

Meeting: UNIVERSITY HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Date and Time: Tuesday 14th March 2017
12.15pm

Venue: Council Chamber

Present:

Mark Humphriss	Chair
Richard Brooks	Director of Human Resources
Chris Young	Head of UHS&E Service
Sophie Hamer	Assistant Facilities Manager, Sports Development & Recreation
Malcolm Holley	Faculty of Science Management Representative
Andrew Nash	Deputy Facilities Manager, Accommodation & Hospitality
Brian Schofield	Head of Security Services
Julian Sulley	Faculty of Engineering & Design Management Representative
Michael Carley	UCU Representative
Jo Carter	UNITE Representative
Hartmut Logemann	UCU Representative
Walter Guy	Technical and Experimental Representative
Mareike Posner	Education and Research Representative
Chris Roche	Management, Specialist and Administration Representative
Will Galloway	Students' Union Sport Officer

Apologies:

Mark Martin	Deputy Director of Estates
Steve Nicholson	UNISON Representative
James Paradise	UNISON Representative

In attendance:

Sue Stove	Secretary
Paul Maggs	Health & Safety Adviser
Dave Matthews	General Maintenance Manager (<i>for Deputy Director of Estates</i>)
Deborah Robarts	Scientific Safety Adviser

ACTION

777 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and the apologies were noted.

He pointed out that elections would be run for all four staff representatives during the next academic year, so the current vacancy for an Operations and Facilities Support representative would be carried over until then as two attempts had already been made to attract nominations.

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 20 December 2016 were approved as a correct record of the proceedings and would be signed by the Chair.

778 MATTERS ARISING:

Minute 761 – Matters Arising:

Minute 707 – Any Other Business: Accessible Toilets

The Head of UHSE had been in touch with the University's Electrical Services Manager (Richard Hughes). Costs had previously been provided for linking all accessible toilets to the DRAX system, but this had not been included in the Estates Department's plan of work. However, this had been rectified and the work was now included.

Those accessible toilets which were already connected to the DRAX system were checked as part of the Estates Department's annual cause and effect checking.

The Head of UHSE had checked that the signs had been updated as required and informed Estates of any which were still outstanding and needed to be addressed.

Minute 764 – Any Other Business:

Rest Rooms

The Head of UHSE reported that UHSE's Scientific Safety Adviser would be meeting with the Deputy Head of Department on Friday 17 March to discuss the use of the rest room in 4 South.

Head of UHSE

Minute 771 – Policies / Health and Safety Standards:

The Head of UHSE reported that the revised Health and Safety Policy and Policy Statement had been approved by both VCG and the Executive Committee (without any changes). They had also been approved by Council on Thursday 23 February and once the Policy Statement had been signed by both the Chair of Council and the Vice-Chancellor they would be formally 'launched' in the next couple of weeks.

Head of UHSE

Minute 772 – Communications: Heads Of Department, Directors Of Professional Services And Line Managers:

Appendix 2 – Heads of Department and Directors of Professional Services: Health and Safety Accountabilities

The Head of UHSE reported that he had attended the January meeting of Heads of Department and Associate Deans to brief them on Appendix 2 'Heads of Department and Directors of Professional Services: Health and Safety Accountabilities'. This document would be updated on a quarterly basis after the meetings of this Committee.

At the meeting, the Head of UHSE also gave an update on the changes to the work-related stress policy and procedures.

The health and safety leaflets had now been professionally printed and circulated to the heads of academic departments and the directors and heads of professional services.

Minute 775 – Any Other Business:

Bus Terminal

The Head of Security Services had discussed plans for the bus terminal with the Director of Estates and would continue to monitor situation. He noted that no complaints had been received, nor had any incidents been reported.

779 UHSE UPDATE (INCLUDING INCIDENTS AND AUDIT UPDATE)

Accidents and Incident Data

The Head of UHSE reported that there had been no RIDDOR reportable accidents or incidents in the last quarter.

He added that all the glass panels making up the edge barrier in the foyer of the Sports Training Village were now being modified as a precaution. This work was due to be completed shortly.

Fire Alarms and Fires

There had been a small fire in the boiler house, which was detected and dealt with by a member of staff. The fractured oil pipeline had been replaced and there were plans to install additional fire detection equipment.

The Head of UHSE added that the programme of fire risk assessments was on track.

Occupational Health Surveillance for 2017

The Head of UHSE reported that the programme was underway and the initial focus was on identifying low level issues. If any subsequent medical examinations or interventions were required, these would be included in the high level review, which was due to take place later in the Spring.

Occupational Health Data

The Head of UHSE summarised the occupational health data. There had been a slight increase in use of the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) in the last month. This was in line with the increase in support provided for departments as a result of recent bereavements.

Mental Health Activities

An event was held in February as part of the national Time to Change initiative. The event was well supported and the feedback received had been very positive. The intention was to hold more events later in the year.

Audit Programme

The Head of UHSE reported that the audit programme for 2017 was on track.

The Office of the University Secretary had been audited. Some minor areas for improvement were identified and UHSE was working with the department to address them.

The Committee noted the report.

780 HEALTH AND SAFETY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

The Health & Safety Adviser explained that the 2016 exercise to collect key health and safety performance data, required departments to self-report as before, but this time there were different sets of indicators for low and high hazard departments.

The response rate was 100% and so was an improvement on the previous year's response rate of 80%. Each department would receive a copy of the report they had submitted and an accompanying report from UHSE.

In summary the results showed that:

- The majority of departments had written health and safety management arrangements in place, mainly based on the health and safety handbook template.
- Low hazard departments tended to be deficient in stress management and manual handling risk assessments.
- High hazard departments tended to be deficient in stress management risk assessments.

As a result of the exercise the profile of health and safety had been raised within departments and UHSE had assurance and an indication of areas which needed to be addressed. The intention was to repeat the exercise again next year and the questions would be modified as appropriate.

Questions were raised regarding the low completion levels of stress management risk assessments. It was explained that the previous process had been less user friendly and the feedback received so far indicated that the new processes for managing work-related stress were easier to use. Also, although work-related stress management (including risk assessments) had been highlighted at the meeting of the Heads of Department and Associate Deans in January, this was after the results of this report had been collated.

It was noted that the Department of Physics was missing from the provided list of participants. The Health & Safety Adviser agreed to check the returns to ensure that the Department of Physics had provided one.

Head of UHSE

The Head of UHSE advised that there was some concern that a minority of departments had identified fairly minor issues when asked to identify their biggest "operational" risks. This suggested that more significant risks may be being overlooked. This would be explored further with the departments in question when individual reports were issued.

Head of UHSE

The Committee noted the report.

781 STAFF SURVEY 2016 – REPORT ON WORK-RELATED STRESS

The Head of UHSE explained that the report on work-related stress provided an overview of the findings taken from the 2016 Staff Survey.

Overall the results were positive and the scores were in line with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) low and medium priority levels. However, there were 2 questions which fell into the HSE high priority level and these were in relation to feeling that too many routine approvals were required and concerns about harassment or bullying. These were being addressed through the Process Improvement and Equality & Diversity work plans respectively.

Individual reports would be produced for each department and the relevant HR Business Partners would follow them up with department heads to identify potential areas for improvement and assist with implementation.

The Committee noted the report.

782 POLICIES / HEALTH AND SAFETY STANDARDS

Lone Working Policy

The Head of UHSE reported that this was largely unchanged and that definitions and terminology reflected the previous policy that was approved by VCG and the Executive Committee.

He pointed out that a key aspect of the policy was that where lone working was assessed as being high risk, then it was expected that the work would not be undertaken as lone working.

The Management, Specialist and Administration Representative asked how many incidents arose each year where lone working was identified as a significant issue. The Head of UHSE advised that he could not recall any issues where lone working had been specifically identified as having contributed to an incident. He explained that underlying incident causes were routinely investigated through the accident reporting process and that this should ensure that where lone working had contributed to an incident then this was identified.

The Head of Security Services also confirmed that he could not recall any incidents relating to lone working having been reported. Security Services were still trialling the lone working App.

The Head of UHSE was keen that the policy was applied to working out and about and off site (e.g. in cities), not just in laboratories, and that it would also apply to support services, such as the Residential Life and Wellbeing Service, as well as to academics.

The Chair pointed out that the policy would be submitted to the Executive Committee as it applied to all line managers.

Head of UHSE

The Committee agreed the policy.

Manual Handling Operations Standard

The Head of UHSE reported that in addition to the standard, generic risk assessment templates had been produced (the Manual Handling Risk Assessment

Record and the Generic Risk Assessment for Office Manual Handling Operations) and the aim was that these would be adopted and / or adapted by departments.

The Chair suggested that the changing of water bottles on water coolers be included in the risk assessment templates. The Head of UHSE would follow this up.

Head of UHSE

The Committee agreed the standard.

Health and Wellbeing Policy

The Head of UHSE explained that health considerations should be addressed as part of risk assessments. Occupational Health and the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) were a means of providing support, but they were not a legal requirement.

He added that this Committee would implement its monitoring responsibilities (listed on page 5) by him seeking feedback from Trades Union colleagues and then raising any concerns at meetings of this Committee.

In response to a question from the Students' Union Sport Officer regarding the role of students (on page 4), the Head of UHSE would clarify the wording on the role of Student Services.

Head of UHSE

The Chair pointed out that the policy would be submitted to the Executive Committee as it applied to all line managers.

Head of UHSE

It was agreed that once this current round of policy reviews had been completed, future versions of policies, standards and guidance would be submitted to the Committee with tracked changes visible.

The Committee agreed the policy.

First Aid Policy

The Head of UHSE reported that the policy was largely unchanged. It covered the core provision of first aiders and a first aid needs analysis carried out by UHSE. In addition, if appropriate, departments could put enhanced first aid arrangements in place.

The Faculty of Science Management Representative enquired how the number of first aiders required for a department was calculated. The Head of UHSE explained that it was based on a range of contextual factors including number of staff, number of students, geographical location and types of activities carried out. He added that whilst it was the responsibility of UHSE to determine how many first aiders were required for each department, if departments wished to have more first aiders then they could request that UHSE review the stated provision. Alternatively, faculties and departments could fund additional first aiders at their own discretion, but these people would not be eligible for honoraria nor would their training and any equipment be funded centrally.

The Head of UHSE would amend the second bullet point on page 2 – it should read 'All new starters are given basic health and safety information.... in their first month at work' and not '... on their first day at work.'

Head of UHSE

Guidance for Heads of Department in Managing First Aid and First Aiders

Appendix 1 of the Guidance provided a template for departments to complete if they wished to apply for a review of numbers of first aiders.

The 'No' box on item 11 of Appendix 1 should be unchecked. The Head of UHSE would amend this.

Head of UHSE

The Committee agreed the policy and guidance.

Working at Height Standard

The Head of UHSE reported that this had previously been a policy and had now been changed to a standard.

The control measures focussed on eliminating working at height, and where this was not possible, collective and then individual proactive measures to manage the situation.

It was pointed out that text against the heading of 'Author and Lead' on page 1 included details of a file path. The Head of UHSE would remove it.

Head of UHSE

The Committee agreed the standard.

Controlling Fire and Explosion Risk Standard

The Scientific Safety Adviser reported that, due to changes in the regulations, this standard replaced the Flammable Substances Policy.

As it was a new document, additional resources will be developed and provided to relevant departments to highlight the areas and operational activities where the regulations applied.

The Committee agreed the standard.

Hazardous Chemical / Biological Waste Standard

The Scientific Safety Adviser reported that the aim of the standard was to provide clarity on responsibilities and a generic risk assessment for departments to use.

The disposal of chemical / biological hazardous waste was currently managed by UHSE. The disposal of other waste such as electrical and electronic equipment was managed by the Estates Department.

The Education and Research Representative asked if there were any plans to encourage departments to stop using certain high-risk products, such as Ethidium Bromide. The Scientific Safety Adviser confirmed she had been talking to departments about phasing it out and using a substitute instead. The Head of UHSE added that members of Management Accounting had approached UHSE about carrying out a project to review the use of Ethidium Bromide. An integral part of this project was likely to be the development of a business case examining whether or not the University should be moving away from the continued use of Ethidium Bromide.

The Committee agreed the standard.

Hazardous Substances Policy

The Scientific Safety Adviser reported that the policy covered all legal obligations relating to chemical and biological materials in one document.

The Faculty of Science Management Representative pointed out that the third bullet point on page 1 should refer to 'lead and any related compounds' as they were all covered by a separate regulation. The Head of UHSE would make the changes.

Head of UHSE

It was noted that the responsibilities of line managers (listed on page 3) did not apply to all line managers and the Chair asked if line managers would know whether or not the responsibilities applied to them. It was confirmed that they would know if this did. Also UHSE provided support through audits, inspections and lower tier documents which would assist in identifying who the responsibilities applied to.

The Committee agreed the policy.

Hazardous Substances Standard

The Scientific Safety Adviser reported that the standard supported the Hazardous Substances Policy and provided more detailed information on responsibilities and the additional requirements in terms of COSHH and exposure to chemicals. The aim was to ensure that a consistent approach to COSHH assessments was implemented across all departments.

Bespoke, detailed safety guidance documents (biological and chemical) had also been prepared (see below) and further training and support would be provided in due course, including the provision of generic documents.

The policy, standard and both safety guidance documents had all been submitted for review by the relevant departmental health and safety committees.

Biological Safety Guidance

The aim was that this guidance would provide more detailed information for users on how to prevent and control exposure to biological substances.

The Faculty of Science Management Representative pointed out that it was possible to comply with biological safety requirements, but to still be in breach of other regulations that might apply. For example, a material may be safely packed, but we may not be allowed to transport it. He suggested therefore that relevant guidance should be signposted to ensure that other relevant regulations are followed. The suggestion was agreed and the Scientific Safety Adviser would follow this up.

Scientific Safety Adviser

The UCU Representative (MC) referred to section 4 'Classification and Assessment' and noted that there was possibly confusion in the text regarding substituting hazardous chemicals with non-hazardous or less hazardous ones. The guidance will be reviewed and amended as necessary.

Scientific Safety Adviser

The Chair asked the Scientific Safety Adviser to liaise with the University's Legal Office and ensure that advice in the Guidance on the Human Tissue Act was consistent with the advice they were giving.

Scientific Safety Adviser

The Chair also asked that the guidance be clarified regarding the use of blood samples for research as opposed to carrying out self-testing as part of practicals.

Scientific Safety Adviser

The UCU Representative (MC) pointed out that the text relating to copyright in the 'Document Information' section on the front cover should also include students and postgraduates. The Head of UHSE advised that the front cover had been taken from a template and the copyright information would be removed as this was not applicable.

Head of UHSE

The UCU Representative suggested that relevant students could receive a copy of the guidance as part of their induction. It was also noted that consideration could be given to whether or not they should be required to sign to say they had received and read the guidance. The Scientific Safety Adviser will discuss this with relevant heads of departments as inductions were managed locally.

The Scientific Safety Adviser advised that longer term work will involve the development of supporting resources, such as online learning and possibly toolkits. The Head of UHSE advised that UHSE was exploring how Moodle might be used to deliver this work and to provide access to staff and students to a range of possible resources including a range of training videos that have been developed by the Royal Society. This work would form part of a wider project to provide training and other resources to support policies, standards and guidance of this type.

Chemical Safety Guidance

As above the Scientific Safety Adviser would review and revise the guidance on compliance and transportation, in this country and abroad, of hazardous chemicals. She would also review the text relating to copyright in the 'Document Information' section on the front cover as above.

Scientific Safety Adviser

The use of poisons was discussed. It was the responsibility of the end user to sign a declaration form and confirm that the substance requested was appropriate and would be used as specified. Once the request had been approved, it would then be authorised by Central Stores who purchased it. It was noted that the academics and academic supervisors had overall responsibility, not the head of department.

The Faculty of Science Management Representative asked if there was any requirement to register and keep a log of these materials. The Scientific Safety Adviser explained that this should be picked up via the risk assessment and action plan. However, she would clarify the text in guidance and create a page within the guidance which could be used as a register.

Scientific Safety Adviser

The Committee agreed the standard and both guidance documents.

Laboratory Safety Standard

The Scientific Safety Adviser reported that this had previously been a policy and had now been changed to a standard, including a generic risk assessment

The aim was to ensure that responsibilities were clearly set out and to encourage consistency in implementation.

The Chair asked that consideration be given as to how the standard would be communicated, so that it reached all those it applied to.

The Committee agreed the standard.

Safe Use of Nanomaterials Standard

The Scientific Safety Adviser reported that, even though the use of nanomaterials was covered by COSHH, there were specific requirements relating to the perceived hazards of nanomaterials.

This standard provided an interpretation of the national guidance and included a generic risk assessment.

The Committee agreed the standard.

783 SCIENTIFIC SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE, MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 24 FEBRUARY 2017

The Scientific Safety Adviser introduced the minutes.

It was pointed out that 'In Attendance' on page 1 should read 'Present'.

**Scientific Safety
Adviser**

The Faculty of Science Management Representative referred to the recent incident at the University of Bristol when TATP (an explosive material) had accidentally been created during an experiment. He pointed out that the University of Bristol had a 'no blame' policy if such incidents were reported straight away to encourage such matters to be dealt with swiftly. He suggested it may be beneficial for the University of Bath to have a similar approach and a written statement to that effect.

This was discussed and it was noted that the University of Bristol did not have a written statement, but the approach was embedded in its culture. The approach was based on the civil aviation guidelines and processes for anonymous reporting e.g. Airbus had a 'red button' for immediate reporting of an error with the understanding that if this was used there would be no sanctions. If the incident was due to more than just a straightforward error, the fact that the ensuing problem had been reported would be taken into consideration if there were to be any sanctions.

The Head of Security Services pointed out that if the University were to adopt a 'no blame' approach, even if it was stated in writing, it would not override the relevant legislation (e.g. in relation to the manufacture of substances).

Although not formally articulated, the University already followed the approach that it would not seek to blame individuals where such situations arose where staff reported them immediately they became aware of them.

It was agreed that guidance should be given to relevant heads of department on this approach and how this might be included within locally provided induction programmes, but the University would not adopt a written statement.

Head of UHSE

The Scientific Safety Adviser would investigate the incident regarding the transportation of liquid nitrogen by the Widening Participation Office (action 100058b). She added that, following a HSE inspection, there had been an action to stop filling liquid nitrogen Dewars in side rooms (as they were a confined space). This practice had however continued, so she would be undertaking an inspection this week to ensure HSE requirements were now being met.

**Scientific Safety
Adviser**

The Committee noted the minutes.

786 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Article in 'Impact'

The Chair explained that a member of the Committee had raised concerns regarding an article in 'Impact' about the prosecution of a former member of staff. He pointed out that this was an opportunity to reinforce the wellbeing services and support that were available. Also a lot of work was currently ongoing both at the University and nationally regarding harassment. The Equality and Diversity Committee was overseeing this work.

The Management, Specialist and Administration Representative suggested that, following the conviction, it would have been helpful if the University had issued an internal statement to restate its position on sexual harassment / assault and pointing staff and students to suitable support.

The Students' Union Sport Officer added that when the University did issue a statement it was reactive rather than proactive and asked if it would take similar approach if something like this happened again.

The Chair explained that any situation would be dealt with on a case by case basis. Also, it may not always be possible to make a proactive statement, as any statement would need to take account of legal processes. So this meant that there would be times when it would only be possible to issue a statement some time after the event and legal processes had taken place.

Public Website

The Faculty of Science Management Representative requested that items, particularly photographs, were checked where relevant from a scientific perspective before they were posted on the public website. He suggested that the Communications team checked images with UHSE to ensure that they were suitable, before making them public.

The Chair would raise this with the Head of Communications.

Chair

Retirement

The UNITE Representative (JC) confirmed this would be her the last Committee meeting as she will be shortly retiring from the University. The Chair and the Head of UHSE thanked her for her contribution and wished her best wishes for the future.

787 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 6 June 2017

The meeting concluded at 2.00pm

Chair: