## CONTENTS

1. Scope and General Principles ........................................ p. 3
2. Uniforms and Work Wear ............................................. p. 3
3. Appropriate Language .................................................. p. 4
4. Mobile Phones ........................................................... p. 5
5. Notification of Rotas .................................................... p. 6
6. Swapping Rota days ..................................................... p. 6
7. Start and End Times ..................................................... p. 6
8. Break Times ............................................................... p. 6
9. Working Additional Hours ............................................. p. 7
10. Flexi Time ................................................................. p. 8
11. Working Hours ........................................................ p. 8
12. 5 Days out of 7 Working Patterns ................................. p. 8
13. Annual Leave ........................................................... p. 8
14. Sickness Absence ....................................................... p. 10
15. Medical Appointments ................................................ p. 12
16. Access Cards ........................................................... p. 12
17. EPOS Cards .............................................................. p. 12
18. University Property .................................................... p. 12
1. **Scope and General Principles**

The aim of the operations handbook is to provide clear, practical information to all staff, whether long serving or new on current practices.

This handbook has been produced to provide operational information concerning processes for all permanent and fixed term contract colleagues working within **ahs**. Colleagues working on casual contracts are also covered by these processes, where applicable to their working arrangements.

All processes within this handbook supersede previous processes in relation to the areas covered. The handbook does not replace University policies such as Human Resources policies and procedures, and should be read in conjunction with University wide policies and procedures. In any cases of doubt over the correct approach, University wide policies should take precedence. This includes University wide policies and procedures concerning working conditions (including learning and development, quality standards, health and safety matters and other departmental specific guidance) and can be accessed electronically via the University web pages or from your manager.

This document has been produced in conjunction with, and the approval of, the Department of Human Resources. If you are unsure, or find the guidance in this handbook unclear, you should discuss any questions with your line manager.

This document will be reviewed at regular intervals and in case of doubt please refer to the **ahs** website for the current version.

2. **Uniforms and Work Wear**

All employees’ appearance must be professional and appropriate at all times both within the workplace and when representing the Department and the University. As general guidance clothing and appearance should appropriate for a department providing a range of services to customers. This means it should be of plain / neutral colours, tailored jackets, trousers or knee length skirts; fine knit woollens or discreet blouses / shirts / fitted T-shirts with no logos or branding.

The department provides uniforms for many roles that deal directly with customers or for roles working in customer outlets. You should be informed of the uniform requirements when you start a new role along with what items the Department will provide, but if you are unsure your manager will be able to provide specific details for your team. If you have any questions, please contact your manager in the first instance for clarification.

Whilst the Department provides your uniform and it remains the property of the Department, please ensure that good care is taken of the clothing provided. It is your responsibility to ensure that your uniform is always clean, laundered and worn in a presentable fashion, and to return any uniforms issued on the termination of employment.
Any specific safety clothing, such as safety boots or hard hats, required by a role will be provided by the Department. Employees who occupy roles that require protective clothing must wear this clothing while carrying out their duties.

The department applies the Food Standards Agency Good Practice Guidance that all staff working in food handling areas should:

1. Keep hair tied back and wear a suitable head covering, e.g. hat or hairnet, when preparing food
2. Not wear watches or jewellery when preparing food (except a wedding band)
3. Not touch their face and hair, smoke, spit, sneeze, eat, or chew gum when handling food

Staff provided with uniforms to wear should provide their own appropriate, comfortable, flat, black shoes. High heels, trainers and flip-flops are not acceptable in the department.

Exceptionally, chef’s whites are provided and laundered by the University.

Staff are also responsible for their personal hygiene and must ensure they present a positive and non-offensive impression when dealing with customers, handling food and working in private living areas. Both shower and laundry facilities are available on campus that staff can use before or after their working day, if necessary.

If your role requires a uniform, you should wear the uniform during working hours unless advised otherwise by your manager. Please remember that when wearing your uniform in public you are representing the Department and the University, and should therefore act appropriately in such circumstances.

If, based on these guidelines, a manager deems an employee's appearance as unacceptable; the employee will be required to return home to change. In these circumstances the employee will not be paid for the duration of his / her absence from work.

The appropriateness of dress and presentation is at your manager’s discretion and includes both personal hygiene and clothing.

All staff dealing with customers are expected to wear University name badges.

3. Appropriate Language

All staff should be aware of the importance of only using appropriate language in the work place. Inappropriate language can cause stress for other staff, even if not directed at them, may cause offence and could potentially amount to discriminatory behaviour or harassment. Additionally inappropriate language is not compatible with the customer service levels the Department provides.
Appropriate language is especially important in customer operations areas where language that you may consider appropriate within a team may be overheard by customers or other staff who may take offence. Examples of inappropriate language include swearing, shouting, rudeness to colleagues or customers and inappropriate jokes or comments. Language may also be inappropriate in the context it is used such as accompanying body language, volume or tone. Other examples of language that would be inappropriate are overly forceful language, sarcasm or crude language/comments. The University’s Dignity and Respect for Students and Staff policy provides more detail on appropriate behaviour.

All staff should therefore ensure that they remain polite, courteous and professional at all times. If you are in any way unsure about this guidance or about a particular issue relating to appropriate language usage, please speak to your line manager. Inappropriate language may be dealt with under the disciplinary policy and procedure. Additional guidance and support is provided by Dignity and Respect training that accompanies University policies.

Colleagues are reminded that a wider variety of languages may be spoken by team members, staff, students and visitors to the University. There may well be times when there is a clear business interest in having English used as a common language in the workplace, such as to ensure consistency of communication or to avoid misunderstandings such as around health and safety issues. It is also conducive to good working relations to avoid potentially excluding colleagues from conversations that might concern them. When choosing how and what to communicate, particular consideration should be given to if this may be perceived as undermining relationships with other staff.

4. Mobile Phones

Work use

Where required for their role ahs staff will be expected to carry a mobile phone during their normal working day, to aid communication within the department and ensure the department delivers the service expected of it. The phones will be provided by the ahs Department, who will pay the monthly rental and for all work related calls.

If a member of staff wishes to use their own phone for work purposes, they may (in agreement with their line manager) as long as the number is made available to all departmental staff, through the departmental phone lists.

Staff will be expected to ensure that the phone they use is charged and switched on at all times during their working day.

Staff must not use any mobile phones whilst driving on University business unless they have the appropriate hands-free equipment and must drive with due care and attention at all times.

Personal use

ahs staff working in customer operations should not normally use mobile phones for personal use during working hours. If a staff member has a need to use their mobile phone for personal reasons during working hours then they will need to agree this with their line manager prior to using their phone. Approval will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. Any approved personal use of mobile phones (calls, text
messages or other) must be made away from front of house areas, out of sight from customers and be kept as brief as possible.

Please note phones, including mobile phones are covered by the University's Policy governing the use of telephones, e-mail and internet by staff which is available on the Human Resources website or from your manager.

5. Notification of Rotas

Staff rotas in Hospitality are scheduled by your team leader using the Kinetics system, and your manager will seek to give as much notice as possible of weekly rotas. Normally the minimum advanced notice of rotas would be 10 working days. However there may be occasions, due to unforeseeable late changes to business levels, where shorter notice periods of rota or weekend working will be given and managers will always work to minimise these instances and the changes required.

Normally, the minimum advanced notice of weekend working would be 10 working days and in many instances, such as In-take, weekend working can be agreed several months in advance.

Additionally, teams can operate an informal log of days particular staff would like to request as non-working days. If such logs operate, speak to your manager and then put the details in the log. Such requests should be for no more than two consecutive working days and line managers will have absolute discretion to accept or decline such requests.

6. Swapping Rota Days

Staff can, with their manager’s approval, swap rota’d working days with colleagues. Such swaps must be recorded in advance in the ‘rotas log’ to ensure both parties have agreed, and that duty managers are aware of who is working a particular on a particular day. Staff must ensure when swapping rotas that they still work their contracted hours for that week.

7. Start and End Times

All staff are expected to be at their place of work at the start of their working day, changed into uniforms (if applicable) and ready to start work.

All employees are expected to work and remain in uniform, if the role requires, until the end of their working day or agreed end time. If keys or other equipment should be returned or handed over to a colleague this should happen in person at the end of your working day.

If you are due to hand over to a colleague who has not arrived at the expected time, you must contact the duty manager for guidance.

8. Break Times

If your working day is 5 or more hours long you are entitled to a break during your working day. The purpose of breaks is to ensure staff have time for rest and relaxation during the day,
have meals and to allow time for personal tasks during the working day. Breaks are defined as time spent not working during the day, are unpaid and additional to your contracted hours of work.

Staff who work over 7.3 hours per day should take their break in 2 half hour blocks over their working day. Breaks must be taken during your 5 or more hours of continuous work, not take at the start or end of your working day.

All breaks have to be taken at a time to meet the requirements of your team and the department, for example front of house staff in Hospitality should not take breaks during the peak lunch time service between 12pm – 2pm. Flexibility should be made by managers and staff to ensure that breaks are taken at convenient times.

Depending on the needs of the operations and at their managers’ discretion, staff may take some of their break time at other times of the day apart from during their ‘lunch hour’. The minimum period of a break is 15 minutes, and staff should ensure they work their contracted hours each day in addition to their break periods.

Any staff taking smoking breaks must use the designated smoking areas and must take these breaks as part of their break times.

9. **Working Additional Hours**

**Lieu time**

There may be times of peak work load when staff work additional hours over and above their normal working week. Wherever possible, these additional hours should be taken as lieu time and should be taken within one month of been accrued. Any additional hours worked must be either at your manager’s request or with their prior approval. Any additional hours worked must be recorded on your team’s lieu time spread sheet and approved at the end of the working week by your manager.

If it is not possible due to business reasons to take lieu time within one month of being accrued your manager may exceptionally agree to carry this forward. All lieu must be taken within 3 months of been accrued, and it is not possible to make payments for untaken lieu time.

**Over time payments**

Entitlement to overtime is set out in individual contracts of employment. Wherever possible, any additional hours worked should be taken as time off in lieu. Where staff are eligible for overtime payments, Team Leaders in Accommodation and Deputy Operations Managers in Hospitality may agree in advance of the hours being worked that for operational reasons overtime payment rather than time of in lieu is necessary.

The only staff contractually required to work overtime are those who are on a formal on-call rota. Separate overtime rules apply to these staff and they are set out in their specific on call agreement.

Further information on overtime payments are set out in the Terms and Conditions section of the Human Resources web site under Pay and Reward.
10. Flexi Time

Due to the need to provide service to staff, students and other visitors to the University it is not possible to offer flexi-time working within the ahs Operations teams.

11. Working Hours

In line with the Working Time Regulations, staff should ensure that they do not work on average more than 48 hours per week over any 17 week period. Please remember that the 48 hours working week includes all jobs you do, not just work you carry out with the University.

Additionally, in line with Working Time Regulations, all staff must have the following rest periods:

- a minimum daily rest period of at least 11 consecutive hours in each 24-hour period during which they work for the University; and
- an uninterrupted weekly rest period of at least 24 hours (this can be replaced by two uninterrupted rest periods of not less than 24 hours in each 14-day period, or one uninterrupted rest period of not less than 48 hours in each 14-day period)

In all circumstances, you should also ensure that any other employment you have does not affect your ability to fulfil your role at the University.

12. 5 Days out of 7 Working Patterns

Due to operational needs, many staff have to work 5 out of 7 days per working week. The working week runs from Monday to Sunday, and you may be required to work on any 5 of those days.

Wherever possible, managers will endeavour to schedule consecutive rest days.

For some areas, 5 out of 7 working is only required on infrequent occasions, e.g. annually during In-take week. In other areas it may be more frequent, e.g. during the conference season or be part of their normal working pattern. General guidance on the regularity of 5 out of 7 working would have been discussed during your recruitment process and is also outlined in job descriptions.

In all cases, managers will seek to allocate weekend working fairly and evenly across their teams, and potentially by utilising staff from outside their teams during extended period of 5 out of 7 working.

13. Annual Leave

Booking of Annual Leave

The Human Resources web site sets out in full detail the University’s Guidance Notes on Annual leave. Your employment contract sets out your entitlements to annual leave. Annual leave is designed to allow all staff paid time away for their work. Staff should manage their annual leave entitlement across the annual leave year.
All annual leave has to be booked with your line manager via iTrent, and it is only booked when your manager has authorised it. Please do not make any assumption, or book any travel arrangements, until your manager has authorised leave as it may not be possible to authorise annual leave even if travel or other arrangements have been made.

Managers are expected to respond to holiday requests made via iTrent in a timely manner, and within 5 working days of the iTrent request being received.

When managers take annual leave, delegates should be set up in iTrent who can approve holiday in their absence, usually their manager.

If, for any reason, your manager is not available to approve requests within 5 working days, e.g. due to sickness absence, you may seek written approval from their manager for a holiday request. It is essential that you also enter the holiday on iTrent when making such a request, so that holiday can be properly recorded and retrospectively approved in iTrent.

For Hospitality team members, when requesting annual leave you will need to enter the dates that you wish to be away from the University from and to (the total period). As most of you work a 5 out of 7 rota pattern with varying rotas, when your line manager approves your annual leave, he / she will check to make sure that the correct number of hours is taken off your leave entitlement for the leave period. If this is different from the standard working pattern that is set in iTrent for you they will carry out a ‘pattern override’ to make sure that the correct hours are counted and deducted.

Annual leave will only be declined on the grounds of business needs, i.e. there are specific, identifiable reasons why it is not possible to grant annual leave. At all times, decisions about the ability to grant holiday requests will be based on the need to maintain sufficient staffing levels.

There are particular peak periods in the year where, either due to business demands or popularity for holiday requests, it may not be possible to grant the same volume of holiday requests as normal. The peak periods of business for each calendar year will be confirmed by 01 January of that year.

Examples of peak periods are as follows:

- **Accommodation:**
  - The week after the end of each academic term
  - The week preceding Intake week
  - Intake week
  - Summer conference season (01 June to 30 September)
  - Open Days

- **Hospitality:**
  - The start of each Academic term
  - Open University and summer conference weeks (approx. 01 July to 15 August)

- **Accommodation:**
  - Christmas period (15 December to 05 January) *n.b. this is a period of peak requests rather than peak business
Process for requesting annual leave during the summer peak period

Staff may make requests for annual leave at any time, however to assist in fairly allocating annual leave during the summer peak period, an initial application process is operated. In outline, the process operates as follows:

Requests for taking more than 12 working days annual leave at any one time should be made by 31 January each year, stating both the length of holiday requested and any special factors, e.g. you are going on honeymoon.

Managers will then review these requests and approve annual leave wherever possible.

Where, due to holiday requests, staffing levels would be too low we would encourage teams to discuss it collectively with their managers and find a resolution. If that is not possible, managers would make a decision based on the circumstances of the situation. Included in this would be how annual leave over previous peak periods was allocated.

Annual leave over the Christmas and New year Period

A similar process operates over the Christmas period. All requests for annual leave over the Christmas and New Year break should be made no later than 1 September each year.

Staff may, of course, put in requests for annual leave at any time of the year; however this will be managed on a strictly first come first served basis.

For all staff, both part time and full time, the minimum block of annual leave that can be booked is half your standard working day.

Requests for taking more than 12 working days annual leave at any one time will be considered. Such requests should be made to your manager, including an outline of the reason for requesting an extended period of leave. Your manager will then discuss this with their manager prior to approval.

Please also note the details on sickness during annual leave set out in the Sickness Absence Policy.

14. Sickness Absence

The University’s Sickness Absence policy sets out in full the procedure for sickness absence. Please refer to this policy if you are unwell. It is essential that you fully understand and follow the University Sickness Absence Policy, which is available on the Human Resources web site.

The ahs department has the following requirements for reporting absence:

Hospitality

All employees should ring the absence reporting line – 01225 384358 at least one hour before they are due to start work. You should leave a message with the following information:

- your name
- your manager’s name
- a contact number
- a brief description of your illness
- how long you believe you are likely to be unwell

Wherever possible you should also endeavour to contact your line manager directly, this should be a telephone call and not a text message.

You should only continue to ring the absence reporting line on any subsequent days, if you expected to return but continue to be unwell. If you have been signed off by a doctor or expect to be absent for a number of days, you are not expected to ring the absence reporting line each day.

All other staff

All employees should contact their line manager on their extension number (or work mobile if applicable) within one hour of their scheduled start time. You should personally speak to your manager directly and not leave a voicemail or a message with another colleague. If you are unsuccessful in contacting your line manager you should leave a message with the following details:

- your name
- a contact number
- a brief description of your illness
- how long you believe you are likely to be unwell

If you work in Accommodation and are due to work over the weekend but are unwell please call the Marlborough Office on 01225 385 078.

You should only continue to ring your line manager on any subsequent days if you expected to return but continue to be unwell. If you have been signed off by a doctor or expect to be absent for a number of days you are not expected to ring your line manager each day, however you should agree with your manager the time to next call in with an update.

15. Medical Appointments

Time off for medical appointments - All GP, dentist and other medical appointments should, where reasonably practicable, be booked outside of the member of staff’s normal working hours. Where this is not practical, paid time off will be granted. The member of staff must ensure that in such circumstances as little disruption as possible to their work / the working day is caused by such appointments and that you have an appointment card to provide, if requested.

16. Access Cards

All staff are required to have a library card which is used for a variety of different purposes including access to printers and for entering buildings. In Hospitality, your role may also require you to be issued with an access card.

Where the library card is unavailable, staff will use a temporary access card, which will be signed for in the same way as keys.
Please remember that your access card is your property and you are responsible for keeping it safe. You must not lend or allow another member of staff to use your access card as the misuse of your access card by another member of staff may have implications for you if an incident occurs where your access card has been used. If you lose your card, you must notify your manager who will arrange for it to be de-activated.

Full details about the issuing and use of library cards is available on the Library web pages. This includes the charges for issuing replacement library cards.

17. **EPOS Cards**

When an employee starts with the University, they will be issued with an EPOS Till card if they have responsibility for cash handling within their role.

It is your responsibility to use this card for till transactions only. Each member of staff holding an EPOS card is listed, and is responsible for all transactions carried out on the card issued in their name.

Staff should be aware that under no circumstances should they lend their card to another member of staff or borrow a card from someone else.

Any lost cards should immediately be reported to your manager. If an emergency or temporary card is needed then you should contact your Team Leader. A £5 deposit will be charged for any replacement cards, and if the staff member subsequently finds their card, the deposit will be refunded on return of the temporary card.

Staff are reminded that spot checks on EPOS till cards may be carried out from time to time to verify that cards are being used correctly, according to Departmental guidance and University policies – e.g. financial regulations.

Tills should be activated at the opening of business by a supervisor or team leader. Staff should not activate a till by using an operator’s card through performing an unnecessary till sale.

If a member of staff's employment at the University ends or they transfer to another department, where the till card is no longer needed, it is the responsibility of the member of staff to return the card to their supervisor or team leader at the end of their last working day.

18. **University Property**

Please remember that University property and materials should only ever be used for work purposes. Misuse or personal use of University property and material may constitute a disciplinary offence. If you are considering using any University property or materials for any non-work purposes, this must be agreed in advance with your manager on each occasion. For clarity, University property and material includes items such as vehicles, equipment, clothing (protective and uniform), cleaning materials, food items (even if you believe they will otherwise be thrown away) and similar. This is not an exhaustive list and if you are in any doubt you should speak to your manager first.

Separate guidance applies to dealing with student property, including that left in residences. Please contact your Accommodation Operations Co-ordinator for details.