

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING POLICY

Issue	Date	Sections Affected	Description of Change / Change Request Reference / Remarks	Amended & reviewed by
5	06/11/23	N/A	Reviewed	SB
5	12/11/24	N/A	Reviewed	CC

Introduction:

This is the mental health and wellbeing Policy Statement of Training Works. It indicates the principle, organisation, and arrangements regarding the mental health and wellbeing at work of employees, learners, and all other customers who are using or delivering courses and qualifications offered by Training Works.

Scope:

Mental health problems and stress can affect anyone, regardless of their position in the organisation. This policy applies equally to all employees.

The implementation of this policy will also be supported by other health and safety policies, e.g., sickness absence, alcohol, drug and substance abuse, COVID-19, and bullying and harassment.

Mental ill-health and stress are associated with many of the leading causes of workplace absence. Promoting and protecting the mental wellbeing of the workforce is important for individuals' physical health, social wellbeing, and productivity.

Many factors in the workplace influence the mental health and wellbeing of individual employees. Understanding and addressing the factors which affect people's mental health and wellbeing at work have a wide range of benefits, both for individuals and the organisation.

Mental health and wellbeing in the workplace are relevant to all employees and everyone can contribute to improving this at work. Addressing workplace mental health and wellbeing can help strengthen the positive, protective factors of employment, reduce risk factors for mental ill-health and improve general health and wellbeing. It can also help promote the employment of people who have experienced mental health problems and support them once they are at work.

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING POLICY

Aim of the Policy:

The aim of this workplace mental health and wellbeing policy covers the following aspects of mental health and wellbeing:

Promoting the mental wellbeing of all staff through:

- Providing information and raising awareness about mental health and wellbeing.
- Providing opportunities for employees to look after their mental health and wellbeing.
- Promoting policies and practices that promote wellbeing.

Developing skills for managers and supervisors to:

- Promote the mental health and wellbeing of employees.
- Deal with issues around mental health and stress effectively.

Providing support to employees through:

- Providing a work environment that promotes and supports mental health and wellbeing for all employees.
- Offering assistance, advice, and support to people who experience a mental health problem while in employment.
- Support for staff returning to work after a period of absence due to mental health problems.

Helping people get back to work after a period of absence due to mental illness through:

- Recruitment practices.
- Making reasonable adjustments.
- Retaining staff who develop a mental health problem.

Objectives:

To tackle workplace factors that may negatively affect mental health and wellbeing, and to develop management skills to promote mental health and wellbeing and manage mental health problems effectively.

Policy actions:

- Give employees information on and increase their awareness of mental health and wellbeing.
- Provide opportunities for employees to look after their mental health and wellbeing, for example through physical activity, stress-buster activities, and social events.
- Offer employees flexible working arrangements that promote their mental health and wellbeing.

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING POLICY

- Give all staff the opportunity to influence how they do their jobs, the scope for varying their working conditions as far as possible, and opportunities to develop and fully utilise their skills.
- Set employees realistic targets that do not require them to work unreasonable hours.
- Ensure all staff has clearly defined job descriptions, objectives, and responsibilities and provide them with good management support, appropriate training, and adequate resources to do their job.
- Manage conflict effectively and ensure the workplace is free from bullying and harassment, discrimination, and racism.
- Establish good two-way communication to ensure staff involvement, particularly during periods of organisational change.

As an employer, we aim to create and promote a culture where employees can talk openly about their job and mental health and wellbeing and to report difficulties without fear of discrimination or reprisal.

Policy Actions:

- Give non-judgemental and proactive support to individual staff who experience mental health problems.
- Deal empathically with staff suffering from mental health problems due to circumstances outside the workplace, and who consequently find it difficult to do their job properly.
- Give new employees a comprehensive induction programme providing an understanding of the organisation, the organisations policies, and procedures, and the role they are expected to carry out.

To provide support and assistance for employees experiencing mental health and wellbeing difficulties.

Policy actions:

- Ensure individuals suffering from mental health and wellbeing problems are treated fairly and consistently and are not made to feel guilty about their problems.
- Encourage staff to consult the Director, their own GP, or a counsellor of their choice.
- Investigate the contribution of working conditions and other organisational factors to mental ill-health and remedy this where possible.
- In cases of long-term sickness absence, put in place, where possible, a graduated return to work.
- Make every effort to identify suitable alternative employment, in full discussion with the employee, where a return to the same job is not possible due to identified risks or other factors.
- Treat all matters relating to individual employees and their mental health and wellbeing problems in the strictest confidence and share on a 'need to know basis only with consent from the individual concerned.

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING POLICY

To positively encourage the employment of people who have experienced mental health and wellbeing problems by providing fair and non-discriminatory recruitment and selection procedures.

Policy actions:

- Show a positive and enabling attitude to employees and job applicants with mental health issues. This includes having positive statements in recruitment literature.
- Ensure that all staff involved in recruitment and selection are briefed on mental health issues and the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in appropriate interview skills.
- Make it clear, in any recruitment or health check undertaken, that people who have experienced mental health wellbeing issues will not be discriminated against and that disclosure of a mental health and wellbeing problem will enable both employee and employer to assess and provide the right level of support or adjustment.
- Do not make assumptions that a person with a mental health and wellbeing problem will be more vulnerable to workplace stress or take more time off than any other employee or job applicant.
- Ensure all line managers have information and training about managing mental health and wellbeing in the workplace.

To recognise that workplace stress is a health and safety issue and acknowledge the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors.

Policy actions:

- Identify all workplace stressors and conduct risk assessments to eliminate stress or control the risks from stress. These risk assessments will be regularly reviewed.
- Provide training in good management practices, including those related to health and safety and stress management.
- Provide information on confidential counselling for staff affected by stress caused by either work or external factors.
- Provide adequate resources to enable managers to implement the organisation's agreed workplace mental health and wellbeing policy.

Responsibilities

Everyone has a responsibility to contribute to making the workplace mental health and wellbeing policy effective.

Directors and Managers have a responsibility to:

- Monitor the workplace, identify hazards and risks, and take steps to eliminate or reduce these as far as is reasonably practicable.

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING POLICY

- Ensure good communication between management and staff, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes, as well as the impact of COVID-19, lockdown measures, and other external regulations that may be enforced.
- Assist and support employees who are known to have mental health and wellbeing problems or are experiencing stress outside work – for example, due to bereavement or separation.
- Ensure staff are provided with the resources and training required to carry out their job.
- Monitor workloads to ensure that people are not overloaded.
- Monitor working hours and overtime to ensure that staff is not overworking and monitor holidays to ensure that staff is taking their full entitlement.
- Ensure staff are provided with meaningful developmental opportunities.
- In addition, senior management will ensure that staff performing a management or supervisory function have sufficient competence to discharge that function in a manner consistent with the maintenance of mental health and wellbeing in the workplace.
- Organise training and awareness courses on workplace mental health and wellbeing in conjunction with suitable experts.
- Provide advice and support to employees and managers in relation to this policy.
- Monitor and report on levels of sickness absence that relate to mental health problems including stress-related illness (in conjunction with the occupational health service and departmental managers).

Employees have a responsibility to:

- Raise issues of concern and seek help from their director or line manager.
- Accept opportunities for GP visits and counselling when suggested.

Line Managers have a responsibility to:

- Provide specialist advice and awareness training on mental wellbeing.
- Train and support managers in implementing stress risk assessments.
- Support individuals who have been off sick with mental health and stress problems and advise them and their management on a planned return to work.
- Refer individuals to specialist agencies as required.
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of measures to promote mental wellbeing.
- Inform the employer and the health and safety committee of any changes and developments in the field of stress at work.
- Meaningfully consulted on any changes to work practices or work design that could precipitate stress.
- Able to consult with members on the issue of stress, including conducting workplace surveys.

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING POLICY

Mental health and wellbeing lead will:

- Cascade mental health and wellbeing information at Team Meetings.
- Publicise wellbeing opportunities, events, and lifestyle changes.
- Present recent findings from research and current initiatives.
- Identify opportunities to develop organisation to become more supportive and open about mental health and wellbeing.
- Create an open culture for discussions about mental health and wellbeing.
- Promotion of positive coping strategies through a whole team approach.
- Challenge negative ways of thinking within organisation.
- Create an open, non-judgmental, and supportive place to work.

Review and Monitoring

The Director (or an individual as appropriate) will be responsible for reviewing the workplace mental health and wellbeing policy and for monitoring how effective the policy meets its aims and objectives.

Indicators to measure effectiveness could include:

- Working hours and patterns.
- Accidents at work.
- Staff complaints.
- Staff sickness levels.
- Staff turnover.
- Use of counselling services.
- The employee surveys.
- Exit interviews.
- Learner / Employer Complaints.
- Missed Appointments.
- Changes in Behaviour and Attitudes.

The Policy will be reviewed six months from implementation and then annually after that to ensure that it remains relevant.