

## **1. Introduction**

Aberystwyth University is committed to promoting the health and wellbeing of its students and staff through the provision and promotion of physical activity. The University workplace is an important setting for active living where both students and staff can be encouraged to be active in order to benefit their physical health and mental well-being.

Current research indicates that approximately 150 minutes of moderate activity per week is recommended for good health and positive well-being. Individuals that are physically active tend to show a higher level of resistance to common illnesses and other conditions that affect general health. For example, we would expect to see lower levels of chronic back pain or other musculoskeletal conditions, an ability to maintain a healthy weight range, increased concentration and alertness. It is also noted in the research that physically active staff tend to recover faster from illness and other health-related conditions.

## **2. Aims**

- To raise awareness of the benefits of being active daily for both physical health and mental well-being;
- To create a workplace environment that promotes the benefits of physical exercise and mental well-being for all staff;
- To support and encourage staff to take part in moderate levels of exercise whilst in the workplace, through the provision of varied sporting and physical activities available from early morning to late evening;
- To support healthy lifestyles through promotional events that motivate change;
- To underpin lifestyle adaptations with endorsement and joint working with Hospitality Services for healthy eating options with clear policy guidelines at our food venues (See Nutrition policy – insert link)
- To raise awareness of the benefits of exercise on psychological wellbeing through the provision of clear policy guidelines which support staff identify suitable exercise programmes, provision of links to independent sources of information from other organisations and assistance through day to day management routes.

## **3. Action Plan**

3.1 To raise awareness of the benefits of physical activity through:-

- Providing educational leaflets and resources on physical activity;
- Offering a range of courses and seminars on the benefits of activity and risk of inactivity;
- Organising 2 physical activity promotional events per year aimed at staff and students.

### 3.2 To support staff who wish to become more active by:-

Encouraging active choices through the use of promotional and motivational resources, for example encouraging staff to walk or cycle all or part of the way to work, or to use the stairs instead of the lift;

- Providing maps on walking trails or routes on campus;
- Establishing a lunchtime activity group e.g. group led walking classes, green gym
- Providing information on our sporting and leisure facilities, classes and clubs;
- Promoting workplace activities for those whose job role involves sedentary activities and tasks;
- Promoting suitable activities for shift workers by reviewing the provision of classes and activities outside core business hours;
- Providing corporate sports centre membership to staff.

### 3.3 To remove barriers and enable staff to be more active in and around work by:-

- Offering flexible working to allow for physical activity before, during and after work;
- By exploring ways of engaging with staff who have atypical work patterns e.g shift worker/lone workers to encourage participation in physical exercise;
- Providing incentives to staff that walk or cycle to meetings in conjunction with Hospitality Services promotional events;
- Providing safe storage racks for bicycles;
- Offering bicycle hire on campus;
- Offering and signposting the location of showering and/ or changing facilities on campus.

## **4. Monitoring**

The Sports Centre will produce an annual report at the end of each academic year which will monitor and report on:-

- Number of staff as a percentage of total corporate membership, sub divided into job family and gender;
- Promotional events held during the year;
- Analysis of class uptake by staff and students as a percentage in the previous year.
- Policy review

This report will be presented to the Executive Group and the Corporate Health Steering Group.