



EBOR ACADEMY TRUST

38

Menopause Policy

Approved By: PPP Committee

Approval Date: November 2022

Review Period: 3 Years

Review Date: November 2025

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Date Created/updated: Nov 2022

Version Number: V1

Contents

1. Policy Statement and Aims	3
2. Roles and Responsibilities	3
3. Definitions.....	4
4. Legislative Context.....	5
5. Making reasonable adjustments	5
6. Additional sources of support	6

1. Policy Statement and Aims

Ebor Academy Trust is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive working environment for all its workers. The Trust recognises that, although menopause is a normal part of a woman's life, additional consideration, support and workplace adjustment may be needed before, during and following a woman's menopause to enable her to feel well and continue working effectively.

The Trust also recognises the importance of creating awareness around menopause and its possible effects in promoting a culture of respect and understanding amongst the workforce generally.

The aims of this policy are:

- to help create an environment where staff members feel confident enough to raise issues about their menopausal symptoms and, if necessary, ask for support and adjustments at work.
- to ensure that conditions in the workplace do not make menopausal symptoms worse and that appropriate adjustments and support are put in place, recognising that the menopause is an individual experience and therefore there is no 'one size fits all' solution.
- to reduce sickness absence due to menopausal symptoms and retain valued staff in the workplace.
- to educate and inform managers about the potential symptoms of the menopause, and how they can support such staff at work.
- to raise a wider awareness and understanding among the workforce.
- to outline support and reasonable adjustments that are available.
- to ensure that women are treated with respect and dignity throughout this time in their lives.

This policy applies to all staff at Ebor Academy Trust.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

The Trust will:

- Create a culture of openness and understanding about the menopause and its possible impacts across all of its schools.
- Make funding available for training and reasonable adjustments required.

Line managers will:

- Organise and participate in discussions with staff members experiencing the menopause.
- Exercise appropriate sensitivity in dealing with staff who have issues regarding their menopause.
- Working with HR where needed, determine what reasonable adjustments should be made to support staff and ensure these are recorded, implemented, monitored and amended as appropriate.
- Promote menopause awareness within their teams.
- Notify HR when a referral of a colleague to occupational health is felt to be necessary.

HR will:

- Actively consult with the Trust's staff and staff representatives to determine appropriate training and other interventions to support women going through menopause.
- Organise communications, training and other initiatives related to menopause support.
- Refer colleagues affected by menopause to occupational health as required.
- Signpost colleagues to internal and external organisations which provide specialist support.
- Provide reports on the implementation and impact of this policy for senior leadership, including trustees, as required.

Individuals will:

- Take responsibility for looking after their health.
- Be open and honest in conversations with their line manager, HR and occupational health.
- Be willing to help and support their colleagues.
- Accept and support any agreed necessary adjustments colleagues request or are receiving as a result of their menopausal symptoms.

3. Definitions

3.1 Perimenopause

The period in a woman's life when she starts to experience hormonal fluctuations and changes to her periods. The average duration is between 4 and 5 years. The symptoms of the perimenopause can be worse than the menopause for some women.

3.2 Menopause

A woman is described as being menopausal when she has gone for 12 calendar months without a period. The average age to reach the menopause in the UK is 51, however, it can be earlier or later than this due to surgery (e.g. hysterectomy), illness or other reasons.

3.3 Post menopause

The average time for a woman to experience symptoms of menopause is five years, although many experience symptoms for up to 10 years.

- 3.4 Symptoms of the menopause are listed at Appendix A. Three out of four people experience menopausal symptoms; one in four experiences more severe symptoms, which impacts on their day-to-day life. The changing age of the UK's workforce means that between 75% and 80% of menopausal women are in work.

These symptoms can interfere with everyday life and happiness, so it's important to find the underlying cause and work out what can be done to resolve it.

4. Legislative Context

- 4.1 The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination against people on the grounds of certain 'protected characteristics' including sex, age and disability. Conditions linked to the menopause may meet the definition of an 'impairment' under the Equality Act and require reasonable adjustments. For this reason, menopause related absence will not count towards triggers before reasonable adjustments are put in place. Performance objectives will also be reviewed in the light of the woman's health if menopausal factors are having a detrimental impact on her achieving them.
- 4.2 If menopause affects a colleague's comfort and performance at work, the Trust has a duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all workers (Health and Safety at Work Act 1974) for all employees and therefore commits to ensuring that adjustments and additional support are available to those experiencing menopausal symptoms.

5. Making reasonable adjustments

- 5.1 Colleagues are encouraged to inform their line manager that they are experiencing menopausal symptoms at an early stage to ensure that symptoms are treated as an ongoing health issue rather than as individual instances of ill health. Early notification will also help line managers to determine the most appropriate course of action to support an employee's individual needs.
- 5.2 Where women members of staff feel uncomfortable going to their line manager, e.g. because he is a man, or someone much younger, or both, she may find it helpful to have an initial discussion with a trusted colleague or another manager instead. She

may wish to talk to a member of the HR team, or a trade union representative, who will ensure that an alternative contact is available. Employees will be encouraged to seek advice from medical practitioners regarding appropriate treatment and/ or to investigate suitable ways to manage/ reduce symptoms. Confidentiality will always be respected.

- 5.3 Reasonable adjustments can be made to help colleagues manage menopausal symptoms. These are likely to be temporary changes whilst going through menopause transition. Risk assessments may be needed if the changes required are significant. Risk assessments are completed by line managers to understand more about how menopausal symptoms are affecting colleagues at work and the adjustments that are needed. Risk assessments should be reviewed periodically and as agreed between the line manager and individual or sooner if appropriate. Reasonable adjustments will depend on colleagues' specific circumstances (symptoms, job role etc), see appendix A for menopausal symptoms and possible adjustments. A member of the HR team is available to help line managers to undertake a risk assessment.
- 5.4 In some cases a referral to Occupational Health could also be of assistance, to understand what adjustments would be beneficial. Colleagues are encouraged to give their consent to be referred for advice.

6. Additional sources of support

External sources of help and support for employees and managers, is available:

- [Menopause matters](#), which provides information about the menopause, menopausal symptoms and treatment options
- the [Daisy Network](#) charity, which provides support for women experiencing premature menopause or premature ovarian insufficiency
- The [National Health Service](#), which provides an overview of menopause
- The [Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists](#) who offer further information in this dedicated area of their website
- The Trust's employee assistance (www.eborrewards.co.uk) and trade unions also provide helpful information about menopause, its symptoms and possible solutions.

Appendix A

Symptoms associated with menopause and support that can be offered in the workplace

Suitable adjustments (as suggested below) must be discussed and agreed between the employee and line manager. The list below are suggestions only and listed as a guide as they may not be practical in the individual's work/ workplace.

Symptom	Possible Support
Vasomotor symptoms	
Hot flushes and night sweats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to fresh drinking water Well ventilated work places Provision of a fan Washroom facilities Temporary change in working hours/ start time
Psychological effects of hormone changes	
Low mood/ mood swings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree which, if any, other colleagues should be aware An onsite "buddy" could be agreed to keep an eye on the colleague and be someone to check in with
Poor memory and concentration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep notes of meetings – provide books for this Record online meetings Dedicated, protected time allowed to catch up on work Adjust hours of work to when concentration levels are best Review task allocation and workload Offer quiet space to work
Insomnia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Later start times, if possible, or a temporary reduction in hours
Anxiety/ panic attacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stress risk assessment A "safe space" could be agreed on site An onsite buddy and regular check ins with line manager Work break during the day to practice relaxation techniques
Physical symptoms	
Headaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well ventilated workplace Natural light available Agreed time out of workspace to give tablets time to work Access to fresh drinking water Access to a quiet room
Fatigue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporary reduction in working hours or change in working pattern Work break during the day to practice relaxation techniques
Joint aches and pains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of work duties, by OH if necessary, with a view to reducing strain on joints through provision of aids, alternative

	ways of working etc.
Palpitations	A “safe space” could be agreed on site to go to in an episode with cover arrangements identified in case needed
Formication (creeping skin)	Toilet spaces available to apply creams Antihistamine availability
Insomnia	Later start times, if possible
Vaginal irritation	Alternative, comfortable seating, or a standing desk
Urinary tract infections	Easy access to toilets, which may include ensuring quick class cover is available

Additionally there are longer term health conditions associated with menopause due to oestrogen deficiency:

- Obesity / diabetes
- Heart disease
- Dementia and other cognitive decline
- Cancer

Appendix B – Menopause Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment – Menopause

Please complete the first 3 sections of the form below. The 4th section is to be completed by your line manager after discussion with you.

Please retain a copy of the completed assessment and a copy will also be placed in your personnel file.

Section 1 – Personal Details

Employee Name		Job Role	
School Name			
Assessment undertaken by		Job Role	
Date of Assessment		Review Date	

Section 2 - Your Health

Please outline the symptoms linked to the menopause that you are experiencing, including details regarding the severity, frequency and impact on you as relevant to the workplace:

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Please outline any medical intervention you have received to date:

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Section 3 – Your Role and Workplace

Do you have easy access to:		
• Drinking water?	Yes	No
• Toilets?	Yes	No
• Rest facilities?	Yes	No

Is your work place well ventilated?	Yes	No
Does your work place have good lighting, including natural light?	Yes	No
Are you able to take a break during the working day?	Yes	No
Is your work environment sufficiently comfortable?	Yes	No
Are you able to work your working hours without issue?	Yes	No

If you have answered no to any of the above questions, please provide more information below:

Are you concerned about your ability to perform your role (for some reason connected to your menopause)?	Yes	No
Please outline more information below:		

To be completed by the line manager following discussion of the responses above

Section 4 - Discussion Points/ Actions Agreed

Discussion point	Action agreed

Employee signature	Line manager signature

Date of plan:	
Date of review:	
If your situation changes and you want to discuss this plan before the next review date, please let your line manager know.	