

# Management Guidance for completing the Individual Stress identification Tool

## Introduction

Stress is the way that we react mentally, physically or emotionally to changes and demands in our lives. A certain amount of stress in one's life is good it can keep us motivated and focused. Too much stress however, can detract from this and lead to ill health and reduced work performance.

The University's stress policy has adopted the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) definition of stress as well as incorporating the six management standards used by the HSE which cover the primary sources of stress at work:

**Demands:** workload, work patterns, and the work environment

**Control:** how much say you have in the way you do your work

**Support:** encouragement, sponsorship and resources available through the organisation, line management and colleagues

**Relationships:** avoidance of conflict and promotion of positive working

**Role:** understanding of role within the organisation

**Change:** management and communication of change

## Individual Stress Risk Identification Tool

The Individual Stress Identification Tool has been developed using the HSE's six management standards to give managers preliminary guidance on how to assist staff who believe that they are experiencing work stress. An action plan to control the perceived negative stressors at work can then be developed.

As a manager you have a legal responsibility to support staff in finding ways to reduce the causes of work stress. Support and further guidance for this can be obtained from your HR Adviser or by contacting Occupational Health.

### Process

1. Once a manager has identified that an individual is suffering with symptoms of stress they should make time to discuss the perceived cause of their stress with the employee. This should establish whether it is related to work or non-work issues.
2. If stressors are easily identified and can be resolved then a formal assessment of the stressors may not be necessary. The stress identification tool can be helpful in honing down the precise cause so targeted control measures can be implemented.
3. If an individual has been off with work associated stress ill health or if the stressors are complex a stress identification tool should be completed.
4. This should usually be completed with the manager and employee and an action plan generated. If either party do not feel that it is appropriate, advice should be sought from the School HR Adviser.
5. The individual stress identification tool should then be kept in the individual's personal file and where relevant a copy forwarded to Occupational Health to be kept in their health record.
6. Suggested actions should be documented on the form and the effects monitored and revised as indicated.