

# Lone Working and Events Guidance

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## **Aim and Scope:**

This guidance is designed to alert employees and student ambassadors to the risks presented by lone working, to identify the responsibilities each person has in this situation, and to describe procedures that will minimise such risks.

## **Context:**

Durham University has a duty of care to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees and students while at work. Staff and student ambassadors who undertake school visits and UCAS events for us, will often be working alone away from the office. We are responsible for assessing the risks to lone workers and taking steps to avoid or control the risks where necessary.

Employees and students have responsibility to take reasonable care of themselves and others in lone working situations. Lone working is not inherently unsafe. Taking precaution can reduce the risks associated with working alone. This guidance is designed for employees and student ambassadors who either frequently or occasionally work alone. It also refers to both high and low risk activities.

Persons are considered to be working alone if they have neither visual nor audible communication with someone who can summon assistance in the event of an accident, illness or other emergency. There are a number of risks associated with lone working, these include, but are not limited to:

- Accidents or sudden illnesses may occur when there is no-one to call for help or no first aid available
- Violence or the threat of violence
- Theft.

Lone working is covered in the school visits risk assessment and covers ways in which these risks can be reduced. The following information covers this, as well as other steps that should be taken to ensure personal safety, and steps that should be taken if an incident occurred.

## **Guidance:**

- All staff and student ambassadors who undertake any external visits on behalf of Widening Access and Participation or Student Recruitment must provide their own personal contact details and details for their next of kin or other contact, who should be contacted in an emergency.

- **Staff** should provide these details to the responsible Manager. It is likely that this will be the Student Recruitment Manager (Schools Membership Scheme, Events and Conversion). However, you will be informed if this is not the case.
- **Students** should provide these details to the Student Ambassador Co-ordinator.
- Details will be handled and stored in line with data protection and GDPR.
- All staff and student ambassadors will be expected to inform someone that they have arrived safely at their destination and safely home following the visit. This person should know where you are going, where you are staying (if relevant), and when to expect you to check in with them.

**Guidance for Staff:**

- This should be a friend or family member.
- It is your responsibility to inform them about where you are staying (where relevant) and when you are expected to arrive there and back home.
- If you prefer to check in and out with a member of staff, this can be arranged with the Student Recruitment Manager.
- If you have not checked in or arrived back home when expected, your friend or family member should check with your hotel and the train company to see if there have been any incidents. If this then becomes a greater concern they should contact the emergency services and inform the office of the situation ASAP but during office hours.

**Guidance for Student Ambassadors:**

- In most circumstances your contact will either be the Student Ambassador Co-Ordinator, an Assistant Manager, or a Manager in either the Schools Liaison or Widening Access & Participation team. You will be informed of who this is before your visit.
- You must let this person know when you have arrived safely at your destination and make them aware of any delays. If you have not been in touch for up to 2 hours beyond your expected arrival time, or by 10pm that evening, they will get in touch with you.
- If we don't hear from you 2 hours after your expected time, or by 10pm that evening then we will try to reach you via MS Teams, your contact telephone number that we have stored on file, and failing that through social media platforms such as Facebook Messenger. If we still haven't been able to make contact with you after an hour of us trying to reach you by this method, then we will contact your emergency contact. We will also contact your college to raise concerns.
- The preferred method of communication is via MS teams, but we can give you a contact number if this is not possible. If you are travelling on a Friday evening or weekend, we will give you a contact number, rather than using MS teams.

- If the office is alerted to an incident affecting a member of staff or student and it is likely that the next of kin/emergency contact cannot or has not been informed by them directly, the responsible Manager or Senior Manager will contact them.

#### **Travel and Accommodation:**



- If you would have to leave home before 7am or return home after 10pm in order to attend a visit or event, then you are entitled to stay over night the night before and/or the night of (as applicable). This is to try, wherever possible, to ensure staff and students are not required to travel between 10 pm and 7 am.
- Travel and accommodation will be organised by the office and a record of the arrangements saved on file. Details of the visits being attended will also be held.
- We will usually book you in to a Premier Inn and these are pre-paid in advance. In the unlikely situation where you find that your hotel has not been paid for, please contact the office during office hours (9am and 5pm). If you encounter an issue outside of these hours, student ambassadors should contact the contact the staff member who has been assigned as your contact (as explained above). Staff should try to resolve this themselves, by paying for the accommodation themselves in the first instance and then claiming reasonable expenses back. **NB:** it is extremely unlikely this will happen. The risk is minimised by using Premier Inns where we can or only hotels that can take pre-payment. Some hotels may ask you to leave credit card details at the desk in case of damages or in case you want to order any extras.
- If you are travelling in a quiet area when it is dark, always take a taxi rather than public transport.

#### **Staying safe and well:**

- Be vigilant when travelling. Always keep your personal belongings with you. Never leave anything of value unattended. If the hotel you are staying in has a safe, make sure you store valuables in it. When taking University property with you, ensure you transport it safely and securely.
- All staff and student ambassadors will have a specified contact in case of an emergency. This will be the same contact that you should check in with, as above.
- In the event of a personal attack, theft of personal belongings, or any other major incident you should call 999.
- If you become ill or injured during your time away from the office and it is serious you should first of all seek medical assistance. Call 999 or 101 depending on

the severity. Then call your office contact. They will inform the event organiser where required and help you to make any additional travel or accommodation arrangements.

- If there is a major incident during your time away from the office, such as a terror attack, your personal safety is paramount. Get yourself to safety as quickly as possible. Remove yourself from the area when possible, taking the safest form of available transport irrelevant of cost. Any reasonable costs incurred will be reimbursed. Then inform your office contact that you are safe. They can then help to arrange to get you back home safely.

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