THE MANAGER'S GUIDE
TO WPA 2022

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Contents

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1. Introduction

This guide is aimed at AU managers who are responsible for specific follow-up work relating to WPA 2022. The guide offers you, the manager, an overview of your tasks, and inspiration on how to tackle them.

- The WPA survey will be conducted in the period 28 February to 11 March 2022.

- WPA 2022 includes questions relating to both the physical and the psychological work environment. The psychological part of the questionnaire will be completed anonymously.

- On 30 March, managers will be sent a link to the report for their own units. On 4 April, the reports will be made available to staff on [AU's WPA website.](#) You will also be able to read more about the survey here. Once the reports have been reviewed, local dialogue meetings will held, with a view to interpreting and discussing the results and identifying and prioritising initiatives.

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2. Framework for WPAs

The following framework applies for WPA 2022.

- The physical and the psychological workplace assessments will be conducted simultaneously, in one single survey.
- WPA 2022 is based on the same concept and questions framework as WPA 2019. However, the question framework has been adjusted, and the sub-questions on offensive behaviour have been expanded.
- As with WPA 2019, Rambøll A/S is responsible for collecting responses and supplying the WPA reports.
- No one at AU has access to see employees' responses, as all the data will be stored at Rambøll A/S.
- The anonymity limits for general questions are 10 responses and for questions about offensive behaviour and discrimination 40 responses. Responses to sub-questions about offensive behaviour and discrimination will not be shown in the report until there are four instances.
- Action plans will be prepared at least at department/school level and documented in the associated action plan system. It is compulsory to upload action plans to the system.

In the period up to the next WPA in 2025, Rambøll's Spot 2.0 system will be available for units that want to use it to perform interim measurements. The following characteristics are common to WPA work across AU:

- The manager has the overall responsibility for ensuring that a WPA is conducted and that the results are followed up on. The manager is obligated to involve the occupational health and safety organisation and liaison committee in this work.

This work takes place in four stages:

WPA FOLLOW-UP

FURTHER WORK ON
HEALTH AND SAFETY

READING
Understand
the report

DIALOGUE
Talk about
the results

PRIORITISATION &
PLANNING
Develop action
plans

CONTINUOUS
FOLLOW-UP
Follow up and
adjust as required

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3. Managing the psychological and physical aspects of the WPA

WPA 2022 targets both the physical and the psychological work environment in one single survey. This makes it possible to assess the work environment as a whole, rather than separate areas.

The employees' comments on the physical work environment will be shown in separate comments reports to which managers and the occupational health and safety organisation (AMO) will be given access. The comments reports make it possible to follow up on individual employees who have reported problems in the physical work environment.

Please note that different approaches may be required to handle any problems reported. In the follow-up on the physical work environment, the topics that score lowest should often be dealt with first. The same may apply for follow up on the psychological work environment, although poor figures in one area may be a symptom of something else. This means that it is not necessarily always best to begin by targeting the worst figures. Read more about this in the section 'The three reading approaches'.

4. How can the organisation prepare for the WPA?

A prerequisite for a high response rate and a good subsequent process in the unit is a good introduction or defining a clear framework in which the manager introduces WPA 2022 at AU. Before this introduction, it may be useful to consider how many new colleagues have joined since the last WPA in 2019, and how much they know about the WPA. Are the employees familiar with the WPA? Are they international employees who may not be familiar with the WPA? It would be a good idea to take this into account when defining the framework. Suggestions for topics in defining the framework:

- Why conduct a WPA? (statutory + an opportunity to strengthen well-being and a healthy workplace)
- Summarise WPA 2019: What was the department's response rate in 2019, which themes were particularly significant, and what did we find most relevant and important to work on? How did we work with action plans subsequently? What has the effect been?
- How will we specifically work on WPA 2022, and what do we hope this will give us as a unit?

A high response rate in the unit is important to get the best data for the subsequent dialogue. It may be a good idea to mention this in the preparatory dialogue. It may also be a good idea to clarify who and what specifically is referred to in relation to the themes "Your daily management" and/or "Your unit", as experience shows that there may be doubts in this context when the questionnaire is answered.

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5. Inspiration for specific planning for dialogue, prioritisation and initiatives

Once the WPA results have been published, you (as a manager) are in charge of initiating dialogue on these within your unit. As a unit, you should then prioritise what to focus on and plan how to do it.

Here you will be collaborating with your local liaison committee and occupational health and safety committee. Below are specific suggestions for how you can approach this task. If you need help, please contact HR.

A. Dialogue on the results

The first step is to organise and complete a dialogue on the results within the unit. How can you interpret the figures? What is it important to do something about? The meeting format and method depend on the purpose, number of employees and the situation in the unit.

For further inspiration, see 'Dialogue meeting methods'.

B. Prioritising and planning initiatives

Once the dialogue has provided you with an overview of what needs to be done within your unit to improve the work environment, you should prioritise a suitable number of initiatives to ensure that future work targets the most important issues. In connection with this prioritisation, think about what is most relevant for work at the unit right now, what could be low-hanging fruit, something you can address quickly and simply, and which initiatives you believe will have the greatest effect across the unit. Find methods to consider what type of initiatives are required to improve the working environment.

C. WPA action plans

WPA action plans are documented in AU's action plan system. Action plans must be prepared at least at department/school and deputy director level, but it is also a good idea to prepare action plans as locally as possible in order to ensure that the activities are meaningful to individual managers and employees. Action plans must be prepared for priority initiatives, not things. For example, a new office chair does not require an action plan. If a unit decides to adopt stress as a focus area, for example, initiatives and activities should be as specific as possible, to ensure that they can be followed up easily on an ongoing basis. There must also be a deadline and a person responsible for the action plan and for following up on the action plan.

In order to succeed with these initiatives, it may be beneficial to involve additional levels in the organisation to ensure coordinated efforts where everyone is pulling in the same direction. What should **the management** do, for example to combat loneliness? What can **the individual employee** do? What can be done at **group level**? And what activities can be adopted at **workplace level**?

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6. Development and implementation of initiatives

Why continuous follow-up?
WPA work does not end with an action plan. Systematic follow-up is crucial to ensure that dialogue and action plans have an impact. Follow-up is a management task, and it is important this has priority. Share relevant results with the staff, and reflect on adjustments to the initiatives. There is often a need to follow closely the initiatives that have been launched and regularly consider whether anything needs to be adjusted. Only few hit the mark with the first proposal for an initiative, especially if there are complicated issues. Therefore, adjustment is often necessary underway to achieve the desired effect.

Create a framework for ongoing follow-up, reflection and learning – for yourself and for your unit
A prerequisite for action is good reflection. It may be a good idea to reflect on:

- What was the purpose/intention of the activity?
- What did we hope would happen?
- What do I/we see happening?
- What can I/we learn from it?

These reflections can usefully be done individually and as part of your own management practice once a month, although joint reflection in the unit should be less frequent.

At unit level, it may be a good idea to include follow-up work in a fixed timetable, e.g. as a point at unit meetings once a quarter, as an element in staff development dialogues or group development dialogues, at local liaison committee meetings, in 1-to-1 interviews or at other relevant meetings in a fixed cycle. In the first year after the WPA measurement, a more frequent cycle would be relevant, while there may be longer intervals between follow-up sessions later. It is important to find rhythm and cycle that is meaningful and works in the local context.

A fixed structure for follow-up, like in the four questions above, may be useful. It is important that, as a manager, you facilitate a good dialogue in which people feel confident about sharing experiences, observations and ideas.

As a manager, you should also regularly follow up on relevance. Is the theme still important for the unit, or has anything improved, has anything had an effect, or has another occupational health and safety agenda become more relevant? A lot can change over three years, and it is important to ensure that you focus on the most relevant issues.

If individual units need to follow up with measurement of their priority initiatives before the next WPA in three years' time, they can conduct an interim measurement. Units should spend time actively working with the initiatives before conducting any interim measurements, e.g. after one year. Rambøll's Spot 2.0 system is available for units that want to use it for [interim measurements](#).

The senior management team and the Main Occupational Health and Safety Committee-Main Liaison Committee (HAMU-HSU) regularly follow up on WPA work.

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7. List of management tasks to create a good work environment

Finally, here is a list of your tasks in connection with management of the work environment. This is an ongoing management task, in collaboration with the liaison committees and the occupational health and safety committee. Below are examples of some tasks that you, the manager, are responsible for.

Note that the tasks vary depending on management level.

JANUARY-MARCH:

❑ **Discuss and agree on the following with the liaison committee and the occupational health and safety organisation before the WPA measurement:**

- How you collaborate. E.g. who does what to ensure a good outcome from WPA 2022?
- How will you follow up on the survey results to create value. E.g. when and in what form?
- Roughly how many initiatives will you prioritise to ensure that the work is appropriate and manageable?

❑ **Discuss and agree on the following with your own manager and your management team:**

- How will you coordinate interfaces and collaborate based on your individual functions? What agreements do you need now, and how can you continuously coordinate?
- What actions and communication from you, as managers (jointly and individually) will contribute to a good outcome from the WPA 2022? E.g. activities that help employees feel that the WPA process is actually useful.

❑ **Motivate and inform your own organisation:**

- What form does the WPA process take? Time schedule and expected form of dialogue meetings, follow-up work, action plan, etc. Talk about the purpose and desired effect of the WPA process.
- If necessary, send special information material about the WPA to new and international employees (Danish version / English version) and remember to introduce international employees to the purpose of the WPA, as this is a purely Scandinavian phenomenon.

❑ **If applicable, book rooms for dialogue meetings and other follow-up activities.**

APRIL:

❑ **Set aside time to read the relevant reports**

  ✓ Note that there are several ways to read the report. The best and most sustainable solutions are not only derived from the 'classical' reading approach, which would see the worst report results targeted first. See more here: The three readings.

❑ **Discuss your own report with the relevant management team**

  ✓ Discuss the immediate situation and whether there is anything you as management should be particularly aware of in subsequent dialogue and follow-up across the area. Possibly use each other as sparring partners in reading your own reports.

  ✓ Also discuss the working environment for you in the management team as employees. Are there places where you could usefully take one or more initiatives to improve the working

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environment for yourselves The manager of the management team should set and plan the agenda, if possible.

- ✓ Revisit the plan you created in January-March. Is the plan still applicable, or do the figures call for adjustments?

❑ **Present your own report for the staff group in question**

- ✓ Create a good dialogue about the figures and what they may reflect. Beware of your own preconceptions and listen to the employees ' narratives.

- ✓ Use this dialogue to understand the different views on what the figures mean, and determine what initiatives are most important in dealing with the physical and the psychological work environment.

MAY onwards:

❑ **Develop action plans incorporating the prioritised initiatives**

- ✓ Create a good process and organisation for action plan work in order to generate commitment and ownership – should the entire unit be involved in the specific work or a small working group on the basis of a joint dialogue?

- ✓ Use the module of the compulsory action plan to document the initiatives. If you have decided on initiatives in several different areas, it is most appropriate to set up several separate action plans in the system.

- ✓ In the action plan work, focus on choosing initiatives with broad support in the unit and have a realistic scope: rather more small-scale initiatives that you will successfully implement than a large and diffuse effort that is difficult to manage.

❑ **Implement the initiatives**

- ✓ Be aware of engaging as many people as possible, or those who are most passionate about the work in question – follow up regularly, share status reports/results, and possibly adjust along the way.

- ✓ Create a framework for ongoing follow-up, reflection and learning – e.g. at unit meetings or at 1-to-1 meetings

❑ **Continue the good work of managing ensuring a positive work environment – both physically and psychologically.**

- ✓ Managers should constantly maintain awareness of the physical and psychological work environment, e.g. by putting it on the agenda, referring to it, asking about it and working to improve it – together with staff, liaison committees and occupational health and safety committees.

- ✓ Share experiences with your management team, so you can inspire across units, and build on good experiences from other units so that successes can be noted and celebrated.