



Health and Safety Policy
for managers and staff
2008-2011

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Foreword

“This statement of the University’s Health and Safety Policy towards the conduct of its activities, replaces all earlier statements and reaffirms the intent of the University and its Board of Governors to conduct its affairs with all due regard for the health and safety of staff, students and visitors. It is concerned with the protection of everyone who is lawfully on University property who may be affected by its activities and seeks through clearly defined responsibilities to achieve the highest standard of health and safety that is reasonably practicable. The Health and Safety Policy imposes a duty on all of us to take care of our own health and safety and those who may be affected by our activities. I ask every one of you to think constantly about how you can improve the health and safety impacts of your work as well as that of your colleagues and students. Please give the Policy your total and active support.”

Dr Robin Baker, Vice-Chancellor

Health and Safety Statement

The Board of Governors recognises its responsibilities under the relevant national and international Health, Safety and Environmental Regulations, in particular the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. The University of Chichester is committed both as an employer and a provider of higher education to the provision of a safe and healthy working environment for members of staff, students and visitors. In furtherance of this Policy, the Board of Governors, Vice-Chancellor and Senior Management will, so far as is reasonably practicable, provide:

- Processes to identify hazards and assess risks through recognised departmental risk control systems.
- Clear policies, guidance and procedures to support the Health and Safety Policy.
- Safe premises, plant, equipment and systems of work.
- Adequate facilities, protective equipment and clothing to enable articles and substances to be used, transported, handled and stored safely.
- Such information, instruction and supervision as is necessary to ensure the health and safety of staff and students and visitors.
- Appropriate arrangements for consultation with University staff and union representatives on measures for achieving agreed health and safety performance.

The Board of Governors considers issues of health and safety to be of the highest importance and priority and seeks to maintain commitment to continuous improvement and awareness. The Board also undertakes, through its managers, to ensure that staff and students are consulted and involved in all areas of health and safety.

While recognising its own legal responsibilities in the matter of health and safety at work, the Board of Governors requires all members, staff, students and visitors to act safely and to co-operate with the University in meeting these obligations. The Board of Governors believes that health and safety at work is the responsibility of all. It will encourage employees to take an active role in ensuring that a safe working environment is maintained.

1. Introduction: the legal position

The concept that employees should be safe at work is not a recent phenomenon. Legislation was developed in the 1970s to streamline the many different statutes governing safety issues making management responsible for the provision and maintenance of adequate standards and policies. Although there are many different statutes governing safety issues, health and safety is not only governed by legislation. Under what is known as 'common law' all employers have a duty of care imposed on them to protect their employees. There is also a term implied into all employment contracts requiring employees to comply with the University's health and safety policies and guidelines.

The legislation relating to health and safety is extensive. One of the most important statutes is the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSWA). All work places are covered by this legislation which says that an employer must do everything reasonably practicable to provide a safe and healthy workplace with adequate welfare facilities. HSWA has been supported and extended by various sets of regulations, codes of practice and guidance, all of which deal with various aspects of health and safety. The Health and Safety Commission (HSC) and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) were established under the HSWA to respectively decide upon and implement health and safety policy. In January 2008 a draft order was issued to implement the merger of the two bodies.

The organisation and management of health and safety is a corporate responsibility and failure to comply with health and safety requirements can have serious consequences – for both the University and individuals. Health and safety law states that organisations must provide a written health and safety policy; assess risks to staff, students, partners, stakeholders and any other people who could be affected by the activities of the Higher Education Institution (HEI); arrange for the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of preventive and protective measures; ensure that staff and students have access to competent health and safety advice; and consult staff about their risks at work and current preventive and protective measures.

Any failure by a manager or employee to comply with any aspect of the University's Health and Safety Policy or any associated policy or other procedures or health and safety guidance or any other rules or duties specifically assigned to the manager or employee with regard to health and safety, may be regarded by the University as misconduct which will be dealt with under the terms of the University's Disciplinary Policy.

2. Health and safety at work: risks and benefits

Addressing health and safety should not be seen as a regulatory burden: it offers significant opportunities. Benefits include:

- Reduced costs and reduced risks – accidents are fewer, the threat of legal action is lessened, employee absence and turnover rates are lower.
- Improved standing among collaborative partners and suppliers.
- A better reputation for corporate responsibility among students and members of the University community.
- Increased productivity – employees and students are healthier, happier and better motivated.

HSE statistics reveal the cost of health and safety at work in terms of the human and financial cost of failing to address health and safety:

- More than 200 people are killed at work in the United Kingdom each year. This does not include work-related road deaths.
- In 2006, 30 million working days were lost in the UK to occupational ill-health and injury, imposing an annual cost to society of £30 bn.
- Surveys show that about two million people suffer from an illness that they believe to be caused or made worse by work.
- Many thousands of deaths each year can be attributed to occupational illnesses, including some cancers and respiratory diseases.
- Organisations can incur further costs such as uninsured losses and loss of reputation.

3. Essential principles at the University of Chichester

It is the policy of the University to comply with the legal obligations outlined in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and any other statutory provisions by ensuring:

- The provision of a safe and healthy working environment with adequate facilities and arrangements for welfare.
- Physical equipment and structures are maintained to be intrinsically safe and without risks – including the means for accessing the workplace and exiting from it.
- Information, instruction, supervision and training are provided to ensure safety by competent personnel. Prescribed information will also be supplied to non-employees e.g. visitors and contractors, about any work that might affect their health and safety.
- Procedures are drawn up and reviewed for the safe use of equipment, safe systems of work, and the safe use, handling and storage of materials.
- Training is provided and reviewed for employees and for those appointed as departmental health and safety co-ordinators/fire wardens/risk assessors/first aiders.
- The provision and use of protective clothing and equipment where necessary.
- That medical advice is available where needed.
- Arrangements are put in place for the periodic inspection of work places and methods of working and the monitoring of any corrective action necessary.
- The establishment of a Health and Safety Committee to ensure that consultation is facilitated between management and employee representatives.
- Sufficient time and other resources are given to employees with health and safety duties to allow them to discharge these duties effectively.

The University's Health and Safety Policy will evolve over time, e.g. in the light of major organisational changes such as restructuring or a significant acquisition.

4. Leading health and safety

The University will ensure that health and safety is integrated with other core management functions and that all employees and students are equipped with the necessary information, instruction, training and supervision to carry out their responsibilities. This includes:

- 1) Strong and active leadership from the top:
 - Visible, active commitment from the Board of Governors;
 - Establishing effective 'downward' and 'upward' communication systems and management structures;
 - Integration of good health and safety management with business decisions.

2) Employee involvement:

- Engaging the workforce in the promotion and achievement of safe and healthy conditions;
- Effective 'upward' communication;
- Providing high quality training.

3) Assessment and review:

- Identifying and managing health and safety risks;
- Accessing (and following) competent advice;
- Monitoring, reporting and reviewing performance.

5. Nominated Health and Safety Personnel

Employees occupying a variety of management, academic and professional support posts are nominated as volunteers to monitor health and safety across the University. Nominated personnel include:

5.1 Health and Safety Co-ordinator

The Health and Safety Co-ordinator will undertake a vital role in ensuring safe and compliant working practices in their area. They will act as a liaison between their department and the University's advisers on health and safety matters and will be required to attend training provided by the University to help them in their role. The co-ordinator will:

- Undertake training to carry out regular workplace inspections and to report health and safety concerns and deficiencies, ensuring that any recommendations or remedial actions are acted upon within an appropriate time frame.
- Maintain a health and safety file and complete quarterly returns to the health and safety office using appropriate pro-forma.
- Disseminate health and safety information to staff and students, as appropriate.
- Attend health and safety meetings co-ordinated by the Health and Safety Officer at least once per semester.

5.2 Fire Wardens

Nominated Fire Wardens are responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of fire safety measures throughout the University. Fire Wardens will be provided with training on fire awareness and the use of fire extinguishers. Fire Wardens will:

- Report shortfalls within their workplaces on fire safety issues to the Health and Safety Co-ordinator and Health and Safety team.
- Assist with the swift and calm evacuation of persons from their area on hearing a fire alarm (fire warden arm bands should be worn to ensure that they can be easily identified).
- Report to the person responsible for co-ordinating a fire rescue (usually a member of Estates and Facilities Management, a Health and Safety Officer/Adviser, or a Fire Service Officer) and provide information where required.
- Attend health and safety meetings co-ordinated by the Health and Safety Officer as required (usually at least once per semester).

5.3 Risk Assessors

All staff who organise or control activities such as field trips, equipment or facilities, will receive training in risk assessment. The Risk Assessor will co-ordinate risk assessments in their area, returning completed and accurate paperwork to the health and safety team. A Risk Assessor will be trained in identifying and controlling risks and will be given access to University risk assessment software.

5.4 First Aiders

First Aiders support the health and safety of staff and students across the University. First Aiders are provided with regular First Aid training supported through the Staff Development Programme. First Aiders attend to incidents and keep records of all first aid treatments they have administered including details on accident/incident report forms.

5.5 Health and Safety Officer

The University's Health and Safety Officer provides advice and guidance on all matters relating to health and safety for staff, students and nominated health and safety personnel. The Health and Safety Officer takes lead responsibility for reviewing and monitoring the effectiveness of health and safety policies, procedures and systems.

The Health and Safety Officer has the responsibility for periodically devising and implementing a health and safety audit programme as well as developing health and safety policies and guidance and the provision of training. As well as reporting health and safety concerns and outcomes to the Health and Safety Committee, the Health and Safety Officer audits health and safety performance and liaises with enforcement authorities and local authorities on matters affecting University premises or staff. The Health and Safety Officer also takes responsibility for investigating and reporting any accidents or near-misses to the Health and Safety Executive.

The Health and Safety Officer co-ordinates and chairs Health and Safety meetings on a quarterly basis, involving co-ordinators and fire wardens. The outcomes of meetings and the notes taken are reviewed by the Health and Safety Committee.

The Health and Safety Advisers are responsible for assisting in the monitoring of health and safety compliance and progress at faculty and departmental level. They undertake audits and inspections of premises and student accommodation and report findings to the Health and Safety Officer, as well as highlighting areas of non-compliance.

5.6 Health and Safety Committee

The Chief Financial Officer chairs the Health and Safety Committee which reports to the Vice-Chancellor's Group and the Joint Consultative Group (alternately chaired by the Vice-Chancellor and the Unions). The Health and Safety Committee takes responsibility for the monitoring of policies and procedures and safety working practices within the University. Members of the Health and Safety Committee are the Director of Estates and Facilities Management, Health and Safety Officer, Director of Human Resources, President of the Students' Union and representatives from the recognised professional associations, UCU and UNISON. The Health and Safety Committee meets formally three times per academic year.

6. Health and Safety responsibilities

6.1 Board of Governors

Health and safety is a corporate governance issue. The University recognises that it will never be able to achieve the highest standards of health and safety management without the active involvement of its Board of Governors. The governing body will integrate health and safety into the main governance structures, including sub-committees, such as risk management and audit. All members of the Board of Governors will take the lead in ensuring the communication of health and safety duties and benefits throughout the organisation. The governing body will 'own' and understand the key issues involved and decide how best to communicate, promote and champion health and safety.

The Board of Governors will:

- Ensure that health and safety appears regularly on the agenda for governing body meetings.
- Make arrangements for an independent member of the governing body to act as a health and safety champion.
- Ensure that health and safety arrangements are adequately resourced.
- Encourage staff or their representatives to be involved in decisions that affect their health and safety.
- Ensure that governing body decisions are made in the context of the health and safety policy.
- Consider health and safety when deciding senior management appointments.
- Ensure Audit Committee is aware that key issues are addressed.
- Encourage appraisals of senior managers to include an assessment of their contribution to health and safety performance.
- Support staff involvement in health and safety.
- Request periodic audits of the effectiveness of management structures and risk controls for health and safety.

6.2 Managers

Managers at all levels of the University are responsible for the implementation of the Health and Safety Policy within their realm of responsibility (e.g. Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Executive Deans, Deputy Deans, Subject Leaders, Faculty Managers, Directors and Heads of professional support areas).

Managers will:

- Demonstrate their personal concern for health and safety at work through example and commitment, encouraging individuals they manage or supervise to do the same.
- Ensure that health and safety is included as a regular agenda item at faculty and department meetings.
- Nominate and support Health and Safety volunteers in the faculty/department. Ensure that nominated volunteer health and safety co-ordinators, risk assessors, fire wardens and first aiders receive adequate training to assist them in their role (training is supported through the University's Staff Development Programme).
- Ensure that all necessary safety equipment is available, adequate, properly maintained and used as specified.
- Ensure that the University accident reporting procedures are adhered to and initial investigations of accidents in their areas of responsibility are carried out and reported to the Health and Safety Department.
- Ensure that local health and safety issues are resolved in consultation with staff who may be affected and strategic issues are brought to the attention of the Health and Safety Committee.

- Ensure that workplace inspections are regularly carried out, reporting inspection findings to the Health and Safety Officer on a regular basis.
- Liaise closely with and assist the health and safety team, reviewing and monitoring safe systems of work.
- Ensure that appropriate risk assessments are conducted and reviewed and all those who may be affected are advised of relevant findings and risk reduction strategies.
- Provide employees and students that they manage or supervise with sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision, and in particular make them aware of any foreseeable hazards connected with their work.

6.3 Employees

Every employee has health and safety responsibilities in statutory and civil law as well as under their contract of employment. It is the duty of all employees to co-operate in implementing health and safety policy by:

- Acting with due care for the health, safety and welfare of themselves and others and co-operating with managers by complying with instructions and procedures for safe working.
- Not intentionally or recklessly interfering with or misusing anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare.
- Evacuating students promptly from teaching rooms in the case of emergency situations and fire drills, in accordance with University procedures.
- Making proper use of protective clothing and safety equipment provided (in accordance with any training or instruction provided by the University), reporting any loss or obvious defect in that equipment and taking reasonable care of it.
- Informing their manager(s) of any shortcomings in respect of the protection arrangements for health and safety and anything that could be considered as representing a serious or immediate danger to health and safety.
- Reporting to their manager(s) any defects in equipment, structures or safety procedures which they are aware of and incidents which have led or might have led to injury or damage.
- Co-operating with any investigation that might be undertaken with the object of preventing accidents in the future.
- Making sure that an appropriate and accurate record is made on the University's accident/incident report form, following an accident or near-miss which has (or could have) led to injury or ill-health.
- Taking responsibility for the safety of students and visitors, ensuring that any proposed new activity is risk assessed before the activity commences.
- Ensuring risk assessments are conducted where appropriate (e.g. for field trips, work in laboratories or workshops) and all those who may be affected are advised of relevant findings and risk reduction strategies.

7. Assessment and review: monitoring and reporting

Monitoring and reporting are vital parts of the health and safety culture at the University of Chichester as well as effective management systems and practices that ensure that health and safety risks are dealt with sensibly, responsibly and proportionately. Formally reviewing policies, procedures and practices will help to ensure that established principles are embedded in the organisational culture and adhered to.

A formal review of health and safety performance is essential. It allows the Vice-Chancellor's Group and the governing body to establish whether the essential health and safety principles – strong and active leadership, staff involvement, and assessment and review – have been embedded in the organisation and whether the system is effective in managing risk and protecting people.

Regular surveys and departmental audits are carried out by the Health and Safety Officer to ensure that the University is complying with health and safety legislation. A premises fire safety risk assessment is carried out each year. Premises improvements are prioritised and implemented by Estates and Facilities Management, monitored by the Health and Safety Officer.

Each faculty/department must keep records of accident and incident reports that they have made during the year by keeping a copy of the report form. Accident and incident reports must be kept for a period of three years (the Health and Safety Officer will keep records for longer than this). In addition, records must be kept of the steps taken after an incident has occurred, including details where applicable on accident investigations, risk assessment, subsequent decisions on amendments to procedure and, where necessary related communications.

Risk assessment and incident and accident report forms are available on the Health and Safety Page on Portia and in hard copy as required. Documents are completed accurately before a copy is passed to the Health and Safety Department for recording purposes.

8. Health and Safety Guidance

The management of health and safety is supported through a variety of policies and procedures and H&S guidance on topics such as: fire evacuation, manual handling, noise at work, personal protective equipment, portable appliance testing, risk assessment, selection, use and maintenance of work equipment, work at height, working outdoors, display screen equipment, control of substances hazardous to health, alcohol, drug and substance abuse, stress management, and other health and well-being policies. Policies will be developed as a result of changing legislation e.g. Corporate Manslaughter and Driving at Work.

Health and Safety documents are available on the Health and Safety page on Portia for reference and in hard copy as required. The Health and Safety Committee receives copies of new or revised Health and Safety policies or guidance for information and review.

9. Managing health and well-being

The University is committed to supporting the health and wellbeing of its employees by encouraging the adoption of healthier lifestyles. The philosophy which underpins this commitment is one of self-help and individual responsibility, promoting and supporting good practice to ensure staff feel supported in their work. An option to join discounted health care schemes and sports activity/fitness centres is available for staff along with the provision of a confidential counselling service. A focus on supporting health care matters has been prioritised with the introduction of annual influenza vaccinations. The University has developed a health and well-being policy to address its duty of care towards employees under the Health and Safety at Work Act, Human Rights Act and the Disability Act, with the aim of improving health measures and reducing health risks such as stress related illness.

The Staff Development Programme encourages staff to support their health and well-being in the workplace including activities such as a 'general health week' and focussed events on 'women's and men's' health' together with sport and exercise health initiatives.

The University continues to work closely with the Occupational Health Service to ensure adequate support for individuals suffering ill-health including advice on capacity for work and prognosis. Whilst occupational health is concerned with the prevention of ill-health in employees, it also provides essential advice in relation to rehabilitation and recovery programmes, health and prevention of occupational disease, managing work related aspects of illness and helping workers to make informed choices regarding lifestyle issues.

10. Absence monitoring

The continuing use of sickness absence procedures, Occupational Health involvement, return-to-work interviews and the support of a confidential counselling service are identified as the most effective approaches for managing absence and ill-health at the University. A sickness absence policy, incorporating elements of contractual requirements and advice provided in the Employee Handbook, has been developed to support managers and staff. The health of the workforce will continue to be reviewed as will the dedicated support services provided. The Human Resources function provides support to managers and individuals and will inform the Vice-Chancellor's Group of any changes and developments in the work place that may impact on general health and well-being.

11. Further information and support

A broad range of health and safety information is available on the Health and Safety Executive website at www.hse.gov.uk. The Health and Safety page on Portia provides guidelines and advice on health and safety related matters. The Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) provides further advice and annual Health and Safety reports on www.ucea.ac.uk.

The Staff Development Programme provides a variety of opportunities for employees to attend relevant health and safety training events throughout the year. Training can be tailored to individual or departmental requirements and is delivered by internal and external training providers. Provision includes conflict resolution and personal safety, minibus driving, fire warden and health and safety co-ordinator training, portable appliance testing, working at height, risk assessment awareness, defibrillator training, first aid at work, manual handling, and developing wellbeing and performance.