

WELLBEING POLICY

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WELLBEING POLICY

THIS DOCUMENT SETS OUT FALMOUTH'S APPROACH TO SUPPORTING STAFF MEMBER'S HEALTH AND WELLBEING.

1. Scope

This policy is applicable to all staff directly employed by Falmouth.

2. Purpose

The University understands that the health and wellbeing of its staff is one of the most important factors in achieving a positive and productive working environment. Health and wellbeing is ultimately the responsibility of each individual, but the University recognises that, whilst work and employment generally have a positive impact on health, factors in the work environment can have a negative impact on both physical and mental health. Falmouth is therefore committed to providing safe and supportive working environments, and a range of services and policy approaches that support staff wellbeing. The aim of this policy is to:

- Set out the commitment of Falmouth in relation to supporting the physical and mental health and wellbeing of its staff
- Provide information about the services that Falmouth offers in support of staff health and wellbeing
- Set out the support that Falmouth will offer in relation to specific health issues such as drug and alcohol abuse, and work related stress
- Ensure Falmouth is compliant with its responsibilities under Health and Safety legislation

3. Definitions

Wellbeing at work – wellbeing is difficult to define as it is a subjective state that takes into account physical health, psychological state, personal beliefs, social relationships, environmental and occupational factors. The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development defines wellbeing at work as "...a state of contentment which allows an employee to flourish and achieve their full potential for the benefit of themselves and their organisation."

Stress – the Health and Safety Executive define stress as "The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demands placed upon them"

4. Related Policies and Procedures

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Falmouth Policies:

- Sickness Absence Management policy – where staff are absent from work or have a poor attendance record as a result of ill health.
- Code of Conduct – for information on conduct standards in relation to drug and alcohol misuse.

- Flexible Working Policy – for information on flexible working to improve wellbeing through achieving a better work-life balance
- Health and Safety Policy – for information on health and safety requirements in the workplace

5. The Link Between Work and Wellbeing

Studies generally show that work is beneficial for health. As well as financially rewarding individuals, work provides a source of self-esteem, status, and companionship. Supporting wellbeing at work therefore promotes a healthy, motivated workforce. This is beneficial to both the staff group and the employer, as such a workforce is more likely to perform well, have improved morale, reduced absenteeism, increased retention and improved productivity.

While wellbeing at work is supported by schemes such as an effective Occupational Health service (see section 7) and access to leisure facilities (see section 12), it relies on some more important underlying factors. These include factors such as staff having meaningful and challenging work, a safe and healthy working environment, effective working relationships and open communication between colleagues and managers, and the opportunity to achieve aspirations while maintaining a work-life balance.

The way in which Falmouth aims to provide such a positive, productive and healthy working environment is detailed in its HR Strategy which sets out the people orientated objectives which are aimed at supporting Falmouth to achieve its strategic aims.

6. The Role of the Line Manager

In delivering the objectives of the HR Strategy, and providing a working environment which supports the wellbeing of staff, the role of line managers is crucial. Effective line managers are better able to provide many aspects of a working environment that support wellbeing, such as:

- good role design, with fair and realistic allocation of work
- effective recruitment processes ensuring a good match of people to roles
- clear, reasonable and regularly reviewed objectives which are linked to those of the organisation
- effective monitoring of the physical work environment such as work station assessments
- promotion of good working relationships and communication between colleagues, and between levels of management
- approachable support for staff experiencing problems

Falmouth is committed to supporting its line managers in this important role through a Leadership and Management Development Framework of training packages available via StaffSpace, a range of HR policies, procedures and guidance that provide managers with a clear framework for, and advice on, managing employment issues, and HR Business Partnering Services to provide direct support with HR practices.

7. The Role of Occupational Health

Falmouth has access to third party Occupational Health Services provided via an outsourced contract arrangement. The role of Occupational Health is to ensure that staff are fit for work, that the job they are doing will not adversely affect their health, and that they are not exposed to any health hazards while at work, through the provision of:

- Pre-employment health screening
- Advice and guidance to managers relating to the health of staff members and the management of sickness absence
- Advice and support to staff members absent through sickness

Most requests for the support of Occupational Health Services are made via management referrals, supported by the HR Business Partnering Team, and paperwork and guidance is available on the HR pages of SharePoint.

8. Relate Counselling Services

The University provides its staff members with the opportunity to access the counselling services of Relate completely confidentially and free of charge. Relate are able to offer staff members support and counselling in relation to personal and / or professional issues. Relate may wish to establish that they are employed by the University by asking to see some form of identification.

Relate offer a confidential service, and the University is informed only of the number of staff from each staff group attending, how many sessions are used, and whether the issue is related to work, home or both. This is done for invoicing and monitoring purposes. Staff can contact Relate via www.relate.org.uk or on 01726 74128.

9. Chaplaincy

The University's multifaith chaplaincy is available to all staff, whether they already belong to a faith group or not, and can link staff with like-minded people in the wider community, help them explore their spirituality, or just provide someone to talk to about issues. The chaplaincy also has a quiet room, known as The Oasis, which is located in the Wellbeing Centre on the Penryn Campus. The Oasis is available to all staff and is set aside for reflection, contemplation, meditation and prayer. The Chaplaincy Team can be contacted on 01326 370744.

10. Stress Management

Some levels of pressure at work can be stimulating and motivating for staff if managed correctly. However, excessive or poorly managed work demands, or conflict in the workplace, can cause stress which can be detrimental to health. Stress is a state rather than an illness, and where stress only lasts for a short period there usually is no lasting effect. However if stress is sustained over a long period it can have significant impact on physical and mental health, work performance and morale. Falmouth is committed to reducing stress in the workplace by:

- Regularly monitoring stress related issues in the workplace at an organisational level. This is conducted through a range of tools such as the staff survey, specific stress surveys which may be conducted in line with Health and Safety Executive (HSE) recommendations, and organisational risk assessments which are conducted by Falmouth's Health and Safety Advisor.

- Regularly monitoring stress related issues at a departmental level through departmental risk assessments. These should include reviewing sickness absence records, trends in staff turnover, complaints of harassment or bullying, working hours and overtime, and issues emerging from personal development reviews or departmental meetings.
- Regularly monitoring stress related issues at a local level by individual line managers using opportunities presented through regular one to one meetings, team meetings, feedback at performance and development review meetings or during probation reviews to assess risks to individuals.
- Line managers conducting stress risk assessments with their staff where a stress related issue or risk is identified or where work related stress could affect a return to the workplace after a period of sickness absence.
- Taking reasonably practicable steps to prevent and minimise occupational stress where it relates to matters within the control of the University
- Ensuring additional support and communication mechanisms are put in place at times of significant change which may have an impact on the stress levels, and therefore the wellbeing of staff.

To enable staff, line managers and departmental heads to risk assess potential sources of stress, and to minimise the impact of these stressors where they are identified, Falmouth offers a range of training, guidance and risk assessment templates. These are based on the HSE Management Standards for Work Related Stress, which are six key areas of work that, if not properly managed, are associated with poor health and wellbeing, lower productivity and increased sickness absence. The guidance for managers and individual risk assessment templates, which are available from the HR Business Partnering Team, encourage a systematic review of these six areas, and suggest ideas for controlling or reducing potential stress hazards. These may be used to minimise the potential impact of stress across a team or department, or may be used to support an individual who has identified stress as being a problem for them in the workplace. Training on 'Understanding Stress' is also available via StaffSpace to help all staff identify and better manage potential sources of stress.

11. Eye Tests

Under the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations of 1992, staff members who are 'users' of display screen equipment (DSE) may, if they request, be provided with free eye tests. 'Users' are defined as staff members who need to work with DSE as a substantial part of their job more or less on a daily basis and who cannot do their job without using DSE for spells of up to one hour per day.

Staff who believe they may be eligible for a free eye test based on these criteria should contact the HR Services Team before booking the eye test. The HR Services Team will then arrange for a Specsavers e-voucher to be e-mailed to the staff member. Once in receipt of the e-voucher, staff can book an appointment for their eye test at Falmouth Specsavers by calling 01326 212733 or via www.specsavers.co.uk.

A print out of the voucher must be taken to Specsavers at the time of the test and on arrival staff should indicate that they will be using a voucher to pay for the test. If the test reveals that the staff

member requires glasses for VDU use only, the voucher will also cover the cost of a pair of glasses from Specsavers' basic range, or staff will be able to add their own contribution to upgrade to any of the glasses ranges. Following completion of the eye test, staff should contact the HR Services Team to notify them of the outcome of the test.

Technicians who wear glasses and cannot wear the protective goggles supplied by Health and Safety, can arrange to have them supplied from Specsavers, but they are obliged to pay for their own eye test. To arrange protective goggles from Specsavers, staff should contact the HR Services Team who will issue them with a letter to take to the opticians.

12. Sports Facilities

The Penryn Campus Fitness Centre provides opportunities for staff, students and the wider community, of all levels of ability, to participate in sport and physical activity. The centre offers the latest fitness equipment, a free-weights area, a fitness studio, and a variety of regular exercise classes. Discounted rates for staff are available for membership of the fitness centre and for individual exercise classes.

13. Drug and Alcohol Misuse

Falmouth University respects the privacy of individuals, particularly in health matters, where their conduct or performance at work is not affected. The University must, however, be concerned where health or behaviour impairs the conduct, safety or work performance of staff members, and it recognises that the misuse of alcohol or drugs may be a cause of such impairment. Falmouth's Code of Conduct sets out the expected standards of conduct in relation to the use of drugs and alcohol during work time or on work premises. However, Falmouth recognises that some staff may have an alcohol or drug dependency problem for which they may benefit from the support of their employer in recognising and addressing.

Line managers should be aware that reduced levels of performance, increased sickness absence, poor timekeeping, changes in behaviour, interpersonal difficulties with colleagues, and higher incidences of accidents, can all indicate an alcohol, drug or substance related problem, especially when occurring in combination. It should also be noted that these symptoms could be caused by other factors and that the diagnosis of a misuse problem is one for medical staff. In cases of a suspected problem, Occupational Health staff can be contacted for professional advice via the HR Business Partnering Team.

Where a potential problem is identified, the line manager should discuss the issue sensitively and sympathetically with the member of staff concerned as soon as possible. Where a staff member agrees that they may have a problem then the line manager should encourage them to seek an appropriate diagnosis, counselling and treatment, through their own GP, Falmouth's Occupational Health and / or counselling service, or an external charity or organisation specialising in dependency problems.

Reasonable time will be given to staff with alcohol or substance misuse problems where time off is required for treatment or counseling. Where staff members need to undergo a course of rehabilitation, this should be treated as a period of sickness absence. When managing any such sickness absence, consideration should be given to whether the staff member has a disability as defined by the Equality Act (see Falmouth's Sickness Absence Management Policy). While alcohol and drug dependency are excluded from the definition of disability, underlying conditions that may

have contributed to the dependency, or have been caused by the dependency, for example depression or liver damage, may be within the scope of the definition.

It is important for both parties to be aware that there is a distinction between the staff member for whom alcohol or substance taking is becoming problematic, and whom the University wishes to help and support, and misconduct involving alcohol or substances, including attending work whilst under the influence of either alcohol, drugs or other harmful substances, which should be dealt with under the Disciplinary Policy. However if an alcohol, drugs or substance misuse problem is identified as the likely cause of the misconduct during a disciplinary procedure, or underperformance during a capability procedure, then the staff member will normally be given an opportunity to undergo appropriate treatment to enable them to return to full health and wellbeing and achieve the necessary standards of performance and behaviour at work. Refusal to accept help or denial of a problem where there are behavioural and / or performance issues, and where alcohol or substance abuse is strongly suspected, will be treated as a disciplinary and / or capability issue.

14. Ill Health Retirement

While Falmouth aims to help staff prevent ill health where this is within their control, and to support staff in rehabilitating from any periods of ill health, the University also recognises that on some occasions, staff members may be deemed as permanently unfit to return to their role, or in some cases, to any form of work. In such circumstances, the line manager, in consultation with the Human Resources Department and Occupational Health, should consider as part of the ill health capability procedure (see Falmouth's Sickness Absence Management Policy) whether the member of staff is eligible to apply for ill health retirement.

The University operates two pensions schemes – the 'Teachers Pension Scheme' for academic staff, and the 'Local Government Pension Scheme' for members of professional services. Both operate ill health retirement schemes which are outlined in summary below. The relevant website (see sections 14.1 and 14.2) should be consulted for further advice on eligibility and conditions, and the Human Resources Team should be contacted for information on the procedure for applying for ill health benefits. Any decision in relation to the awarding of ill health retirement, is not taken by Falmouth, but is the decision of the relevant pension scheme, based on medical assessment.

14.1 Local Government Pension Scheme (www.lgps.org.uk)

Staff members with at least two years pensionable service, and who have to leave work at any age due to illness may qualify for immediate payment of their pension benefits under this scheme. Qualification for ill health retirement is dependent on the pension scheme, based on medical opinion, being satisfied that the member of staff is permanently unable to do their job, and has a reduced likelihood of being capable of gainful employment before the age of 65.

There are graded levels of ill health retirement benefit based on how likely it is that the member of staff will be capable of gainful employment (ie. paid employment for not less than 30 hours per week for a period of not less than 12 months) after they leave. The different levels of benefit are:

- Tier 1 - Where staff have no reasonable prospect of being capable of gainful employment before age 65, ill health benefits are based on the membership they would have had if they had stayed in the scheme until age 65.
- Tier 2 - Where staff are unlikely to be capable of gainful employment within 3 years of leaving, but may be capable of doing so before age 65, then ill health benefits are based on their

membership built up to leaving, plus 25% of their prospective membership from leaving to age 65.

- Tier 3 - Where staff are likely to be capable of gainful employment within 3 years of leaving, or before age 65 if earlier, ill health benefits are based on their membership at leaving. Payment of these benefits will be stopped after 3 years, or earlier if they are in gainful employment or become capable of such employment. If the payment is stopped it will normally become payable again from age 65 but there are provisions to allow it to be paid earlier, details of which would be provided at the time.

14.2 Teachers Pension Scheme (www.teacherspensions.co.uk)

Staff members with at least two years pensionable service, and who are assessed as being permanently unable to teach, whether or not they may be able to undertake other work, may be eligible for immediate payment of pension benefits under this scheme. There are two levels of ill health retirement based on whether it is likely that the staff member will be able to undertake work other than teaching. These different levels of benefit are:

- For staff who are assessed as being permanently unable to teach, but can do other work up to their normal pension age, they may be eligible for accrued benefits, which are based on their accrued reckonable service.
- For staff who are assessed as being both totally unable to teach or take up other gainful employment, they may be eligible for enhanced benefits (known as Total Incapacity Benefits). This is in addition to the benefits based on their accrued reckonable service. The maximum amount of enhancement staff could get is half the service that they could have completed before their normal pensionable age.

15. Personal Responsibilities

Falmouth aims to support the health and wellbeing of staff wherever possible. However, staff members also have a personal responsibility for supporting their wellbeing at work by:

- Looking after their own health and safety at work
- Being responsible for raising the need for support with an appropriate person such as their manager, a colleague, or union representative, where they feel that they are not coping, or are experiencing a problem that is impacting on their work
- Participating in the risk assessment processes in relation to health, safety and wellbeing issues at work
- Taking responsibility for their own personal development through participation in Falmouth's staff development programme, and other developmental activities
- Following advice given by their GP and / or Occupational Health in relation to their health at work
- Ensuring that they plan their work to enable adequate breaks and use of annual leave

While Falmouth does not wish to dictate how staff conduct their personal lives, wellbeing is not just affected by work factors and ultimately is an individual's own responsibility. Falmouth therefore also encourages staff to take a holistic approach to their wellbeing, in considering factors such as their diet, levels of exercise and activity, lifestyle choices such as alcohol consumption and smoking, and the quality and quantity of their sleep. A range of organisations who can support people with such issues are listed below.

16. Other Sources of Support

Cornwall Community Directory – www.communitydirectory.cornwall.gov.uk

A Cornwall Council website for everyone living in Cornwall, detailing services and events in the community, including leisure facilities and health and wellbeing support services, as well as information on money, social care, housing and transport.

Addaction - www.addaction.org.uk

A UK drug and alcohol treatment charity providing support to overcome substance use problems.

Mind – www.mind.org.uk

A UK mental health charity providing advice and support to anyone experiencing a mental health problem.

NHS Livewell - www.nhs.uk/livewell

An NHS website on healthy living within information on a range of topics including stopping smoking, healthy eating, weight management, fitness, insomnia, mental health and substance misuse.