



Health & Safety Working Alone Policy

<i>Version</i>	2.3
<i>Version date</i>	June 2023
<i>Review date</i> ¹	June 2026
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¹ or earlier if change in legislation or on risk assessment

Amendment Control

Version	Date	Amendments
1.0	Aug 2015	
2.0	Aug 2018	Full review (S Hughes)
2.1	Apr 2020	Update (2) Add ID card Update (3) Add lockdown and getting in building Update (4) Add consult H&S Team Update (5) Add Prohibition of certain tasks following risk assessment and consult H&S.
2.2	Mar 2021	Update to new format
2.3	Jun 2023	Update S1

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Policy Summary

There will be times when managers, staff and students may want to work on University premises when there are no other members of staff present in the immediate or surrounding areas. This policy explains the steps you should take to make sure that other people know you are on university premises in these circumstances, so that appropriate action can be taken in case there is an emergency.

This policy details: -

- Responsibilities
- Procedure
- How to know if work is low or high risk
- Restrictions on working alone

This includes the procedure:

- If you want to work early or late when there is nobody else around the immediate or surrounding area
- If you need to work on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday
- If security staff are not on site and there is no swipe-card entry
- If security staff are not on site, but you have a personal key
- If building in lockdown following an incident or external national event or extenuating circumstances

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1. Introduction

There will be times when managers, staff and students may want to work on University premises when there are no other members of staff present in the immediate or surrounding areas. This policy explains the steps you should take to make sure that other people know you are on University premises in these circumstances, so that appropriate action can be taken in case there is an emergency.

Reference should also be made to the “Access Out With Normal Working Hours Policy” as local School or Service normal working hours may vary. Other approvals and restrictions may apply.

2. Responsibilities

It is your responsibility to tell the relevant Dean of School/Director of Service if you want to work during hours when there may be nobody else in the immediate or surrounding areas. If you know beforehand that you will be on your own, you should tell the Dean of School/Director of Service so they can assess the likely risk involved. Deans of School/Directors of Service and line managers are responsible for supervising health and safety issues daily. You must always also have your staff identification card with you (this will assist you if areas go into lockdown and you need to swipe to gain access to buildings). Outlined below are the guidelines you should follow when assessing the risk of working alone, and what you should do to reduce the risk once you are on University premises.

3. Procedure

a) If you want to work early or late when there is nobody else around the immediate or surrounding area, you must do the following:

Phone Security Control on 0131 455 6119 and give them your:

- name and School/Service;
- room number and extension number where they can contact you, and
- the time you plan to finish your work.

Tell Security Control when you leave the building.

Note:- to access the building you will need your identification and also prior approval if out with normal operating hours on the card reader. This needs arranged with security.

b) If you need to work on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday, you must do the following:

- a) Authorisation from the Dean of School/Director of Service
- b) Authorisation from Security
- c) Sign the on-site book at the main foyer on the main campuses when you enter the building.
- d) Sign the book again when you leave the building.

Note:- to access the building you will need your identification and also prior approval if out with normal operating hours on the card reader. This needs arranged with security.

If security staff are not on site and there is no swipe-card entry you must do the following:

Phone Security Control on 0131 455 6119 and give them your:

- name and School/Service; and
- the time you plan to come onto the site and tell Security Control when you leave the building.

If security staff are not on site, but you have a personal key, you must do the following:

Notify Security Control of your requirement to access the building, to get authorisation. Give them full details of why you are needing access, what you will be doing and how long you will be.

Phone Security Control on 0131 455 4444 immediately when you enter the building and give them your:

- name and School/Service;
- room number and extension number where they can contact you; and
- the time you plan to finish your work.

Tell Security Control when you leave the building.

If building in lockdown following an incident or external national event or extenuating circumstances

Follow the information available on the intranet or email notifications on the current arrangements for gaining entry to the building.

- If in doubt, contact your Dean, Director or line manager for advice.
- Contact Security Control on 0131 455 6119 to arrange access.
- Have your staff card with you at all times.
- Do not put yourself or others at risk.
- No high risk activities to be carried out - electrical, working at height, work in labs with chemicals, pathogens, etc.
- Sign in with security
- Sign out with security before leaving the building

4. How do I know if my work is low or high risk?

Low risk work is normally administration, clerical or normal office work. High risk work is normally laboratory work, construction activity or work involving machinery. If you are not sure, ask your Dean of School/Director of Service or line manager.

In all cases it is important that:

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Revision Date: June 2023
Version: 2.3
Author: Health and Safety Office, Edinburgh Napier University

- staff, students and visitors are aware of our emergency procedures (these are explained on the Fire Action Notices displayed throughout the University);
- you carry out a risk assessment for the activity that could be high risk before you begin work, and implement the necessary controls prior to carrying out the tasks;
- staff and students know the school emergency procedures (for example, chemical spillage) for this activity which should be in line with our emergency procedures; and
- the Dean or Dean School/Director of Service (after consultation with Health & Safety Team) has given you written permission for activities or work areas that are classed as high risk, and the School/Service has kept a copy.

5. Restrictions on working alone

- If a fault develops in our emergency activation systems, security staff should tell you to leave the building.
- You should not use lifts in fire emergency situations.
- You should not bring children or pets onto University premises when you have arranged to work at weekends.
- You should not work alone if you have a medical condition which is not suitable for this activity.
- If construction work is happening in or near the area where you want to work, you will not be given access, unless authorisation and risk assessments/safe systems of work have been produced and followed.
- Where work on the power supplies is taking place whether maintenance or full shut down, access may not be granted due to increased risk to your safety.
- Some high-risk activities will be prohibited when working alone – if a Dean, Director or line manager is not sure then they must contact Health & Safety Team to discuss further, re risk assessment and what is able to be done. Examples of high-risk activities – electrical systems work, hazardous chemicals or materials, working at height or using hazardous machinery.

If staff have any doubts about the above health aspects, you should contact Human Resources and Development to be referred to the Occupational Health provider.