

MINUTES

CONFIRMED MINUTES

UNIVERSITY HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE, STRATEGIC COMMITTEE (HSWSC)

NON-CONFIDENTIAL minutes of the HSWSC meeting held on Wednesday 4th June 2024, 10:00-11:00, VCO Boardroom CLC.2.01.

Present: Paul Bradley (PB) Director of Occupational Health & Safety;
Neil Fernandes (NF Secretary) Health & Safety Administrator;
Simon Hogg (SH) Unison;
Sarah Irons (SI) Bioinnovation Hub Manager;
Jill Millar (JM) Senior Lecturer in Business and Management;
Alan Reeve (AR) Savills Reader,
Sarah Thonemann (ST) Chief People Officer;
Sharon Willett (SW Secretary), Safety Manager;
Jerry Woods (JW,) Director of Estates and Campus Services;

In attendance: Abigail Riley (AbR)

Apologies: Brendan Casey (BC Chair), Registrar and Chief Operating Officer;
Benjamin Craft (BeC) Timetabling Officer;
Stefan Friel (SF) Health & Safety Adviser;
Haleema Javeed (HJ Secretary), Executive Assistant to Chief People Officer;
Andy King (AK) Partnerships and Placements Manager;
Alex Powell (AP), Interim Programme Lead for Law;

27. Welcome and Apologies

27.1. There were apologies from BC, AK, BeC, AP, HJ and SF.

27.2. Neil Fernandes (NF) was welcomed to the meeting. NF will be taking over the administration of this committee.

28. Minutes of the HSWSC meeting held on 6th February 2024 **HSWSC240206/12**

28.1. The minutes of the meeting were a true and accurate record. The amendments previously made from JM had been actioned.

29. Action Log Review and matters arising **HSWSC240206/03**

29.1. The action log was reviewed and updated and completed actions were closed.

30. Health & Safety Report/Analysis

[HSWSC240604/04a](#) & [HSWSC240604b](#)

30.1. Specific Issues

- 30.1.1. PB went over the contents of the new report format and presented key information at the meeting. The highlights are:
- 30.1.2. PWC reduced the Legionella risk to low.
- 30.1.3. A member of staff was locked in the Colonnade building over the weekend. Support was offered to them. There was some discussion about the circumstances surrounding the incident. The investigation discovered that there was no security monitoring of the Colonnade and John Payne buildings. JW provided more explanation. The investigation showed that the door locks contained a part that was wearing out, and action was taken to change them. A question was raised as to whether the incident was reportable under RIDDOR. It was concluded that it was not.
- 30.1.4. Following a number of accidents associated with the climbing wall including one that was RIDDOR reportable, it was considered appropriate to undertake a review of the safety management arrangements. The report compared the climbing wall arrangements with guidance from the Association of British Climbing Walls 'Code of Practice' of which the Sports Centre is a member.
- 30.1.5. A 'Hazard Mapping' exercise will be carried out with Faculties and Directorates. The purpose is to verify the hazards that they are exposed to and that there are appropriate control measures in place.

30.2. Local governance Arrangements

- 30.2.1. Minutes of the HSWOC meeting (Operations Committee) SW verbal.
- 30.2.2. The June meeting has been cancelled; there was not enough time after the last meeting to implement and report any meaningful action. SW will talk to committee members over the summer about the agenda and purpose of the meetings. The findings will be published during Semester 1.
- 30.2.3. Fire evacuation assistants - employees will receive additional training to clarify their responsibilities in an evacuation. SW reported that the discussion covered how the training might be rolled out, communication and staff worries about the role.
- 30.2.4. The topics covered by PB were:
 - Staff responsibilities through combination training.
 - Intermediate instruction in facilitation and fire safety.
 - Pat testing.
 - ECS for setting up electrical team procedures.
 - Workshops for staff and students on 14 June VCG ops electricity at work policy.
- 30.2.5. It has recently come to the universities notice (from news sources and UMAL the university insurers) that there is a risk of fire caused by lithium ion batteries. Recently, there have been reports of defective batteries on e-bikes and scooters, in particular catching fire. However, it was noted at the meeting that any lithium ion battery is a risk and that they are used on a number of devices including laptops, vapes and mobile phones. A particular concern is linked to scooters. Action is required to identify measures to reduce the risk.

30.3. Health & Safety Objectives

- 30.3.1. The greatest improvement in online training was made by PD 99%. It does emphasise the value of regular online checks and online training. Correspondingly distinct areas and employee training according to their departments/roles. A foundation model that yields results.

30.4. Workplace Wellbeing

[HSWSC240604/04a](#) & [HSWSC240604b](#)

- 30.4.1. The Draft Policy for the Prevention and Management of Work-Related Stress is to go to VCG for approval subject to any comments being made by attendees by the 14th June 2024. (There weren't any).
- 30.4.2. The University-level Stress Risk Assessment - Interim Actions (workload and leadership and management) report is also to go to VCG. I noted two main areas of feedback (aside from the Unions emphasising that this was a key area of concern for them) One was in relation to the proposed action on p3:
 - “ii) Activities to address the 'over-assessment' issue identified as part of the WLP review. This would seek to ensure that the demands created by assessment are proportionate to the allocation and that people feel supported in making these changes, noting the potential implications for NSS scores and student perceptions.”*
- 30.4.3. Concerns were raised around the pedagogic impact of changing assessment. It was clarified that the nature of any changes had not been determined and that the action only highlighted the requirement identified as part of the wider WLP review and did not make any assumptions around the nature of the changes themselves. It was noted that the review process would need to take into account the relevant pedagogical implications and impact on student experience.
- 30.4.4. The other was in relation to the following proposed action (also on p3):
 - “iii) Establishment of a monitoring and review process of the application of the 1600-hour notional working year (FTE) and consideration of other additional monitoring via WAMs reporting and wider staff survey data.”*
- 30.4.5. There was some discussion around the current guidance and practices pertaining to the '1600-hour notional working year' and differences between different departments. It was noted that the proposed action needed to include something around clarifying guidance i.e. what tolerance either side of 1600 hrs is acceptable. It was also suggested that there should be a process to be applied should monitoring identify allocations outside the guidance. This in addition to the existing proposal above. It was noted that this was something for the WLPc to consider at their next meeting in Sept. AR sought clarity around what someone should do in the meantime if their allocation for the upcoming year was in excess of the 1600 hours. ST confirmed that this should be raised with their line manager in the first instance.
- 30.4.6. Again attendees were given until the 14th to feedback on anything else but no further comments were received.

31. Supporting Papers

- 31.1. Compliance Report (HSWSC240604/07). Summary report submitted prior to the meeting: please refer to the paper.
- 31.2. Water Hygiene Audit (HSWSC240604/08). Summary report submitted prior to the meeting: please refer to the paper.
- 31.3. Climbing wall audit (HSWSC240604/09). Summary report submitted prior to the meeting: please refer to the paper.
- 31.4. University level Stress Risk Assessment (HSWSC240604/10). Summary report submitted prior to the meeting: please refer to the paper.
- 31.5. Draft Prevention & Management of Work-related Stress policy (HSWSC240604/11) Summary report submitted prior to the meeting: please refer to the paper.
- 31.6. Electrical Safety Procedure (HSWSC240604/12). Summary report submitted prior to the meeting: please refer to the paper.

32. Union Matters

- 32.1. No issues raised.

33. Any Other Business

- 33.1. There was no other business

34. Dates of next meetings

- 34.1. The next HSWSC meeting dates TBC

Meeting ended at 11:05 am