

Blizard Institute Out of Hours and Lone Working Guidance notes Part A

Out of Hours Lone Working Application forms

(If you are working between 8pm and 8am, weekends and Bank Holidays)

Part B: Office Part C : Laboratory

Introduction:

This guidance deals with the potential hazards associated with lone working, which may give rise to risk to your personal safety whilst at work. The principal aim of the guidance is to ensure that all University employees are aware of the potential hazards and risks associated with lone working, their individual roles and responsibilities in preventing danger to themselves and others and, to outline the practical steps that can be taken to minimise the risks to their safety.

Lone working is working in physical isolation from other individuals. This could be out of normal office hours when you may be the only worker within a specific laboratory or it could be during a normal day, where you may be spending significant periods of time in side rooms such as tissue culture laboratories, cold rooms or dark rooms. In any case, when there is no other person in the immediate vicinity or more significantly within earshot, then the risk of a serious incident increases and therefore must be formally assessed.

Lone working is not covered by any specific piece of legislation, however a wide range of regulation may apply depending on the nature of the work involved. The Health and Safety at Work Act and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations will apply in all instances.

In addition, working out-of-hours can present an increased risk if the 'normal' emergency provisions such as first aiders are not available. Therefore an assessment of what activities are deemed appropriate to be undertaken out-of-hours (whether lone working or not) needs to be made.

- Non-QMUL personnel (no contract) or non-registered students will not be granted laboratory access outside normal working hours. Undergraduates & other similarly inexperienced individuals will not be given lone working access to the laboratories and must only work in the building in the presence of their supervisor.
- Short term staff (less than three months) are considered to be at particular risk and it is therefore not recommended that out-of-hours access be granted to these individuals.

Responsibilities:

All workers must ensure they are fully aware of the risks associated with lone working & working out-of-hours and understand the appropriate actions to take before they begin any procedure.

Group Leaders & Supervisors must set a suitable framework for each **INDIVIDUAL** in terms of what is and what is not permissible under lone working and 'out-of-hours' conditions.

Centres must consider carefully what first aid and other emergency provision is necessary for lone working taking account of the nature, scale and range of activities being permitted.

The responsibility for implementing planned and effective safe systems of work for those who work alone is that of the person who controls the work activity. This responsibility cannot be delegated to those who work unaccompanied.

However all employees have a responsibility to take reasonable care of their own safety and to co-operate with their employer. Employees should not knowingly place themselves in situations which expose them to the additional risk of working alone without the full knowledge of their line-manager. An agreed 'safe system of work' must first be discussed and then implemented.

If a person finds that they are placed in a situation, which may be considered to be that of a 'lone worker', then they should make sure that their manager is made aware of these circumstances at the earliest opportunity and then assist in the process of identifying the steps needed either to prevent the 'lone worker' situation from arising, or if this is not possible, assist in developing the precautions necessary to ensure their own safety.

Risk Assessment:

Office working

Persons carrying out general office duties including computer work may do so on their own, as the risk is assessed as relatively low. Please fill in **PART B**, sign and return to Institute Laboratory Management.

Laboratory working

Laboratory activities will inherently pose a greater risk to the individual if carried out alone and/or out-of-hours. Laboratories not only pose a greater number of hazards that could increase the seriousness of the incident, but, due to the location and specialist nature of some areas it can also delay any emergency aid. Therefore, Group Leaders & Supervisors must assess, with each **INDIVIDUAL**, what is not permissible under lone working conditions, taking into account that individual's experience and any other relevant factors. Please fill in **PART C**, sign and return to Institute Laboratory Management.

Hazard Identification:

Identify all the hazards specific to the lone working activity; evaluate the risks (low / medium / high); Current control measures should be outlined in your existing risk assessment so identify and record any further control measures required in **Part C** of this document.

Specific hazards should be assessed on your existing risk assessment form and cross-referenced with this document where appropriate.

Some hazards to consider may include:

- **Workplace:** Identify hazards specific to the workplace environment, which may create particular risks for lone workers, e.g. remote areas, laboratories, workshops, confined spaces. Consider access requirements, transport and parking arrangements, etc.
- **Process:** Identify hazards specific to the work process, which may create particular risks for lone workers, e.g. work with electrical apparatus, moving equipment, cryogenic liquids/gases and/or chemicals etc.
- **Equipment:** Identify hazards specific to the work/equipment, which may create particular risks for lone workers, e.g. manual handling, operation of essential/emergency controls.
- **Individual:** Identify hazards specific to the individual, which may create particular risks for lone workers e.g. medical conditions, disabilities, expectant mothers, age, inexperience, etc.
- **Work Pattern:** Consider the lone worker's work pattern and how it relates to those of other workers, in terms of both time and location.
- **Other:** Specify any additional hazards particular to the lone work.

Control Measures:

- Identify existing control methods, assess their effectiveness and specify any additional controls that may be necessary. Consider alternative work methods, protective equipment/devices and arranging work times to coincide with others where possible.

Some measures to consider may include:

- Specific information, instruction and training (e.g. emergency procedures, out-of-hours procedures, personal safety training, etc.).
- Increased communication systems/procedures (e.g. regular prearranged contact by mobile phone with buddy/supervisor)
- Increased security (e.g. CCTV, secure access, personal alarms)
- All lone workers should be conversant with risk assessments, local rules, guidelines and emergency procedures

Safe Working:

Consideration should be given to additional safe working procedures during lone working in order to reduce any risk as far as is reasonably practicable. Examples of appropriate safe procedures are:

- Reducing the exposure to a particular hazard, by limiting activities and/or substances used.
- Using additional shielding or mechanical controls (e.g. fume cupboards) to further limit exposure.
- Identifying 24hr emergency contact numbers for assistance/advice.
- Arranging for periodic contact with buddy/supervisor.
- The use of panic alarms or other communication devices to obtain support.
- Providing additional training, instruction and information for the work to be undertaken.
- All lone workers must have sufficient knowledge, experience & capability to deal with any foreseeable emergency without immediate assistance.
- **All persons applying for out-of-hours access for laboratory areas of the Institute must have attended (or registered for the next available course) the QM Health and safety courses 'Working with Biological Hazards and Genetically Modified Agents' and 'COSHH Risk Assessments in Laboratories', and any other course relevant to their project.**
- All lone workers must have completed the e-learning Fire Safety Awareness module and should be encouraged to acquire basic first aid skills.
- All Lone Workers must know the locations of the following emergency equipment/resources:
 - First aid box
 - Eye wash station
 - Emergency shower
 - Emergency spill kit
 - Fire extinguishers
 - Risk assessments & COSHH assessments relating to their project

Please note: A current copy of the risk assessment for the work being undertaken by the applicant must accompany the Part C application form . The supervisor is wholly responsible for the content and accuracy of the risk assessment and must ensure that it reflects the work being done by the applicant when they undertake lone working .

Emergency:

- Out of normal working hours, contact Security Services on their 24HR EMERGENCY NUMBER which is 3333, if unsure about any situation

The arrangements described in this document are considered by the Institute to be best practice and therefore those that Centres are expected to follow. Where this guidance does not cover a particular situation, further advice may be sought from Laboratory Management.

More information can be found at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg73.pdf>



Blizard Institute

Please read Part A: before completing this form

**Part B:
Office Lone Working
Application Form**

Name of lone worker: _____ **Centre:** _____

Status: Student Research Assistant Post Grad Post Doc Hon.Visiting worker
Technician Clerical
Other (specify) _____ **QMUL Card Number**
FIRST SEVEN NUMBER BLOCK ON REVERSE OF YOUR CARD

Supervisor/Line manager: _____ **Centre:** _____

OHSD E-learning modules are available for all QMUL staff and Postgraduate students

Online fire awareness training tailored for all staff and postgraduate students to give an awareness of the causes of fire, actions to take to avoid fire and actions to take in the event of a fire. This incorporates self assessment questions and an online test.

<http://qm-web.ohsd.qmul.ac.uk/training/elearning/index.html>

You must have completed this module to work out of hours

QMUL e-learning module: Fire Safety awareness

Certificate date

We have read part A of this document and have considered all activities that are likely to be undertaken by the named applicant and, where appropriate, introduced special arrangements to monitor the safety of this lone worker, or prohibited the activity for lone working. The applicant is aware of any restrictions on lone working activities and any measures considered necessary to monitor his / her safety.

Applicant
Do you have a medical condition that may put you at significant risk when working alone and/or out of hours ?
Yes No (re-assess risks and arrangements if your medical condition changes)
If you have answered yes - I have made the appropriate arrangements with my supervisor and appropriate safety/ assistance measures will be put in place to mitigate risks.
Signature..... Date

Supervisor, Group Leader or Line Manager
Signature Date



Blizard Institute

**Part C:
Laboratory Lone Working
Application Form**

Please read Part A: before completing this form

Name of lone worker:		Centre:	
Status: Student	Research Assistant	Post Grad	Post Doc
Technician	Clerical	Other (specify)	Hon.Visiting worker
			QMUL Card Number <small>FIRST SEVEN NUMBER BLOCK ON REVERSE OF YOUR CARD</small>
Supervisor:		Centre:	
Outline activities to be undertaken and work location(s)			
Explain why work cannot be carried out during normal working hours			
Does the applicant have sufficient knowledge, experience and capability to work safely and to deal with all foreseeable emergencies without assistance?		Yes	No
		<i>(If no, then appropriate extra supervision must be noted below)</i>	
Extra supervision details			
Will this work involve any of the following high risk activities?			
• Biological material requiring 'Containment Level 2/3' controls	Yes	No	
• Use of reactive, toxic, corrosive or flammable substances	Yes	No	
• Exposure to ionising or non-ionising radiation	Yes	No	
• Work with animals, specifically if there is a risk from zoonoses	Yes	No	
• Use of liquefied gases (e.g. nitrogen, helium)	Yes	No	
• Use of electrical apparatus	Yes	No	
• Exposure to moving machinery	Yes	No	
• Work with compressed / flammable gases (e.g. hydrogen)	Yes	No	
• Work at height	Yes	No	
• Activities that may affect personal security	Yes	No	
• Any other substance / activity of equivalent risk	Yes	No	<i>(If yes, detail below)</i>
Any other Substance/Activity details			

