

Policy Name: Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy (Staff)

Approved 25th November 2016

Revision 1 approved 10th March 2017

Revision 2 approved

Revision 3 approved by Trinity Academic Council 13th May 2020

1. Context

- 1.1 The Royal Irish Academy of Music, hereinafter referred to as RIAM or the Academy, is committed to respecting employees as individuals and providing an environment that emphasises a healthy balance between working and personal lives. RIAM recognises that changing work and personal commitments are such that lines between work and personal life may be difficult to separate.
- 1.2 RIAM takes note of a number of recent, informative national and international initiatives to promote mental health and wellbeing, such as [2013 Healthy Ireland](#), [HSE's Health and Wellbeing Division Operational Plan \(20 14 \) pg 2 3](#), [Healthy Workplace Initiative](#), and the [UN Agenda for Sustainable Development](#).

2. Purpose

- 2.1 RIAM is committed to providing an environment which promotes both physical and mental well-being for all its employees – one which is stimulating, challenging, enriching and where there is a balance between work-related and personal needs.
- 2.2 Thus, the policy aims to provide advice to managers and individual employees on:
 - (i) ways positively to promote the health and well-being of all employees;
 - (ii) how to identify hazards and assess the risks to mental well-being in the workplace;
 - (iii) how to manage the hazards and risks;
 - (iv) the support available to promote employees' well-being.

3. Benefits

- 3.1 The implementation of this policy will ensure that the contribution of employees to achieve Academy goals is valued and will not be at the cost of their physical or mental well-being.
- 3.2 The policy will provide clear direction for the achievement of this.

4.Scope

- 4.1 This policy applies to all RIAM employees.

5.Principles

- 5.1 To promote well-being, work-related sources of challenge must be managed using the same principles as managing physical hazards in the workplace – through risk assessment.

- 5.2 The importance of distinguishing between challenge and stress. Meeting challenges leads to positive well-being, such as success and personal growth. However, if challenges are not well managed, negative well-being and/or distress, under-performance and illness may result. These effects are often referred to as stress.
- 5.3 The importance of remembering that individuals may react differently under different circumstances and conditions, and at different times.

6. Procedures

6.1 Procedure for Assessment of Risk

6.1.1 The identification of hazards and the assessment of the risks to mental well-being are complex, hence there is no one simple measure that may be used as a direct indicator of well-being, as each person has an individual response. Thus, the Academy Senior Management Team will monitor potential indicators of challenge so that any possible problems and variability between different offices may be identified and, where appropriate, action may be taken.

6.1.2 Potential indicators include:

- (i) sickness absence levels;
- (ii) labour turnover levels;
- (iii) accident/incident reports. The H&S representative is responsible for reporting on any accidents or incidents that may be related to stress at work;
- (iv) referrals to the Voluntary Health Insurance Employee Assistance Programme (VHI EAP) or RIAM Doctor from line managers or HoF;
- (v) self-referrals to either the RIAM Doctor/VHI EAP either in person or via the telephone (such monitoring is carried out without identifying personal details);
- (vi) return to work interviews;
- (vii) risk assessments;
- (viii) employee surveys which may provide anonymous information on how employees feel about their working environment, managers, leadership and training/development opportunities.

6.1.3 Senior Management and the H&S representative will support the risk assessment process, which is the responsibility of the RIAM Secretary.

6.2 Procedure for Recruitment and Selection

6.2.1 The RIAM Secretary should ensure that:

- (i) the full range of tasks, demands and expectations of a post are clearly outlined during the recruitment process for filling staff vacancies;
- (ii) all new appointees (both those who are new to RIAM and those who are promoted or transferred from elsewhere within RIAM) must receive a local

induction into their posts from their line manager or from any colleagues so delegated by the manager;

- (iii) all those offered employment by RIAM undergo a pre-employment health assessment. The assessment process will be used in a positive way, identifying what support, if any, an applicant may need to carry out the job effectively;
- (iv) where appropriate, prior to promotion or transfer to a new role, a pre-appointment health assessment is arranged to identify what support, if any, may be required to enable the employee to carry out the job effectively.

6.3 Procedure for Absence Management

6.3.1 Line Managers and Heads of Faculty(HoF) should inform the RIAM Secretary as soon as possible of any apparent work-related stress issues within their office/faculty that may or may not have resulted in staff absences from work.

6.3.2 They should continue to monitor and discuss in pre-arranged one to one meetings with the employees concerned their return to work and the factors which may have contributed to or caused the stress-related condition. These meetings should allow both the employee and the line manager/HoF to discuss any issues that either may have.

6.3.3 If an employee continues to experience difficulty coping, the line manager/HoF should ensure that a risk assessment is made, and that the situation is discussed with the employee, Director, RIAM Secretary, or RIAM Doctor, as appropriate.

6.4 Procedure for alerting management to employee difficulties

6.4.1 Any employee who feels that they are under unacceptable challenge, or who are personally struggling, should, as appropriate:

- (i) Speak to their line manager/HoF as soon as possible. Managers may be unaware of the pressure their staff feel they are under and may be able to make changes, which could alleviate the situation. The line manager/HoF may, and should then, refer the employee to the Director, RIAM Secretary or VHI EAP as appropriate, for further advice and support. The management referral allows a formal approach to be adopted when stress-related ill health is first identified. It should ensure a consistent approach and enable all employees the opportunity to access appropriate occupational health intervention.
- (ii) Self-refer to the Director, RIAM Secretary, VHI EAP or RIAM Doctor to gain access to confidential and impartial advice. A referral may either be in person or via the telephone/email.

7. Responsibility

7.1 Employees have a responsibility to seek to safeguard their own mental and physical well-being and that of their co-workers by:

- (i) understanding the benefits of adopting a healthy lifestyle;
- (ii) understanding the relationship between the work, home and health balance;

- (iii) bringing to the RIAM's attention sources of pressure, which they feel may have a detrimental effect on their well-being;
- (iv) recognising early signs of mental distress or behaviours in co-workers, and in a sensitive manner, offering support and encouraging them to seek help;
- (v) utilising the initiatives RIAM puts in place to promote mental well-being.
- (vi) proactively seeking and engaging with supports and services as needed.

7.2 The Senior Management Team (Director and RIAM Secretary) and the Board of Governors have a duty to minimise risks to the health of employees from exposure to workplace hazards. Their responsibilities include:

- (i) assessing the work environment to determine if there are any sources of challenge, taking action to control/reduce them in order to minimise the risk to employee mental health well-being;
- (ii) ensuring that employees have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and that they are adequately prepared for any changes introduced;
- (iii) providing employees with the equipment, resources, time and training they require to do their jobs;
- (iv) promoting a supportive environment and developing clear lines of communication;
- (v) monitoring workloads as appropriate;
- (vi) following completion of appropriate training, recognising any early signs of mental ill health in individual employees and taking action to initiate appropriate intervention. i.e. referral to the RIAM Doctor or VHI EAP;
- (vii) ensuring that the selection and promotion process enables the organisation appropriately to match an individual to a job;
- (viii) supporting office supervisors, Heads of Faculty and individuals in encouraging early referral where necessary/appropriate;
- (ix) developing and supporting policies which care for employees and promote well-being;
- (x) as appropriate, providing confidential advice, information and support to any employee who believes his/her health is being affected by pressure at work;
- (xi) organising relevant wellbeing training.

7.3 The RIAM Secretary is responsible for overseeing this policy and its operational procedures.

8. Legislation & Regulation

8.1 [Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005](#).

8.2 [Employment Equality Act 1998](#) and [Equality \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) Act 2015](#).

8.3 [Disability Act 2005](#).

9. Related Documents

- 9.1 Alcohol and Drugs Policy.
- 9.2 Career Break Policy.
- 9.3 Dignity and Respect Policy.
- 9.4 Equality and Diversity Policy.
- 9.5 Employment of People with Disabilities Policy.
- 9.6 Health and Safety Policy Summary.

10. Document Control

Approved by Board of Studies 25th November 2016.

Revision 1 approved by Board of Studies 10th March 2017.

Revision 2 approved.

Revision 3 approved by Trinity Academic Council 13th May 2020.

Next review: Academic year 2020/21.