Managers’ Guide to Completing an Occupational Health Referral Form

This document will provide you with guidance on how to complete and refer an individual to Occupational Health (OH).

Step 1 – Discuss the referral with your HR Advisor

Referrals are normally made when individuals have either:

- Expressed concerns about work-related stress;
- During a period of long-term sickness; or
- Had a number of short-term absences, where an underlying cause may or may not have been identified.

In addition to this, a referral may be made at any other time if you are concerned that an underlying health issue is affecting, or has the potential to affect a member of staff’s ability to carry out their role. If you feel that an OH referral may be appropriate, contact your HR Advisor in the first instance and discuss your concerns. If, following this discussion, a referral is deemed to be appropriate, the referral form can be completed, as far as possible, prior to your meeting with the member of staff concerned.

Step 2 – Discuss the Referral Form with the individual

In order for the referral to be productive, and produce an accurate and effective outcome, it is important that you then discuss the referral form with the member of staff you are referring, as they may wish to add important information. (If the member of staff is off sick at the time of referral, then they should be contacted by phone and a copy of the referral forwarded to them for their records. The member of staff should be made aware of the reason for the referral and what information and advice you are seeking. It would also be advisable to stress at this stage that every effort should be made to attend any appointments offered within OH, and should there be a need to cancel or reschedule, they should contact OH at least two days prior to their appointment. Please also utilise this discussion to ensure that the correct address and contact details are documented on the referral form.

Step 3 – Completion of the Referral Form

It is important to ensure that all fields on the form are fully completed and that you provide as much detail as possible. Below are some key points which you can use to check that you have included all of the relevant information.

Have you:

- provided enough detail about current and previous absence(s) to include the number of days and periods of absences, along with the cause of the absence for each? Please include a twelve-month history of absence or up to three years if you think this is relevant to the referral.
- explored any potential factors that may be contributing to the member of staff’s absence, either internal to the University or external? If external/personal, they should not be pressured to divulge specific circumstances as this can be explored further during their OH appointment.
- given sufficient information about the working environment?
- already implemented adjustments to help support your member of staff in reducing their absence, or facilitated a return to work? If so, have you included these details?
- completed a Risk Assessment (such as a Stress Risk Assessment, if relevant) and, if so, have you provided a copy?
included an up to date Job Summary Form (JSF) which will help OH to suggest any suitable reasonable adjustment(s)? A copy of the JSF is also a useful tool for clarity of the role and expectations required. If a JSF is unavailable, please be as descriptive about the role as possible, especially if you are requesting reasonable adjustments to be considered as part of the referral.

discussed the referral with the member of staff? Please note that the referral will be seen by your member of staff at their OH appointment. This is why it is important that the form is completed in front of the employee at the time of referral (if they are at work) so that they are aware of any concerns you may have in relation to their attendance and any questions that are being posed for discussion.

undertaken a Display Screen Equipment Assessment (DSEA), if relevant? If you are referring a member of staff due to a musculoskeletal disorder (MSD), please ensure that a DSEA has been undertaken prior to the referral. If recommendations have been made following a DSEA, and if circumstances permit, it is ideal that these have been trialled for at least four to six weeks prior to the referral being initiated. A copy of the DSEA should be included and forwarded with the referral.

**Step 4 – Forward the completed form to your HR Advisor**
Once the referral form has been fully completed (and all points in Step 3 considered), forward the form to your HR Advisor. Your HR Advisor will forward the referral to OH on your behalf.

**Step 5 – Appointment for member of staff**
On receipt of the referral, OH will forward an appointment date and time to the member of staff concerned within 48 hours, with the intention of offering an appointment within two weeks of the date that the referral is received.

**Step 6 – Feedback/Management report from Occupational Health**
A report regarding the outcome of the appointment will be forwarded to HR within two working days. HR will then forward the report on to the referring manager and discuss any areas ‘for action’, if required. However, if the member of staff has requested to proof-read the letter prior to it being sent, this may delay the process by up to 48 hours.

**Step 7 – Discussion with member of staff**
An appointment should be arranged between the manager and member of staff in order to discuss the report and recommendations that have been proposed. For example, this may include any recommended support, reasonable adjustments or any further action that either the University or the individual can take to improve the situation.

Unless warranted, once the member of staff has returned to work, routine review appointments with OH will not be arranged. Managers are encouraged to arrange regular review appointments with the member of staff concerned, in order to monitor their progress or any problems they may be experiencing. Should the member of staff continue to have problems, it is requested that they are re-referred with an updated referral form, outlining measures that have been implemented to date and their continued concerns. However, should the member of staff be unfit to return to work following their appointment, a review date will be arranged, if necessary.

If you have any questions in relation to the referral process, or require clarification on any of the above information, please do not hesitate to contact the OH Team to discuss further.

**Contact Details**
Opening Hours: Monday – Thursday, 0700 – 1600.
Telephone: (0116) 252 3263, Email: ochealth@le.ac.uk.
Location: House K, Freemen’s Common, Leicester, LE2 6BF.