

MINUTES

CONFIRMED MINUTES

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

NON-CONFIDENTIAL minutes of the HSWSC meeting held on Tuesday 11th February 2025, 11:00-12:00, VCO Boardroom CLC.2.01.

Present: Brendan Casey (BC, Chair), Registrar and Chief Operating Officer; Andy King (AK), Partnerships and Placements Manager (UNISON); Jerry Woods (JW), Director of Estates and Campus Services; Jill Millar (JM), Senior Lecturer in Business and Management (UCU); Paul Bradley (PB), Director of Occupational Health & Safety; Sarah Thonemann (ST), Chief People Officer; Sarah Irons (SI), Bioinnovation Hub Manager; Neil Fernandes (NF, minute-taker), Health & Safety Administrator; Sharon Willett (SW, Secretary), Safety Manager; Simon Hogg (SH), Unison (UNISON).

Apologies: Benjamin Craft (BeC) Timetabling Officer (UCU); Abigail Riley (AbR) Dir Org Effectiveness & Development; Alan Reeve (AR), Savills Reader (UCU).

9. Welcome and Apologies

9.1. Apologies as above, and ST joined at 11:30am due to a meeting clash.

10. Minutes of the HSWSC meeting held on 12th November 2024

10.1. The minutes of the meeting were recorded as a true and accurate record.

11. Action Log Review and matters arising

11.1. The action log was reviewed and updated, with completed actions marked as closed.

11.2. **Action** - SW to summarise her discussion with Gavin Hodgson with regard to university charging options, and look to pass the project over to ECS Projects. BC requested that students be made aware that there should be no charging in halls.

12. Health & Safety Report ([HSWSC250211/04](#))

12.1. PB reviewed the contents of the report and highlighted the key issues. Particular attention was paid to the H&S procedures.

Specific Items

12.2. A reportable accident occurred when a member of staff tripped at work, leading to an absence of over seven days. Upon their return, it was discovered that the incident was not work-related.

13. H&S Procedures (For approval)

13.1. The H&S policy is reviewed every year. The policy statement went through a significant review last year. As PB recommended that no further changes be made, the committee agreed that it should go forward for approval. **Action** PB.

- 13.2. JM wanted to make sure that health is understood to include mental health. PB advised that this clarification was probably best made within the Organisation & Arrangements Procedure. **Action** – PB to send Organisation & Arrangements over to JM.
- 13.3. **H&S of Overseas Travel** - The overseas travel procedure simplifies the process for individuals and staff by providing detailed information and risk assessment based on the nature of their activities. A revised checklist assessment has been developed, covering low-hazard overseas travel and providing guidance on when a more detailed risk assessment is required.
- 13.4. **H&S of Fieldwork** - The procedure provides a clear framework on managing health and safety risks associated with fieldwork. The template provided within the procedure will be turned into an electronic form for ease of completion.
- 13.5. **H&S of Placements** - The procedure reflects the good practice that is evident within the University and reflects the good practice guidance from within the sector.
- 13.6. AK highlighted that he wasn't aware of the procedure. **Action** – PB to meet up with AK and other managers to discuss and tidy up the process and make relevant changes.
- 13.7. JM enquired about the implications of a detailed risk assessment for staff, and the responsibility for any subsequent problems. PB explained that staff were covered by the University's employer's liability insurance when undertaking activities inline with university procedures. The H&S team is available to advise and support on the completion of risk assessments.
- 13.8. The H&S team offers risk assessment training and aims to share best practices among employees. A university target this year is to focus on ensuring relevant staff have received appropriate risk assessment training. Not everyone needs to be trained, the focus is for areas to identify those staff which require the training.
- 13.9. Subject to further discussion on the H&S of Placements procedure, the Committee approved the policy and procedures to proceed for final approval to the VCG and VCG Operations Group.

Addendum – Post committee update

The H&S of Placements Procedure was reviewed with AK and his team and necessary amendments were agreed upon.

14. Union Matters

(UNISON) - Items

- 14.1. Question: RAAC – Requesting further information on status of report. The Building Team conducted a visual inspection of flat roof areas, finding that many buildings fell outside the construction design/method and relevant dates regarding the use of RAAC. The Buildings Team Manager compiled a spreadsheet detailing our buildings, but no RAAC was found. The Risk and Resilience Officer at the time reported the findings to UMAL, and the Head of Maintenance confirmed no further reports were required. This was reported to the Board of Governors. This was commissioned by BC and signed off as complete.
- 14.2. Question: About first aider provision. The review of first aid needs is ongoing, including the location of first aiders. Emergency First Aid and First Aid at Work courses have been booked for this academic year. 244 first aiders are currently available, and they are contacted by Security. Posters are also present throughout buildings. More staff are being trained as Emergency First Aiders in response to hybrid working.
- 14.3. Question: About Fire Marshall provision. A pilot is being implemented to address the lack of fire marshals due to hybrid working in NHHB & PBW. All staff to be

trained to evacuate using a zoned approach. Fire drills will be run and any lessons extracted and implemented. This will be rolled out over the summer. Communications will be sent out to staff advising that everyone has a role in the event of a fire alarm activation.

- 14.4. Question: About fire assembly points with regard to estate changes. Maps of fire assembly points are being reviewed by the Fire Safety Advisor. "What Three Words" will be used to identify the fire assembly points. The maps will be posted online and should be prepared for publication within the next three months.
- 14.5. Question: Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) accuracy with regards to estate changes. New buildings have been assessed. FRAs are updated where significant changes are made to the fabric of the building.
- 14.6. Question: Fire action notices - accuracy of information with regards to estate changes. Fire action notices and H&S information is posted throughout buildings. New buildings have been included. Building information is reviewed during FRAs.
- 14.7. Question: EVAC chairs - accuracy and numbers. Gibbs building - the number of evacuation chairs was assessed by the FSA, and one evacuation chair was assessed as being adequate. The requirement for additional chairs may result from the completion of a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan for a member of staff or student, but the process should primarily look at the use of ground floor rooms.
- 14.8. Question: Marston Road stairlifts - availability. Two platform lifts, 8074 (near MRG.18) and 8075 (near MRG.40), are currently out of action due to their end-of-life status. The issue will be discussed at the MIP Ops meeting on 12 Feb. It is suggested that the University replace these two lifts for around £40-50k, rather than all platform lifts on site, which would cost around £250k. AK asked for long term and short-term implications – Gather and Gather have reduced the risk by providing catering in pre agreed areas avoiding steps and by using good Manual handling principles.

(UCU) - Items

- 14.9. Question: Request for a proper risk assessment of the move from Harcourt to Headington campus, and the impact on staff in Gibbs. JM - there has been no adequate consultation regarding the move and the process for the move; UCU are not seeing sufficient evidence of these assessments happening. PB explained that it would not be expected that a risk assessment would be produced for such a project. Rather the project management process itself would address relevant H&S issues at the appropriate points. These would be recorded within the project management documents. Many of the controls are standard approaches that ECS have developed. For example, the standard approach for ECS is to engage an external company to move staff items, thus removing manual handling risks. **Action** – JW to speak to the Chair of the HEXIT group about making available appropriate information from the group to the Union safety representatives.
- 14.10. Question: Requested a copy of the Terms of Reference for the H&S committees. Action was completed before the meeting.

15. Any Other Business - There was no other business.

16. Dates of next meetings - 10th June 2025, 11:00am - 12:00pm.

Meeting ended at 12:00 noon