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| **Policy Name** | **Stress Management Policy** | **Policy Number** | HR010 |
| **Approval date** | October 2019 | **To be reviewed** | October 2022 |
| **Approved by** | UCB Guild HR Subcommittee | | |
| **Noted/endorsed** | Guild Manager | | |
| **Applicable To** | All staff and officers | | |
| **Related policies** |  | | |

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| **REVIEW HISTORY** | | | |
| **Date** | **Name** | **Role** | **Notes** |
| 24/10/2019 | Sarah Kerton | Guild Manager, UCB Guild | Creation of new policy and approval by HR Subcommittee |
| 31/10/2019 | Sarah Kerton | Guild Manager, UCB Guild | Ratified by Trustee Board |

**STRESS MANAGEMENT POLICY**

1. **Introduction**

The Guild’s Stress Management Policy is not contractual, but sets out the Guild’s policy and objectives for preventing and managing harmful levels of employee stress, regardless of whether the origin is work-related or external factors.

The Guild is committed to promoting a healthy working environment for all of its staff. We recognise that excessive levels of stress are a potential cause of ill-health and acknowledge the importance of identifying, preventing and managing the risk of stress to enable staff to maximise their potential within a positive working environment.

Our objectives are to:

* ensure staff are able to identify sources of harmful levels of work related stress and, as far as is reasonably practical, either reduce or prevent the risk of staff being exposed;
* enable staff to recognise, at an early stage, problems which might indicate stress related symptoms;
* provide support for those who are suffering ill health due to work-related or other stress and provide assistance and reasonable adjustments to allow them to achieve their fullest potential;
* protect and promote the general health and wellbeing of staff across the Guild.

1. **Managing the Risk of Work Related Stress**

The Health and Safety Executive has developed six Management Standards to help assess and tackle the main causes of stress. The Guild commits to using these HSE Management Standards to ensure that the risk of work-related stress is effectively managed.

The standards focus on six aspects of work as follows:

* Demands – Includes issues like workload, work pattern and the work environment
* Control – How much say the person has in the way they do their work
* Support – Includes the encouragement and resources provided by the organisation, line management and colleagues
* Relationships – Includes promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour
* Role – Whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that the person does not have conflicting roles
* Change – How organisation change (large or small) is managed and communicated in the organisation

External factors, for example difficulties in an employee’s personal life, can also make it difficult for an individual to cope with the demands of their job. The Guild will use these standards to help identify sources of harmful levels of stress at work via a specific risk assessment for new staff within 6 months of beginning their role.

1. **Responsibilities of the Guild**

The Guild will:

* ensure all officers, staff and volunteers receive a comprehensive induction to fully prepare individuals for their role;
* ensure regular review of roles that have been identified as having a high risk of stress, seeing what can be done to reduce the risk of stress to people within them;
* recognise that the nature of the work we do can sometimes be distressing (e.g. staff having contact with vulnerable groups and disclosures of harassment/violence), and will offer both appropriate training for these issues and support for staff if they have had to deal with these;
* ensure officers and staff are offered regular One to Ones and annual appraisals that provide opportunities for feedback and feed in, with volunteers having a staff contact for feedback and feed in opportunities when required;
* offer all line managers access to support services and information and/or training to help them understand how to signpost to appropriate support services;
* implement reasonable support and adjustments to work circumstances in order to allow any officers, staff and volunteers to overcome stress related issues;
* monitor working hours and overtime where appropriate to ensure staff are not overloaded;
* ensure effective communication, consultation and involvement in decision making where changes affect employees and their working environment;
* facilitate team development to promote good working relationships amongst team members and supporting meaningful development for individuals;
* actively monitor stress indicators through a number of measures, including absences, retention and the annual staff survey;
* provide support and guidance for managers implementing the policy.

The Guild will support managers to:

* gain appropriate levels of competence in managing staff through access to participation in training, reflection on practice, and other developmental activities;
* review staff progress against objectives, workloads, hours and general wellbeing to ensure that employees are not overloaded and are coping effectively;
* recognise that staff are individuals - enabling, supporting and coaching staff to enable them to achieve their potential;
* understand the concept of reasonable adjustments and be able to work with direct reports to identify, implement and/or recommend support and adjustments to allow officers, staff and volunteers to overcome stress related issues;
* ensure attendance is proactively managed, including the implementation of return to work interviews;
* provide regular opportunities for learning, development and progression;
* undertake a Stress Management Risk Assessment with any staff member they manage who is exhibiting signs of stress, and take action as identified.

1. **Responsibilities of staff**

All staff, volunteers and officers are expected to:

* recognise their own limitations and barriers, and take steps to minimise the impact of activities or behaviours on their own stress levels;
* take responsibility through their personal development through participating in training, reflecting on their working practices and working with their line manager to identify opportunities;
* raise any concerns about themselves or another staff member, in the first instance with their own line manager or with the Guild Manager;
* ensure they plan their work to take adequate breaks, work a regular working week and make use of their full annual leave entitlement;
* take advantage of appropriate support, training and information sources;

Staff are actively encouraged to inform their line manager or the Guild Manager of any stress related difficulties they are experiencing, whether in work or otherwise, so appropriate support can be offered and adjustments put in place.