

The Individual Stress Assessment is a management tool in order to recognise stress triggers and help support employees in the workplace.

This document covers the 6 key areas based on the Health & Safety Executive’s (HSE) Management Standards for work-related stress. Stress is the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demands placed upon them. To enable managers to manage employees in a way to minimise work-related stress, these areas need to be looked at in order to create a good working environment for all employees.

The assessment can be used to discuss any areas that employees feel are affecting them inside work however it can also bring in external factors as necessary which may ultimately start impacting on their role.

This is a **proactive** tool that could be used as:

* Part of supervision
* Part of appraisal sessions
* Part of 1-2-1 meetings

**Other** times where this can be utilised are:

* where there is cause for concern (e.g. sickness absence, or where there is noticeable [signs of stress](http://intranet/our-people/occupational-health/stress-and-mental-health/signs-of-stress/)  being displayed)
* during return to work interview and/or employee support meetings
* when there is significant change within the department/area of work/team

To utilise the effectiveness of this tool, it is recommended that it be completed jointly with the manager and the employee. The action plan should be agreed as soon as possible. The assessment is an **ongoing process** and must be used as often as is necessary to aid managers and support employees to highlight any possible areas of concern. If there are any issues with this process, an alternative manager could be sourced (speak to HR for further advice).

**To assist with completion of the form, employee and manager guidance are included in this document.**

**We would advise that managers utilise the manager’s guidance pages to assist when working through the form, in order to support further conversations with employees.**

**Further useful information and suggestions for managers can be found within the HSE’s**

[Stress Talking Toolkit](http://www.hse.gov.uk/gohomehealthy/assets/docs/StressTalkingToolkit.pdf)

**Employee Details**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Employee Name:** | **Employee Number:** | **Department / Division / Section:** |
|  |  | Choose an item. |
| **Job Title:** | **Manager / Assessor Name:** | **Date of Assessment:** |
|  |  | Click here to enter a date. |

**HOW TO COMPLETE:**

**EMPLOYEES:** Choose the score which is most applicable in relation to the 6 questions:



Add a comment to support your choice and to elaborate on how you feel. Also, if applicable, recommend how this issue(s) could be rectified moving forward.

**MANAGERS:**

When a score of 2 or more is selected, please *use the questions provided to facilitate your conversation and* to discuss any concerns/issues raised.



After all question(s) highlighted by the employee have been discussed:

* An action plan should be mutually agreed which looks to rectify any concerns expressed and to provide a positive way forward.
* Arrange a review meeting, this will allow you to follow up with the employee and also allows time for any changes discussed to be implemented.

**DEMANDS**

1. **During your day to day activities in work, do you feel the demands of your job affect you?**

**Please consider the following:**

* The authority provides you with adequate and achievable demands in relation to your agreed hours of work;
* You feel your skills and abilities are matched to the job demands;
* Jobs are designed to be within your capabilities; and
* Any concerns about your work environment are addressed.

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| **Scale: *0 = Never 1 = Rarely 2 = Sometimes 3 = Frequently 4 = Always*** | Score: Choose an item. |
| *Employee Comments:* |
| ***If you have scored 2 or more above your manager will go through the following questions with you:*** |
| ***Questions to consider between you and your manager?*****Does your workload feel achievable?***Think about which tasks take up the most time and how your organisation copes at busy times.*Click here to enter text. |
|  |
| **Do you feel the deadlines you are given are realistic? Do you often have conflicting deadlines?**Click here to enter text. |
|  |
| **Have you had the right training to carry out the core functions of your job?**Click here to enter text. |
|  |
| **What improvements or support could be put in place to help with any of the issues you have talked about?** *Think about you, your line manager and your organisation.* |
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**HINTS FOR MANAGERS**

Working patterns

* Allow regular breaks, especially when the work is complex or emotionally demanding.
* Consider changes to start and end times to help employees cope with pressures outside work, like childcare or commuting.

Workload

* Hold regular meetings, both with individuals and as a team, to discuss anticipated workloads (and to deal with any predicted busy times).
* Provide training to help employees prioritise.
* Develop a system to notify employees of unplanned tight deadlines and any exceptional need to work long hours. Identify blocks of time to allow for genuine collaborative planning.
* If you’re a team leader or supervisor, ensure realistic timescales are set when accepting incoming work for your teams
* Refer to the Authority’s [Flexible Working Policy](https://ourpeople.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/media/143148/flexible-working-policy-sept-2014.pdf)

Environment

* Assess the risk and impact of other potential hazards and take steps to deal with them by consulting with employees and others.
* For example, to deal with the potential hazard of violence and aggression, you could seek advice from the police or a specialist charity.
* Provide training to help employees deal with and defuse difficult situations.
* Take steps to reduce unwanted distraction, disturbance and noise levels.

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|  **Notes**  |
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**CONTROL**

1. **Do you have control over your workload?**

**Please consider the following:**

* Where possible, you have control over your pace of work;
* You are encouraged to use your skills and initiative to do your work;
* Where possible, you are encouraged to develop new skills to help you undertake new and challenging pieces of work;
* The authority encourages you to develop your skills;
* You have a say over when breaks can be taken; and
* You are consulted over your work patterns, where appropriate.

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| **Scale: *0 = Always 1 = Frequently 2 = Sometimes 3 = Rarely 4 = Never*** | Score: Choose an item. |
| *Employee Comments:* |
| ***If you have scored 2 or more above your manager will go through the following questions with you:*** |
| ***Questions to consider between you and your manager?***1. **Do you feel you have a say in how your work is organised and undertaken?**

Click here to enter text.Click here to enter text. |
|  |
| 1. **Do you feel your skills are used to good effect? How could your existing skills be used more effectively?**

Click here to enter text. |
|  |
| 1. **What improvements or support could be put in place to help with any of the issues you have talked about?**

Click here to enter text.*Think about you, your line manager and your organisation.* |
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**HINTS FOR MANAGERS**

Communication

* Encourage employees to have a say over the way their work is organised and undertaken through project meetings, one-to-one and performance reviews.
* Where possible, hold regular discussions when planning new work.
* Allocate responsibility to teams rather than individuals to take projects forward. Allow employees some control over the pace of their work.

Decisions

* Talk about the way decisions are made.
* Allow and encourage people to participate in decision making, especially where it affects them.

Skills and training

* Talk about the skills people have and if they believe they are able to use these to good effect.
* Talk about how people would like to use their skills. Consider personal development/training plans, where you ask employees to think about the skills they would like to develop.

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|  **Notes**  |
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**SUPPORT**

1. **Do you have sufficient support at work?**

**Please consider the following:**

* The authority has policies and procedures to adequately support you;
* Systems are in place to enable and encourage managers to support their staff;
* Systems are in place to enable and encourage you to support your colleagues;
* You know what support is available and how and when to access it;
* You know how to access the required resources to do your job; and
* You receive regular and constructive feedback.

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| ***0 = Always 1 = Frequently 2 = Sometimes 3 = Rarely 4 = Never*** | Score: Choose an item. |
| *Employee Comments:* |
| ***If you have scored 2 or more above your manager will go through the following questions with you:*** |
| ***Questions to consider between you and your manager?***1. **Do you feel that your organisation is a positive place to work and that you are valued?**

*Think about the working environment, the support available, the opportunities to talk about support you may need?*Click here to enter text.Click here to enter text.Click here to enter text. |
|  |
| **Do you know who to talk to and where to go when you need support?** *Think about where you would go for help if you were experiencing an issue and whether you would feel comfortable doing so.*Click here to enter text.Click here to enter text. |
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| **Do you feel there are enough opportunities to discuss any emerging issues or pressures?**Click here to enter text.Click here to enter text. |
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| **What improvements or support could be put in place to help with any of the issues you have talked about?***Think about you, your line manager and your organisation.* |
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**HINTS FOR MANAGERS**

Support

* Hold regular one-to-one and team meetings to talk about any emerging issues or pressures. Include work-related stress or pressures as a standing item for meetings with employees and/or performance reviews.
* Consider [coaching, mentoring](http://intranet/our-people/learning-and-development/corporate-learning-opportunities/coaching-mentoring/), buddying systems or work shadowing to improve understanding of roles across the team.
* Find examples of how people would like, or have received, good support from managers or employees.

Resources

* Signpost to areas of support available with your employees like, [Occupational Health](http://intranet/our-people/occupational-health/) and [External organisations](http://intranet/our-people/occupational-health/stress-and-mental-health/self-help-and-support/).
* Talk about the ways your organisation can provide support if someone is experiencing problems outside work. Again signposting to External Organisations.

Training

* Regularly consult with employees to ensure training is up to date.

Environment

* Assess the risk of physical violence and verbal abuse by consulting with employees and others, such as the police and charities.
* Consider what training is available to help employees deal with and defuse difficult situations. Contact L&D for further information

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|  **Notes**  |
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**RELATIONSHIPS**

1. **Do you have any problems with working relationships?**

**Please consider the following:**

* The authority promotes positive behaviours at work to avoid conflict and ensure fairness;
* Employees share information relevant to their work;
* The authority has agreed policies and procedures to prevent or resolve unacceptable behaviour;
* Systems are in place to enable and encourage managers to deal with unacceptable behaviour; and
* Systems are in place to enable and encourage employees to report unacceptable behaviour.

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| **Scale: *0 = Never 1 = Rarely 2 = Sometimes 3 = Frequently 4 = Always*** | Score: Choose an item. |
| *Employee Comments:* |
| ***If you have scored 2 or more above your manager will go through the following questions with you:*** |
| ***Questions to consider between you and your manager?***1. **Have you experienced or witnessed unacceptable behaviour at work?**
2. Do you feel satisfied with how this was dealt with?

Click here to enter text.Click here to enter text.Click here to enter text. |
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| **Do you feel that honest, open communication is encouraged in your organisation?**Click here to enter text.Click here to enter text.Click here to enter text. |
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| **Do you feel that you know where to go and what to do if you experience or witness unacceptable behaviour?** Do you feel confident that steps will be taken to stop this behaviour?Click here to enter text.Click here to enter text. |
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| **What improvements or support could be put in place to help with any of the issues you have talked about?**Think about you, your line manager and your organisation. |
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**HINTS FOR MANAGERS**

Relationships

* Refer to the Authority’s [Behavioural Standards Policy](http://intranet/media/657926/behavioural-standards-january-2020.pdf) for guidance on the standards expected and how to deal with matters that arise. Ensure employees are aware of the policy relating to standards of behaviour
* Encourage your team to report unacceptable behaviour.
* Encourage good communication by communicating well as a manager
* Signpost to relevant [online training](http://intranet/our-people/learning-and-development/) opportunities.
* Encourage and provide opportunities for employees to socialise together at lunchtime, breaktime etc.
* Make sure that you are providing the same level of support and communications for employees who work in isolation like lone workers or those in separate locations.
* Find ways to celebrate success

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|  **Notes**  |
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**ROLE**

1. **Do you understand your role at work and what is expected of you?**

**Please consider the following:**

* The authority ensures that, as far as possible, the different requirements it places upon you are compatible;
* The authority provides information to enable you to understand your role and responsibilities;
* The authority ensures that, as far as possible, the requirements it places upon you are clear and systems are in place to enable you to raise concerns about any uncertainties or conflicts you have in your role and responsibilities.

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| ***0 = Always 1 = Frequently 2 = Sometimes 3 = Rarely 4 = Never*** | Score: Choose an item. |
| *Employee Comments:* |
| ***If you have scored 2 or more above your manager will go through the following questions with you:*** |
| ***Questions to consider between you and your manager?*****Do you feel clear on what your responsibilities are?**Click here to enter text.Click here to enter text.Click here to enter text.Click here to enter text. |
|  |
| 1. **Are you clear on what your performance objectives are and what success looks like for you, your area/department and the organisation?** Do you feel that they are achievable?

Click here to enter text.Click here to enter text.Click here to enter text. |
|  |
| **Do you feel you understand how work is structured in your department and in the wider organisation?** Do you know who is doing what and why and how your role fits in?Click here to enter text.Click here to enter text. |
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| **What improvements or support could be put in place to help with any of the issues you have talked about?**Think about you, your line manager and your organisation. |
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**HINTS FOR MANAGERS**

New starters

* Give all new employees a thorough induction into your organisation and its policies and procedures. Include details of where to get support or who to speak to about stress.

Communication

* Provide clear work objectives.
* Define work structures clearly so that all team members know who is doing what and why.
* Hold regular one-to-one meetings to ensure people are clear about what is planned for the coming months.
* Agree specific standards of performance for individual tasks and review regularly.
* Hold regular team meetings to enable employees to discuss any issues.
* Ensure the employee understands their job profile and how their role relates to the wider objectives of the team.

Role

* Introduce personal work plans which are aligned to the objectives of the team/organisation.
* Review job profiles regularly, especially following change, and discuss training/retraining regularly too.

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|  **Notes**  |
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**CHANGE**

1. **Are you adversely affected by change within your workplace or the Authority?**

**Please consider the following:**

* The authority provides you with timely information to enable you to understand the reasons for proposed changes;
* The authority ensures adequate employee consultation on changes and provides opportunities for you to influence proposals;
* You are aware of the probable impact of any changes your jobs. If necessary, you are given training to support any changes in your jobs;
* You are aware of timetables for changes;
* You have access to relevant support during changes.

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| **Scale: *0 = Never 1 = Rarely 2 = Sometimes 3 = Frequently 4 = Always*** | Score: Choose an item. |
| *Employee Comments:* |
| ***If you have scored 2 or more above your manager will go through the following questions with you:*** |
| ***Questions to consider between you and your manager?***1. **Do you feel that your organisation handles change well?**

Click here to enter text.Click here to enter text.Click here to enter text. |
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| **Do you feel you are properly consulted when changes are made which affect you and your role?** Do you feel the reasons for the change are explained well?Click here to enter text.Click here to enter text.Click here to enter text. |
|  |
| **Do you feel that you are involved in the planning process when changes are made?**Click here to enter text.Click here to enter text.Click here to enter text. |
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| **What improvements or support could be put in place to help with any of the issues you have talked about?**Think about you, your line manager and your organisation |
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**HINTS FOR MANAGERS**

Consultation

* Where the change relates to a restructure, please refer to the Authority’s [Restructure Policy](http://intranet/media/79811/restructuring-policy-and-procedure.pdf) and procedure.
* Define and explain key steps of changes being made.
* Consult employees early and throughout the change process.
* Build in consultation and support as key elements of any change process.
* Involve employees in the planning process.
* Provide a system for employees to comment and ask questions before, during and after the change.
* Review how the change will impact on departmental and individual objectives and workloads.
* Include training/retraining needs as part of your change process.

Communication

* Start communication early.
* Explain what the organisation wants to achieve and why it is essential that the change takes place.
* Explain the timescales of changes and how changes will impact directly on them.
* Have an agreed system for communicating to employees why a change is happening.
* Have agreed methods of communication (such as meetings, notice boards, letters, email and feedback forms) and their frequency.
* Don’t rely on a single communication route – most people may have access to a PC in work but what about those who don’t, or those who work off-site?
* Make sure that employees are aware of the impact of the change being made on their jobs.
* Talk about the potential need for (re)training.

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|  **Notes**  |
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**OTHER**

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| **Are there any external factors that may be affecting you?** (Please consider anything outside of work that we can help with e.g. personal life, family, financial worries) |
| **Scale: *0 = Never 1 = Rarely 2 = Sometimes 3 = Frequently 4 = Always*** | Score: Choose an item. |
| *Employee Comments:* |

**SUPPORT LINKS**

**EXTERNAL SUPPORT AGENCIES**

* [**NHS Direct**](http://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/localservices/searchlocalservices.aspx?s=HealthWellbeingAndSupport)**:** Search for various emotional support services in your local area.
* [**Education Support Partnership**](https://www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk/)**:** Specific support for teachers
* **CALL:** Community Advice and Listening line: 0800 132 737
* [**MIND**](http://www.mind.org.uk/)**:** Mental health support charity
* [**Live Life Fear Free**](http://livefearfree.gov.wales/?lang=en)**:** Domestic abuse support
* [**SAMARITANS**](https://www.samaritans.org/)**:** 116 123
* [**IAWN:**](http://www.iawn.wales.nhs.uk/home) Online resources and information on mental health issues (University Health Board)
* [**NHS Stress Control Training**](http://www.iawn.wales.nhs.uk/stress-control-and-activate-your-life)**:** 07816 064644

stresscontrol.carms.hdd@wales.nhs.uk

* [**Cruse Bereavement Wales Helpline**](https://www.cruse.org.uk/get-help/local-services/wales/wales): **0808 808 1677​**

**You can also email****helpline@cruse.org.uk**

* [**Money Advice Service**](https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en)**:** 0800 138 7777
* [**Citizens Advice:**](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/wales/) 03444 77 20 20
* [**Relate**](https://www.relate.org.uk/)**: 0300 003 0396**

**OUTCOME OF ASSESSMENT**

*Once you have identified the key areas, you should then meet with your manager (if not completed jointly) and go through these in order to agree the most appropriate course of action. A review date should then be agreed, where the Individual Stress Assessment is taken again****.***

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| **Agreed Action** | **Action(s) to be completed by whom and by when?** |
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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Employee’s Signature:** | **Date:** | **Review Date:** |
|  |  |  |
| **Manager’s Signature:** | **Date:** |
|  |  |

**NB: If following a review of the action plan the employee needs further clinical support, this can be sourced via Occupational Health (see links below) and this form needs to be included with the referral. For useful support links visit the** [**Employee Wellbeing**](http://intranet/our-people/occupational-health/stress-and-mental-health/) **intranet pages.**

**Wellbeing Support Service**

This service can be offered to all staff that are experiencing psychological and/or physical difficulties which is impacting on their emotional well-being.

These difficulties can be supported using a range of interventions and strategies which may include:

* CBT / CBT informed approach
* Counselling/active listening
* Coping Skills and problem solving

The Wellbeing Support Service is offered to staff via referral from managers and/or recommendation from physician/adviser.  This service offers an initial assessment and up to 6 further sessions undertaken by qualified health professionals who have specialist training in providing psychological support.

To be referred to this service line managers need to complete an **Occupational Health** e-referral form which is available on the following link:

**OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH MANAGEMENT REFERRAL**

**Link for all Carmarthenshire County Council internal departments (excluding schools)**

English – [Occupational Health Referral Form](https://sirgar-dash.achieveservice.com/en/service/Occ_Health_Ereferral_Process_Internal)

Click here to enter a date.

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