
Meeting:	UNIVERSITY HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE	
Date and Time:	Tuesday 18 December 2018 12.15pm	
Venue:	Council Chamber	
Present:	Mark Humphriss	Chair
	Stephen Godber	Director of Estates Operations
	Chris Young	Deputy Director Safety & Wellbeing Services / Head of UHS&E Service
	Sophie Hamer	Assistant Facilities Manager, Sports Development and Recreation
	Malcolm Holley	Faculty of Science Management Representative
	Andrew Nash	Compliance Manager, Accommodation & Hospitality
	Brian Schofield	Head of Security Services
	Michael Carley	UCU Representative
	Steve Nicholson	UNISON Representative
	James Paradise	UNISON Representative
	Brigit Nunes Simoes Rodrigues	Technical & Experimental Representative
	Melanie Torrance	Management, Specialist & Administration Representative
Apologies:	Richard Brooks	Director of Human Resources
	Julian Sulley	Faculty of Engineering & Design Management Representative
	Hartmut Logemann	UCU Representative
	Mareike Posner	Education and Research Representative
	Kimberley Pickett-Mcattackney	Students' Union Officer (Activities)
In attendance:	Sue Stove	Secretary

ACTION

850 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The minutes of the Committee meeting held on 18 September 2018 were approved as a correct record of the proceedings and would be signed by the Chair.

851 MATTERS ARISING

Minute 838 – Membership 2018/19 and Terms of Reference

The Secretary confirmed that the Membership had been updated to reflect the changes for 2018-2019.

Minute 840 – Matters Arising:

Minute 834 - Any Other Business: Smoking on the Library Balcony

**Secretary /
SU Officer**

As the Students' Union Officer was not present at this meeting of the Committee, she would be asked to report back at the next meeting on 12 March.

852 UHSE UPDATE (INCLUDING INCIDENTS AND AUDIT UPDATE)

RIDDOR Reportable Accidents and Incidents

There had been two RIDDOR incidents in the last quarter, one of which was a scalpel injury sustained by a student in the Department of Architecture & Civil Engineering (ACE). In response the Department would now be issuing all current students with metal safety rulers and safety rulers would be provided in model making packs in future.

The second incident involved a member of staff who had tripped on a can in a student kitchen and was then absent for more than seven days having sustained a sprained ankle. Accommodation Services has included reminders in "Kitchen Talks" of the importance of keeping floors and walkways in communal areas free of debris and rubbish.

Fire Risk Assessment Programme

The fire risk assessment programme for 2017-2019 was on track.

Evacuation Drill Programme

The evacuation drill programme for 2017-2018 had been completed and the new programme for 2018-2019 had started in September 2018. As per the Fire Safety review in 2017, all buildings will have an annual fire drill.

Fire Safety Training

Routine training for new fire wardens was continuing. Additional fire extinguisher training has been provided for Backstage Technical Services and Team Bath Racing.

Fire Safety Exercise

On 26 October Avon Fire and Rescue Service (AFRS) conducted an exercise on campus based on the scenario of a kitchen fire on the top floor of Norwood House. The purpose was to enable AFRS to practise their fire-fighting procedures for tall buildings and to allow the University to test its communication and liaison procedures in the event of a fire.

Overall the exercise was deemed a success. AFRS were very complimentary about the support and preparations provided by the University's Security Services.

The Head of UHSE pointed out that there had been some delays, the key issue had been with access to the dry riser. Also, although a 999 call had been made, AFRS operators knew it was an exercise and the crews did not respond under blue lights, so it took longer for them to arrive than it would have done in the event of a real fire. In addition, the station officer had used the exercise as an opportunity for crews to train going up and down stairs (to and from the top floor) in breathing apparatus, which was slow.

It was noted that despite a lot of planning in advance AFRS had done something different on the day and that access to Norwood House for the exercise and training had increased the inconvenience to the residents. This would be taken into account in the event that AFRS ask to hold future training exercises in the residences.

Occupational Health

There continued to be a significant increase in pre-employment questionnaires showing pre-existing health conditions that required Part B to be completed. The Head of UHSE was not sure if this was due to an increase in the number of conditions or people having more confidence in disclosing them.

The Compliance Manager, Accommodation & Hospitality pointed out that two employees had raised issues about allergies since they had started work in ahs. He asked if allergies could be investigated as part of the pre-employment questionnaire. The Head of UHSE agreed that this could be done to make the questionnaire more targeted to the needs of ahs.

Head of UHSE

Overall numbers of referrals to Occupational Health were consistent with previous quarters. However, it was noted that we were seeing an increase in the number of more complex cases, notably involving Fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue syndrome and similar health conditions (which impacted on work), which were being referred to Occupational Health.

Health Surveillance

Two new starters in the Department of Chemistry had been referred to Occupational Health for occupational asthma screening. The health surveillance programme for 2019 would be launched in January with the majority of the testing taking place in April and May.

Employee Assistance Use

There had been a 23% increase in the use of the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) compared to the same period last year. However, if usage continued at this rate, it would be in line with the total overall usage for the 2017-2018 academic year.

The vast majority of cases related to a mix of both work and personal reasons. Work-related issues included matters such as changes to jobs and working relationships. Non-work issues included general anxiety and depression, personal relationships and self-esteem.

Health and Safety Performance Indicators

The next iteration of the University's health and safety performance self-assessment was scheduled to be issued towards the end of the first quarter of 2019. Previously, departments had been categorised as high or low risk depending on the types of activities that they carried out on campus. The Head of UHSE advised that UHSE were looking to modify their approach to take account of the fact that certain departments currently designated as "low risk" in fact carried out activities with significant risks, such as fieldwork in challenging environments, that needed to be properly audited.

Health and Safety Audit Programme

South Sciences – UHSE were working with the South Sciences to undertake a more expansive audit. This was being conducted as a single exercise as there was a single Safety Co-ordinator for the South Science Technical Services Directorate. Also, it would take into account the various changes to heads of departments. Initial findings had shown some areas of concern around chemical storage, the disposal of redundant chemicals and housekeeping generally. There also appeared to be some issues with risk assessments for work carried out by Post Graduate Research students. A further update would be provided at the next meeting of this Committee.

Head of UHSE

Backstage Technical Services – they have done a lot of work on health and safety matters and the initial findings of the audit were very positive. There was a very good training plan in place, comprehensive risk assessments and they understood what they should and should not be doing. In summary, Backstage Technical Services were well managed.

Engineering Technical Services – initial findings indicated that people had a good understanding of their role and there was good communication, but there was a lack of written arrangements, which would be addressed.

Marketing and Communications – although a low risk department, health and safety inspections had not been undertaken. Recommended actions and guidance have been provided by UHSE.

UHSE has also been undertaking a number of activity specific audits, including:

Hand Arm Vibration (HAV) Measurement Programme – USHE has introduced a system of checks for activities where exposure to hand arm vibration might be high as this was something which the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has shown an interest in at other Universities. We have a specific health surveillance programme in place for identifying where vibration exposure may be causing health issues. However, the University requires vibration exposure data and vibration risk assessments to ensure that appropriate preventative strategies are in place to control such risks at source. The monitoring programme is currently focussing on ACE and Estates (including workshops, grounds and maintenance).

The Director of Estates Operations advised that the HSE has taken enforcement action against a number of Universities as a result of employees reporting issues due to HAV.

Formaldehyde Measurement Programme – some concerns have been raised by overseas students regarding the construction process of Polden and in particular that it may be contaminated by formaldehyde vapour. Consequently a number of students had purchased testing equipment ('formaldehyde meters') online.

However the equipment provided inaccurate readings and misleading positive results. UHSE have therefore been conducting tests, the results of which were unremarkable and as would reasonably be expected. They have then been communicated to the residents.

Air Quality Monitoring – concerns were raised by a member of staff and a complaint made to the HSE regarding diesel emissions from engine testing cells outside 4 East. The University was contacted by the HSE, to which it has responded to explain that the University was meeting its legal requirements and was providing appropriate ventilation in the test cells. The HSE had since indicated that it was satisfied with the steps being taken by the University. Results from air monitoring tests were due in early January and if, as a result, any alterations were required these would be put in place.

The Head of UHSE confirmed that the complaints related specifically to research taking place in Engineering and not emissions from the number of busses idling. It was noted that the UNISON Representative (SN) had occasionally received complaints about vehicles outside air intake units. The Head of UHSE acknowledged that there may be an increase in complaints about fumes and air quality.

Radiation Work – the Radiation Protection Adviser and the Environment Agency Inspector had each carried out their audits and compliance inspections and no non-compliance issues had been identified. However, the Environment Agency had strongly recommended that the University reduced its sealed sources permit to the minimum required. In addition, the Agency would be increasing the cost of the licence, so it had been decided that the University would not renew it.

The Committee noted the report.

853 HEALTH AND SAFETY OF DOCTORAL STUDENTS

The Students' Union had prioritised Post Graduate Research students working away from University premises as one of their 'Top Ten' issues for 2018-2019. The Head of UHSE had reviewed the health and safety policies which were relevant to Post Graduate Research students and revised them accordingly (see Health and Safety Policies / Standards below).

More widespread concerns had been raised by Post Graduate Research students about working in the Faculties of Science and Engineering & Design (regarding the materials they used) and about a lack of risk assessments. However, on investigation there did not seem to be an issue in relation to the risk assessments.

Also, there were some concerns around health surveillance, particularly in the Faculty of Science regarding nanomaterials. However, there were no recognised ill-health effects and therefore no recognised means of screening for nanomaterials.

The Head of UHSE would contact Post Graduate Research students in the Faculties of Science and Engineering & Design and invite them to complete an annual health questionnaire. Any issues could then be followed up with the department and targeted health screening arranged through Occupational Health as appropriate.

Head of UHSE

UHSE would conduct a random survey of doctoral students to establish what sort of induction and advice they had received and what their understanding was. In addition, the Head of UHSE was working with the Doctoral College to produce specific guidance for doctoral students and those supervising them.

Head of UHSE

The Students' Union Officer was not present at this meeting of the Committee, but the SU President had commented by email (to the Chair of the Committee) that the approaches outlined in Paper 13 seemed very positive. However, she raised a query about the availability of contact details for Post Graduate Research students who were doing research abroad or in hostile environments. She understood that the supervisor would be the point of contact, but that this might not always be the case, meaning that sometimes there may not be a designated point of contact for those abroad.

The Head of UHSE suggested that maybe there was a lack of awareness of the support which was in place for those on placements or doing field work abroad. The Chair added that it was his responsibility to review and approve risk assessments for students traveling abroad on University Business (e.g. to placements or fieldwork) in the event that they were going somewhere where the Foreign and Commonwealth Office had advised against travel. It was suggested that this be fed back to the Students' Union, also that information be provided to students and their supervisors who may lack understanding of such matters. The Head of UHSE agreed that understanding of the risk assessment process may not be as thorough as it could be.

The Chair suggested that, where possible, any actions identified in the revised policies be implemented as soon as possible and communicated to staff so that they were aware of the policies. It was pointed out that it would not be possible to address all / certain areas in the policies. For example, if students were uncertain as to what materials they are handling, this could pose a potential risk to their mental health.

The Head of Security Services pointed out that the Callmy App could be used world-wide and the relevant policies could be updated to include a requirement that students sign up to the App. The Head of UHSE added that there was also a travel App that they could sign up to. The issue was ensuring that all processes and support were joined up and all the resources were available in a single place.

It was suggested that there should be a gateway process for the approval of travel abroad for work / study. This could start with registering details of the trip with the University's insurers, but there would need to be a mechanism to ensure that line managers were informed. The Head of UHSE confirmed he would like there to be a gateway system, but suggested that risk assessments be completed before travel insurance was granted.

The Chair noted that there was an opportunity to improve coherence and communications around this matter. The Head of UHSE was currently progressing work on this with the Doctoral College, but it was agreed that this was something which could be rolled out for all students and staff.

Head of UHSE

The Committee noted the report.

854 POLICIES / HEALTH AND SAFETY STANDARDS

Where appropriate policies were reviewed and discussed together with the related standards and guidance as one item.

Smoking Policy

The Head of UHSE explained that the tracked changes showed the proposed amendments to the policy.

There had been an increase in the number of complaints about the places where people smoked and how the policy was enforced. These included the risk to those queuing at the bus turning circle and it was suggested that this be designated a smoke-free area, as well as the covered walkway behind the Fresh shop up to the Nursery. It was suggested that smoke-free areas be shown on the campus map and a copy of the map be added to the policy.

Head of UHSE

The Head of UHSE explained that the policy covered vaping as well as smoking, but suggested that there was no need to replace the no smoking signs on The Parade to explicitly include vaping.

It was agreed to increase the signage around the bus turning circle and was suggested that this could be done when the area was redeveloped. However, it was proposed that signage for other bus stops / shelters on campus would not be changed and these would not be designated smoke-free areas. The Director of Estates Operations would allow for the additional signage (for the bus turning circle) in the Estates plan.

**Director of
Estates
Operations**

A question was raised as to whether or not smokers were potentially being victimised and whether they should be provided with shelters. It was agreed that people were not being stopped from smoking, but the areas in which they were permitted to do so were restricted. It was therefore agreed that the provision of shelters for smokers would not be pursued.

The Chair said that this policy was one of those where the outcome of its review would need be submitted to the University Executive Board, which would happen in the New Year

Head of UHSE

The Committee agreed the policy.

Violence at Work Policy

The Head of UHSE and the Head of Security Services had met with a GW4 research group, which was undertaking a project on domestic violence and its impact on work. It was pointed out that if a situation involving domestic violence arose, it might be helpful to use the policy to clarify the support available at work, even though the issue might not be work related, and to provide information about the 'Report and Support' tool.

The Committee agreed the policy.

Management of Contractors Policy

The Head of UHSE and the Director of Estates Operations had reviewed the policy. The main amendments proposed were intended to make the policy clearer rather than make any changes to the actual policy.

The Chair asked for confirmation that the policy was effective and being followed. The Head of UHSE explained that it applied mainly to ahs, Estates, Sports Services and the two technical services departments. If other departments required work doing, they would generally arrange this through Estates.

It was noted that there may be specific sites where contractors would have designated responsibility, but apart from this the University would be responsible for the management of contractors and this was something which required greater oversight. As such it had been made clear in the policy that the Director of Estates had delegated responsibility for approving and overseeing all works on building

fabric and services. Also that Estates would be responsible for providing an induction for contractors working on building fabric and services.

The Chair asked that the Director of Estates Operations check that the Director of Estates was happy with the proposed changes and the revised policy.

**Director of
Estates
Operations**

The Committee agreed the policy.

Working away from University Premises Policy

The Head of UHSE explained that the term 'staff' had been replaced in the policy with the term 'worker'. A 'worker' included employees of the University, Post Graduate Research students and volunteers assisting with the work. The term 'student' referred to undergraduate or Post Graduate Taught students.

The policy did not apply to Post Graduate Research students who were undertaking distance learning or working from home.

The links in the policy to sector guidance had been changed as the guidance had been updated.

The Committee agreed the policy.

Fieldwork Safety Standard

The Head of UHSE explained that hyperlinks embedded in the standard had been updated to reflect the new sector guidance referenced in the overarching policy. The generic risk assessment in the standard has been updated to clarify that it covers all fieldwork activities not just those carried out by undergraduates. An additional assessment pro forma has also been developed in conjunction with academic colleagues in Humanities to offer an alternative risk assessment format for overseas research work.

The new and existing risk assessment templates have each been revised to provide more information about the potential emergence of mental health issues for people working in challenging situations such as with survivors of traumatic incidents, or in refugee camps.

It was hoped that the new format of the standard would make it easier for people to engage with.

The Committee agreed the standard.

Placement and Study Abroad Programmes Safety Standard

The Head of UHSE explained that this policy applied to students on taught programmes, not Post Graduate Research students, so it had been revised to make this distinction clear. The policy did not cover internships or vacation work which were organised outside of the University's programmes of study. The Head of UHSE was discussing internships with the Doctoral College to see if further bespoke guidance is required for this activity.

The Committee agreed the standard.

The Chair would confirm if any other policies needed to be submitted to the University Executive Board for approval.

Chair

855 UPDATE ON MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The Head of UHSE explained there were a large number of initiatives in relation to the mental health of students, but this was not the case for staff. There was therefore a need to address this and a decision had been made by the University Executive Board to introduce a whole University approach to mental health and wellbeing. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost (currently the Acting Vice-Chancellor) was the organisational lead for this.

In addition, the University Executive Board had agreed to the recruitment of a Staff Health and Wellbeing Manager and it was expected that an appointment to the post would be made this week. The three main functions of the role would be to: identify potential areas of joint working across campus; support the University and work with individual faculties and departments on mental health and wellbeing; and to work with line managers, Human Resources and individuals to identify suitable support mechanisms (e.g. Occupational Health and the Employee Assistance Programme).

A steering group had been established. Terms of reference for the group had not yet been finalised, but the group would not replace formal committees such as the Health and Safety Committee or the Equality and Diversity Committee. Instead it would feed into these Committees and the steering group's action plan would be submitted to the Health and Safety Committee for consultation.

The Management, Specialist & Administration Representative queried the composition of the steering group and how professional services support staff (such as administrative staff) would be represented. The Head of UHSE anticipated that the Director of Human Resources and Trades Unions would represent staff, but noted that there was an academic staff representative on the group, so he could suggest that there was a professional services representative too.

Head of UHSE

The contracts for the provision of Occupational Health and the EAP were due to be re-tendered in April. This would provide an opportunity to review the University's requirements and revise the provisions accordingly.

The Committee noted the report.

856 CYCLISTS ON CAMPUS

The Head of UHSE explained that Estates had received a complaint from a member of the public who was walking by the lake and who did not hear a cyclist approaching. The Head of UHSE was now seeking to clarify what the distinction was between pedestrian and cycle routes on campus.

It was noted that the footpath from 4 East to the Milner Centre for Evolution now had hand rails and cyclists tended to race down there. Also the route from the back of 4 West to 2 South was downhill so cyclists tended to pick up speed.

The Head of Security Services confirmed that cycling was banned on The Parade. There was very little segregation between pedestrians and cyclists across the rest of campus, however he was not aware of many serious accidents having occurred. He suggested that there should be an educational process to inform people, rather than trying to enforce distinct areas. If a decision to separate pedestrians and cyclists was taken, it would need to be enforced otherwise it would not be taken

seriously and this would require staff to do so. Another suggestion was to add speed bumps to footpaths, but this could create problems for accessibility and wheel chair users.

It was agreed that pedestrians had priority on campus, except on the roads. Also, it was suggested that cyclists should dismount and push their bikes when on pavements.

The Head of UHSE would liaise with Communications and the Students' Union to develop some well-rounded and long-running communications in relation to the use of campus by pedestrians, cyclists, runners, and car drivers.

Head of UHSE

The Committee noted the report.

857 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1 West Level 3

The UNISON Representative (JP) reported that for the last 18 months water had been coming in through the ceiling of 1 West. This was impacting on staff and water had been getting into cupboards damaging their work. The water seemed to be accumulating on the roof over a period of time and then pouring through the ceiling. In addition, the heating had not been working and offices were extremely cold particularly on a Monday morning, but this had now been resolved.

The Director of Estates Operations pointed out that there had been issues with the contractor. The leak was being investigated, but the source had not yet been found. There were no risks to health as far as he was aware.

Power Doors

The Technical & Experimental Representative pointed out that the front doors to 9 West were difficult for people with access issues to use as they were not power doors.

The Chair explained that there had been a significant increase in the number of power doors installed around campus and particularly to create access all the way round The Parade at Level 3. Also, the last access audit of campus had identified some other areas where doors needed to be upgraded.

The Head of UHSE and Director of Estates Operations would follow up on this matter then feedback to the Technical & Experimental Representative.

Head of UHSE

Light Fitting in Council Chamber

The Deputy Director of Estates Operations would ensure the loose light fitting in the ceiling of the Council Chamber was fixed.

**Director of
Estates
Operations**

Forthcoming Events

Time to Talk Cafe – UHSE would be hosting the Café on 7 February to encourage conversations about mental health. A communications plan was being developed. It would be appreciated if the Trades Unions would promote it through their networks.

**TU
Representatives**

Autism Awareness – a more expansive event was being planned in conjunction with the Department of Psychology. It would be appreciated if the Trades Unions would promote it through their networks.

Carers Network – there would be an exploratory meeting on 24 January to gauge interest and scope for a setting up a network to provide support to both staff and students. The Network would be set up by UHSE and the Equality and Diversity team. The Students' Union would focus on support for students. The plan was to work with local councils too.

858 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 12 March 2019

The meeting concluded at 2.00pm

Chair: