2 max) out of hours, laboratory users will also need to notify the security office of this by emailing security-office@rt.bath.ac.uk. This email should include details of where you are and how long you expect to be there. Line manager or relevant person will also be copied into this email.

**Please note:** when equipment is running overnight, there must be prominent signs displayed clearly instructing how equipment should be turned off in the event of an emergency.

Each laboratory user must be:
- accompanied by or within call of another person while working in the laboratory out of hours;
- fully aware of the safety procedures of the laboratory concerned including any required emergency shut-down procedures;
- fully aware of the emergency evacuation procedure and location of relevant break glass call points and the evacuation assembly point;
- able to call Security for emergency assistance including First Aid.

Failure to follow this procedure will result in being barred from working in laboratories out of normal working hours.

**5.3 Lone working off Campus**

When working off campus, staff should ensure that they have their mobile phone with them at all times.

**5.4 Ensuring that the researcher’s whereabouts is known to others**

Prior to visiting a participant in their home or workplace (or other off-campus location), the staff member will notify their line manager or relevant person by email of the scheduled meeting, together with the following information:

- Time of meeting
- Location
- Expected end time

At the end of the visit, the staff member will notify line manager or relevant person via text message that the session has ended and that they have left the premises. If the session is taking much longer than planned (i.e. is anticipated to last more than 30 minutes after the original anticipated end time) the research officer will notify line manager or relevant person via text message so that she knows the session will end significantly later than the original anticipated end time.
The line manager or relevant person is a suitable person from the study team at the University of Bath. Therefore, they are the authorised person at the University who is permitted to have access to confidential information; this is described in the Participant Information Sheet, and participants consent to this.

On occasions where the line manager or relevant person is on annual leave or away from University Business, the Researcher will send this information to their co-worker (i.e. the other Research Officer). Where this isn’t possible, the Research Officer will consult with security. In line manager or relevant persons absence, the Research Officer will also consult with security should they have any concerns about their co-worker or become aware of an emergency.

If line manager or relevant person, or the researcher’s co-worker has not received notification from the researchers of their whereabouts within a reasonable amount of time (i.e. 30 to 45 minutes) after the scheduled end time of the session, the following process will be followed.

- Attempt to call the researcher’s work mobile (2-3 attempts).
- If there is no response, attempt to call the researcher’s personal mobile (2-3 attempts).
- If there is no response, attempt to call the researcher’s home telephone (2-3 attempts).
- If there is no response, attempt to contact the researcher’s next of kin (2-3 attempts).
- If the next of kin cannot be contacted, or they have not had contact from the researcher since the scheduled end time of the session, the security department at the University will be contacted and the police alerted. Initially, the police will be contacted using their non-emergency helpline (dial 101).

5.5 Ensuring the researchers can recognise and defuse potential risks and extract themselves from an uncomfortable situation before it escalates into a serious hazard

All researchers will be aware of the University of Bath’s guidance for personal safety at work, which outlines guidance for ensuring personal safety home/off site premises visits:
http://www.bath.ac.uk/hr/stayingsafewell/workingoffsite/workingoffsitedocs/Guidance_for_employeesx_Personal_Safety_at_Work.pdf

If a researcher feels that there is a potential risk and needs to extract themselves from an uncomfortable situation, they can use the “fake call” function on their mobile phones. By activating this function, which will simulate and incoming call that the researcher can use to generate an excuse to leave the situation.

5.6 Ensuring the researchers have the means to summon assistance in an emergency

Researchers should be equipped with a fully charged mobile phone. Where possible, mobile phones should have an SOS feature that can be used to alert nominated contacts of an emergency. If the research finds themselves in an emergency, they can activate the SOS function, which will automatically send an SOS message to line manager or relevant person. They are then able to call the researcher’s mobile
phone which, while in SOS mode, will be automatically answered without ringing so that they can listen into the situation and decide whether action is necessary (for example, alerting the police).

If line manager or relevant person has not received a text message from the researcher within 30 minutes of the anticipated end time, or any notification from them that the session will end later than anticipated, the following process will be followed:

- Line manager or relevant person is to telephone the researcher on their designated mobile phone
- If there is no answer, line manager or relevant person is to telephone the researcher on their private mobile phone
- If there is still no response, will repeat the above two steps to give a second opportunity for the researcher to answer.
- If there is still no response, the police will be alerted.

6 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

The UoB lone working policy
http://www.bath.ac.uk/hr/stayingsafewell/Managing_health_and_safety/healthandsafetymanagementdocs/CC_Policy_Lone_Working_HxSC_approved_Sept_2012.pdf

The UoB lone working guidance documents
http://www.bath.ac.uk/hr/stayingsafewell/health-and-wellbeing/lone-working.bho/index.html.

The UoB document “guidance for employees; personal safety at work”
http://www.bath.ac.uk/hr/stayingsafewell/health-and-wellbeing/healthandwellbeingdocs/Guidance_for_employeesx_Personal_Safety_at_Work.pdf

7 REFERENCES

(1) ICH GCP Guidelines

9 APPENDICES

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<tr>
<th>Staff must complete to state that they have read, understood and will follow the three supporting documents listed above regarding lone working in addition to this SOP (if they are engaged in lone working)</th>
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