

# A Guide to the Occupational Health Referral Process

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**This document should be read in conjunction with the University Sickness Absence Policy, the Sickness Absence Management Guide for Managers and the Staff, Workers and Applicants Privacy Notice in relation to General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).**

## 1. Introduction

The purpose of an Occupational Health Referral (OHR) is to obtain medical advice to assist the University in supporting a member of staff whose health is affecting their fitness for work, or where the working environment is impacting on their health. The University uses Health Management Ltd (HML) to provide its Occupational Health service. At all times during the referral process, an individual's sensitive information will be used, controlled and safeguarded in line with our privacy statement and retention policy.

## 2. Occupational Health Referral Form

The first stage of the OHR process is for a Manager to complete the Occupational Health Referral Form for the individual, with support from the People Hub. The Manager will explain the OHR process to the individual and give them a copy of the OHR Form before it is sent to HML to arrange an OH Medical Appointment. The form includes personal information such as name, staff ID, date of birth, home address, and staff category. Additional information may be attached with an OHR form, including an individual's sickness record, stress risk assessment, and relevant sections of their Display Screen Equipment (DSE) risk assessment, where appropriate.

Once individuals have seen the OHR Form, it will be emailed to the People Hub for input onto HML's secure portal. One password protected electronic copy of the OHR Form will be stored on the person's electronic case file by the People Services Adviser/Senior People Services Adviser working on the case. A hard copy will be kept by the Manager, and the People Hub, which must be secured safely in a locked drawer or cabinet. Hard copies of the form and the electronic copy stored on the person's case file must be destroyed 12 months from the last action taken. . Hard copies must be destroyed and the soft copy on the person's electronic case file must be deleted. Further information can be found in the Sickness Absence Management Guide for Managers.

## 3. Medical Appointments and OH Report

Once in receipt of an OHR form, HML will determine whether a telephone or face-to-face appointment is most appropriate, and an appointment will be arranged. Following attendance at a medical appointment, HML will produce an OH report, which individuals can choose to see before it is sent to their Manager and the appropriate adviser within the People Hub.

Once the report is ready, the People Hub will receive an email explaining that the password protected report is available for retrieval from HML's secure portal. The designated People

Services Adviser will retrieve the report and send an email copy to the Manager and Senior People Services Adviser. The document will be password protected, with the password sent in a separate email.

The report should be printed, then emails and soft copies of the report must be deleted. Hard copies must be stored securely in a lockable drawer or cabinet. The People Services Adviser/Senior People Services Adviser working on the case should store an electronic copy of the report on a person's case file, which must be password protected. All hard copies of the report must be destroyed as soon as actions from the OH Report have been completed, and no later than 12 months from the last action taken. Additionally, the People Services Adviser must delete the electronic copy of the report from the person's case file after this time period. If necessary, a report can be accessed after this time from HML's secure portal.

The Manager will discuss the report with the individual and the People Services Adviser/Senior People Services Adviser to identify how best to support the individual.

- Where a person may need a gradual return to normal duties at work, a phased return to work will be discussed in order to build the hours of work up to the full contracted hours over a specified period.
- Where a person may need a physical adjustment to their working environment, the Manager will speak to the Health & Safety Manager explaining the situation. The Health & Safety Manager will then contact the individual to discuss next steps and the possibility of a specialist Display Screen Equipment (DSE) assessment.

Further information can be found in the Sickness Absence Management Guide for Managers.

On some occasions, an HML practitioner may decide that a specialist GP report is required. If this is the case, the Manager will discuss this requirement with an individual, who will be asked to sign an Occupational Health Consent Form. Once completed, the same process will be carried out as described above for the standard OH Referral.

Further information can be found in the Sickness Absence Management Guide for Managers.

#### 4. Managing HML's provision

People Services actively manages the University's contract with HML to ensure that we receive good service. In order to monitor the service delivered by HML, an electronic 'Complaints Log' is kept securely. This log captures an individual's name, unit, date of complaint, and date of complaint response. The document is only accessible to designated People Services Advisers and Senior Employee Engagement Advisor), who monitor the service provided by HML. The document is retained on a 12-month rolling basis.

In the event that any complaints are made about HML provision, the Senior Employee Engagement Adviser would raise an official complaint with HML via email. HML response letters to complaints are password protected and retrieved from their secure portal. The Senior Employee Engagement Advisor would then email a password protected complaint response to the Manager and Senior People Services advisor dealing with the complaint, with the password sent in a separate email. Once the complaint response is printed by the Manager and Senior People Services Advisor, emails and soft copies of the response must be deleted. Hard copies will be stored securely in a lockable drawer or cabinet until reviewed, and for no longer than 12 months from the date of the last action taken.

## 5. Useful References

Occupational Health Consent Form  
Occupational Health Referral Form  
Online Cardinus Training and Risk Assessment (DSE)  
Sickness Absence Policy  
Sickness Absence Management Guide for Managers  
Stress Risk Assessment Form  
Staff, Workers and Applicants Privacy Notice  
Document Retention and Personal File Guidance