



Student Services

Enabling students to fulfil their potential

Procedures for lone working

1. In the Office

- 1.1 Where possible arrange your room so that the client is not sitting between you and the door.
- 1.2 Always make sure other colleagues are aware that you are seeing a client in a room on your own.
- 1.3 If from previous experience you think a particular client may be aggressive towards you make sure a colleague is aware who you will be seeing and when. If you think it necessary you could ask a colleague to use a pretext to interrupt your meeting with the client after an agreed time to check how you are.
- 1.4 If a client has been aggressive or unpleasant to you or a colleague in the past you are entitled to refuse to see that client or insist you will only see them with another colleague present in the room.
- 1.5 If during your interview with the client s/he starts to become aggressive or you have good reason to think s/he may become aggressive find a reason to leave the room or bring the interview to an end.
- 1.6 Personal alarms are available from the Student Enquiry desk. If you have an alarm keep it readily available so that it can be used quickly. For example attach it to a belt or belt loop or wear it around your neck on a lanyard (also available from the Student Enquiry Desk) so that you can activate it simply by pulling down firmly on it. Do not keep an alarm in a drawer or somewhere the client can pick it up.
- 1.7 Remember the alarm is intended to scare off an assailant and to give you time to leave the scene. You should not assume activating the alarm will attract help.
- 1.8 If you are able to leave the room without being prevented by the client then do so as quickly and as calmly as possible. If the client prevents you from leaving the room wait calmly for assistance.

- 1.9 If the client attempts to leave the room do not stop them. Let them leave and report the incident to security so that they can apprehend the client later.
- 1.10 If you hear an alarm sound in another room telephone security immediately on extension 5150. Do not dial Reception on 0 or 5000 as you may be in a queue of other calls. 5150 will go straight through to security staff. Calmly tell Security your name, the building and room number where the incident is taking place.
- 1.11 After alerting Security go to the room where the alarm has sounded and knock on the door and open it. If the client has not already left this may encourage them to do so. If the client does not leave do not attempt to use force but remain calm and stay near the scene to re-assure your colleague that assistance is on its way.
- 1.12 Do not attempt to physically restrain the client even if you think your colleague is in danger, you will run the risk of endangering yourself and probably make the situation worse.
- 1.13 Once Security arrives allow them to deal with the situation. Do whatever you are instructed by Security or the Police should they be on the scene.

2. Working out of hours

- 2.1 You should always inform Security when you intend to work on campus outside normal office hours such as in the evening or at weekends. even if you have not arranged to meet with a client.
- 2.2 Clients should normally be seen outside normal office hours only when it is essential or absolutely unavoidable. Ideally there should always be at least one other colleague nearby if you intend to see a client on your own at a time when most other staff are not at work. Make sure that colleague is aware of who you will be seeing and when.
- 2.3 Even if a colleague is available nearby you should inform security before your client is due to arrive who you will be seeing, where and when. When you have finished seeing the client let Security know.
- 2.4 Inform Security when you have finished and are about to leave the building.

3. Visiting clients away from the office or off campus

- 3.1 Sometimes it may be necessary to see a student or other client away from your office e.g. in a flat in halls or a student house. If so follow these basic rules.
- 3.2 Do not go alone. Take at least one other colleague with you.

- 3.3 Make such visits during daylight hours not at night.
- 3.4 Take a mobile phone and your University identification. Ensure your phone is charged and switched on and has sufficient credit to receive and make calls.
- 3.5 If travelling by car make sure you have sufficient petrol and the car is in good working order. Make sure your car is insured for business and professional use, including carrying passengers. (The University Finance Department requires proof of insurance, driving licence and a valid MOT certificate before considering claims for motoring expenses.)
- 3.6 Tell colleagues where you are going, the time you plan to be away and how you can be contacted, usually your mobile number.
- 3.7 Agree a time when colleagues should contact you if they have not heard anything from you.
- 3.8 When inside the property you are visiting always make sure your exit is clear. Do not allow yourself to be separated from your colleague. See people in communal areas only e.g. kitchen, living room etc. Do not go into bedrooms.
- 3.9 Avoid confrontational situations. Trust your instincts. Should your discussions become heated or you are not comfortable with the situation you are in calmly leave the premises and move quickly away from the area. Follow up actions can be taken later.
- 3.10 If you are returning home after an off campus visit let a colleague know you have arrived home safely.
- 3.11 Report any incidents to your line manager and Security.

4. Working with groups of students

- 4.1 If you are due to lead a workshop or group session during the evening or week end book a room close to the main reception or in a building that you know will be staffed whilst you are working.
- 4.2 Inform security that you are working with students, the times of the session and the room number. Inform Security when the session has finished.
- 4.3 If you believe that a particular student who will be attending may be difficult, ask Security to walk past and check on you at regular intervals e.g. every 15 minutes.
- 4.4 If you wish to exclude or eject a student from a session because of their behaviour arrange for Security staff to be on hand to help.

- 4.5 If you think it may be difficult to end a session with a particular student, arrange for a colleague or Security to interrupt you at the planned finish time of your session.
- 4.6 Take a personal alarm with you, especially in the evening or weekend (see 1.5 and 1.6 above).
- 4.7 Where possible, arrange the room so that you have easy access to the door.

Roger Prout
Head of Student Services
April 2012