

MINUTES

University Health Safety and Welfare Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 27th February 2013 at 10.00 in SG05 Gipsy Lane

Present:

Paul Large	Chair	Registrar
Richard Beresford		UCU Safety Representative
Karen Brockington		Faculty of Health and Life Sciences
Loraine Dyson		Faculty of Health and Life Sciences
Catherine Flemming		Catering Services
Andy Glass		Faculty of Technology, Design and Environment
Ernest Grainger		Quality Manager, Hospitality Services
Michael Holder		UNISON Safety Representative
Tim McGill		University Safety Officer
Elizabeth Mitchell		Faculty of Health and Life Sciences
Laura Percival		Faculty of Business
Bob Price		Director of Human Resources
Christie Rainbird		Occupational Health Advisor
Brian Rivers		Faculty of Social Sciences and Law
Caroline Rushmer		OBIS / Learning Resources
Iain Sloan		Academic and Student Affairs
Colin Stocker		Estate Director, Property Services
Charlie Williams		Finance and Legal Services
Gordon Langford	Secretary	Assistant Safety Officer

Apologies:	Gillian Almond	Deputy Director Hospitality Services
	Trish Cox	Directorate of Corporate Affairs
	Simon Hogg	UNISON Safety Representative
	Jason Jolliffe	Faculty of Business
	David Whittingham	General Manager, Students' Union

24 Minutes of the meeting held on 5th December 2012

24.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 5th December 2012 (HSWC13022702), were accepted as an accurate record.

25 Matters Arising

25.1 Minute 13.2.5 To consider the tendering process for University-wide PAT testing

25.1.1 It was stated that there had been a poor response from external contractors to provide quotations for a service to carry out PAT testing across the whole University. Of the three companies approached, only one responded in full.

25.1.2 Further enquiries will be made in order to find suitable service providers with the aim that this service should begin from August 2013
Action: Tim McGill

25.2 Minute 15.1.2 Updates of Risk Registers

25.2.1 It was confirmed that the Risk Registers of the Directorate of Corporate Affairs and The Directorate of Academic and Student Affairs have now been updated.

25.3 Minute 17.1.1 Health Protection Agency training of Laboratory Technician

25.3.1 It was confirmed that the Laboratory Technician who manages the laboratories in which work with radioactive materials is undertaken, will attend relevant training with the Health Protection Agency in May this year.

25.3.2 It was confirmed that the funding for this training will come directly from the University rather than from the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences.

25.4 Minute 17.1.2 status of the updating of the University's Radiation Protection Handbook

It was confirmed that the University's Radiation Protection Handbook has now been updated. The changes include using the names of the current personnel in key roles, the correct name of the Faculty and incorporating currently used nomenclature and terminology.

25.5 Minute 19.6 To consider proposals for the strengthening of the first aid service

25.5.1 The Committee received, considered and approved a report of The Management of First Aid within the University, (HSWC13022704).

25.5.2 It was confirmed that there remains a difficulty in recruiting a sufficient number of members of staff to become first aiders. It can be particularly difficult to locate first aiders outside of core hours, even as early as after 16.30 hrs. It was recognised that with an increasing tendency for the University to operate outside of daytime hours and at weekends, there is a need for certain core staff, such as Caretakers, to become first aiders and that this should be built into their job descriptions. It was also agreed that processes must be put in place to ensure that Caretakers and other key staff are not always seen as the first option during core operating times.

25.5.3 It was noted that there is currently some inconsistency in the online directory of first aiders, in that some, but not all, of the Appointed Persons, (first aiders who have undergone one rather than three days training) are included on the list. It is intended to modify the list to include both types of first aiders and to distinguish between them. **Action: Christie Rainbird**

25.5.4 It was confirmed that the report, The Management of First Aid within the University, (HSWC13022704), is not intended to suggest that Directorates and Faculties manage the first aid provision within their own units, rather that they play an active role in working with The Occupation Health Team to determine the needs in their areas. It was confirmed that some Faculties and Directorates have begun to give such feedback.

25.5.5 Due to the nature of their work, may staff who are first aiders may be away from their regular workplaces when there is a need for their support, this can make it very difficult to find a first aider. The Occupation Health Team is working with OBIS in order to find suitable methods to promptly summon first aiders.

25.5.6 It was agreed that it would be worthwhile to lean how similar institutions deal with these issues with the aim of adopting relevant practices and procedures. **Action: Christie Rainbird**

25.6 Minute 20.2 Progress of the review of the Ground Section's COSHH assessments

25.6.1 It was noted that, since the departure of the Property Services Health and Safety Officer, the COSHH assessments for the Grounds Section's hazardous material remains under review.

25.7 Minute 22.1.1 Status regarding the proposals for relocation of gas cylinder storage

25.7.1 It was confirmed that there is no longer a need to relocate the storage cage for compressed gas cylinders at Gipsy Lane as there is currently no intention to demolish the building to which the cage is affixed.

- 25.7.2 There is a proposal to replace the existing bulk liquid nitrogen storage vessel with a new one which is to be located on the land between the Gibbs and Fuller Buildings. It was agreed that the user of this facility will discuss their needs with Capital Projects. **Action E. Mitchell**
- 26 To receive and note the UCEA Report, Sickness Absence in Higher Education, 2011/12**
- 26.1 Prior to the meeting Committee members received the above mentioned report, (HSWC13022705)
- 26.2 It was noted that compared to the national average, short term absences in the higher education sector are at a relatively low level, it is believed that this may be due to under reporting, particularly for academic staff. The absence levels are significantly higher for support staff compared to academic staff, again is this likely to be due to under reporting by academic staff.
- 26.3 There is a higher level of sickness absence in the post '92 Universities (of which Brookes is one) compared to the pre '92 institutions. This may be due to a greater tendency to report sickness absence. The level of sickness for Oxford Brookes University is below the sector average, data for which can be found in the Occupational Health Annual Report.
- 26.4 It was noted that excluding absences for which the causes were unclassified or unknown, the UCEA Report indicated that largest proportion were for 'anxiety, stress, depression or other psychiatric illnesses.'
- 27 To consider the policy for the maintenance and availability of the asbestos register**
- 27.1 The Committee received and noted a report, on the University's Asbestos Policy, (HSWC13022710).
- 27.2 It was confirmed that the University's procedures comply with and in some instances exceed the requirements of the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012.
- 27.3 It was confirmed that the University's Asbestos Register is held by the Directorate of Estates and Facilities Management. Access to relevant parts of the register are made available to those with a legitimate need to have the information.
- 27.4 An explanation was given regarding the type of survey which is carried out to compile the data in the Asbestos Register. Generally the identification and location of asbestos containing materials (ACM) has been determined by appointed contractors carrying out 'Management Surveys' (previously known as Type 2 Surveys). In this case representative samples are taken from readily accessible locations to determine if ACM are present and if so, the asbestos type. A more intensive 'Refurbishment and Demolition Survey' will be carried out by appointed contractors prior to work which will involve cutting into or other hazardous disturbance of ACMs
- 27.5 An explanation was given regarding reports from the Asbestos Register which were issued to Caretakers at Clive Booth Student Village, who were undertaking cleaning operations on walls and ceiling in the former Morrell buildings, which are labelled as containing asbestos. It was noted that the issued reports did not include examples of every building of this type. It was confirmed that the regulations permit the assumption to be made that if similar materials are use in the same way in similar building stock it can be strongly presumed that they also contain asbestos.
- 27.6 It was noted that some of the warning labels that indicate the location of ACMs may have been removed or painted over. It was confirmed that although there is an obligation to ensure that everyone who needs to know about the presence of asbestos is made aware, there is no legal obligation to do so by way of signage.

27.7 It was stated that Property Services are in the process of upgrading their procedures to ensure that all building work, including that not initiated by Property Services, is managed across the University in a uniform fashion. The procedures will include making reference to and appropriately acting on the Asbestos Register.

28 To note the UCEA Annual Health and Safety Report 2012.

28.1 The Committee received and considered the UCEA (Universities and Colleges Employers Association) Annual Health and Safety Report 2012 (HSWC13022706) and their Action Plan 2013 (HSWC13022707).

28.1.1 It was noted that across the membership of UCEA, there has continued to be a fall in the level of RIDDOR reportable accidents, 2.1 per 1000 staff in 2011, compared with 2.4 per 1000 in 2010. These rates are significantly lower than the UK average for all employees which are 4.45 per 1000 employees in 2011/12. The majority of reportable accidents remain due to slips, trips and falls, and manual handling activities.

28.1.2 It was noted that the UCEA H&S Plan, 4.2, includes an action to support student awareness on health and safety issues.

28.1.3 Examples were given where the University actively provides health and safety awareness training for its students, including information provided prior to those taking up residence in halls.

29 The Safety Inspection of The Directorate of Corporate Affairs

29.1 The Committee received and considered the report of the Safety Inspection in December 2012, of The Directorate of Corporate Affairs (HSWC13022708).

29.2 On the whole the inspection proved to be quite satisfactory, indicating that the workplaces were managed very well.

30 The Safety Inspection of The School of Arts

30.1 The Committee received and considered the report of the Safety Inspection in January 2013, of The School of Arts, within the Faculty of Technology, Design and Environment. (HSWC13022709).

30.2 On the whole the inspection proved to be satisfactory, indicating that the workplaces were managed well.

30.3 Actions required were noted, most of which have been dealt with, such as updating of signage and of fire action notices and the need to include ladders and lifting equipment on the annual inspections carried out by Zurich.

31 Date of next meeting, 28th May