

Health and Wellbeing Policy

Skills4Stem has a duty of care to look after the health and safety of staff and candidates/apprentices, including their health and wellbeing. Promoting and protecting staff wellbeing in the workplace is important for every business.

There are many factors that influence the health and wellbeing of staff, so to try to understand and overcome these issues could result in a range of benefits for both individuals and the wider business.

Mental wellbeing is relevant for all employees, which means everyone at Skills4Stem can play a part in improving wellbeing as part of our core values. We can do this by addressing issues or concerns that can then lead to improving the general wellbeing of everyone, reducing absenteeism and presenteeism, lowering staff turnover, increasing productivity, and help promote the employment of those who have experienced some kind of health, wellbeing or mental health problem.

Similarly, promoting physical activity and encouraging healthy eating, can help manage stress and weight loss, while also improving concentration and alertness. Those that exercise regularly and eat a balanced diet also report less illness and are more likely to recover more quickly from any illness they do get.

This health and wellbeing policy covers the following areas:

Mental wellbeing

Promoting mental wellbeing by:

- Providing information and raising awareness of mental health issues
- Promoting policies and actions that support mental wellbeing in the workplace
- Equipping employees with the skills to support their own mental health

Encouraging physical health by:

- Promoting physical activity across the business
- Supporting a healthy, balanced diet in the workplace
- Encouraging staff to drink 6-8 glasses of water a day

Management and leadership

- Equipping managers and leaders with the skills to: Identify and assist those with mental ill health
- Raising awareness of mental and physical wellbeing across the business support for employees

Offering support to employees by:

- Creating a culture that supports the wellbeing of all employees
- Offering help, support, and guidance to those with a mental health issue
- Assisting those returning to work after a period of mental ill health

Employment for those with mental health concerns

Supporting those coming back to work by:

- Making any necessary adjustments to the role/environment
- Establishing agreed recruitment practices
- Retaining and supporting colleagues who develop mental ill health
- Provide ways for colleagues to support their own mental wellbeing, for example through stress-buster activities, lunchtime activities and social events
- Offer employees flexible working hours
- Set realistic targets and deadlines for colleagues to prevent long working hours

- Deal with any conflict quickly and make sure the workplace is free from bullying, harassment, racism, or discrimination
- Ensure all colleagues have clear job descriptions, objectives, and responsibilities, as well as the training to do their job well
- Ensure good communication between managers, colleagues, and teams

To provide support and guidance for any member of staff experiencing mental health issues

- Check how working conditions and the organisation's policies are influencing mental health
- Ensure colleagues with mental health issues are treated fairly and without judgement
- Encourage colleagues to talk to a mental health first aider, HR, occupational health, a counsellor, or GP
- If an employee has been on long term sickness absence, ensure a gradual return to work with support at each stage
- Treat all matters relating to colleague's mental ill health in the strictest confidence, and only share information with prior consent from the individual concerned

To encourage the employment of people who have experienced mental ill health

- Show a positive attitude to employees and job applicants with mental health issues, including having positive statements in recruitment literature
- Ensure that all colleagues involved in the recruitment process are aware of mental health issues and the Disability Discrimination Act
- Do not assume that those with a mental health issue will be more susceptible to workplace stress, or will necessarily take more time off than other applicants
- Ensure that all line managers have received mental health first aid training, or have the skills to manage mental health in the workplace

To recognise that workplace stress is a Health and Safety issue

- Identify workplace stress factors/scenarios and carry out risk assessments of the business.
- Provide training in good management practices
- Provide resources to help managers implement the company's workplace mental health and wellbeing policy
- Offer support through a confidential counselling service, or qualified mental health first aiders

Physical activity

To Raise Awareness of The Importance of Physical Activity for Managing Stress and Maintaining Mental Wellbeing

- Provide leaflets and information on the importance of physical activity
- Provide courses and talks on the ways that physical activity can help colleagues manage stress and back pain, as well as improving mental alertness and concentration
- Map out walking trails or routes in the local area and publicise them across the business
- Provide information on local gyms, classes, and sports facilities
- Encourage lunchtime activity groups, e.g. running clubs, football games
- Provide corporate membership at local gyms
- Provide details on the UK's Cycle to Work Scheme

Healthy eating

To raise awareness of the importance of healthy eating for both physical and mental wellbeing

- Provide information and resources on how healthy eating can contribute to mental health, for example, increasing levels of concentration and the ability to cope with everyday stresses
- Appoint a healthy-eating champion to create a workplace health eating programme
- Provide courses and talks on the benefits of healthy eating

To encourage and support colleagues in making healthier eating choices

- Provide food storage and preparation areas for lunchtime meals
- Create a yearly healthy eating week, with activities and events
- Provide easy access to cold water in all offices and meeting rooms
- Encourage colleagues to eat lunch away from their desks

Communication

All employees are made aware of the workplace Health and Wellbeing policy - and the resources that are available to them.

The policy's effectiveness will be measured through the following methods to ensure it stays relevant:

- Feedback from colleagues
- A mental health and wellbeing at work risk assessment. (You may wish to use the St John Ambulance Workplace Stress Risk Assessment guide to help with this).
- Staff sickness, presenteeism and colleagues' turnover levels
- Exit interviews
- Use of occupational health or counselling services
- Staff complaints or referrals
- Feedback from the company's mental health lead, or qualified mental health first aiders

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