

**Minutes
Health and Safety Executive
Committee (HSEC)****8 December 2021****Present:**

Dr Tamsin O'Connell, Dept of Archaeology, (Chair)
Dr Mick Mantle, Department of Chemical Engineering
Ms Emma Rampton, Registry
Dr Martin Vinnell - Director of Health and Safety
Dr Anne-Marie Farmer, Director of Safety Governance
and Assurance
Dr Caroline Edmonds, Secretary of the School of Clinical
Medicine
Dr Jessica Gardner, University Librarian
Ms Andrea Hudson, Director of HR

Mr Graham Matthews, Director of Estates
Division
Mr Gary Moss, Director of Estates Operations
Mr Philip Rule, Acting Head of Estates
Facilities
Mrs Dee Vincent, Governance and
Compliance Division (minutes)

Apologies, Professor David Cardwell, Dr Richard Sandford, Dr Robert Henderson, Professor Richard Philips

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2021 were approved as a correct record.

2. Matters arising**2.1 The Learning Together programme**

The Registry reported that a Prevention of Future Deaths report had been received from the Coroner on 3 November 2021. The Report comprises 22 recommendations of which 4 were directed to the University, among other entities. The HSEC were advised that a response to the recommendations would be prepared by the due date of 7 January 2022.

The Registry also reported on related matters, including that the revised health and safety documentation relevant to work with offenders and ex-offenders would be reviewed at an Extraordinary HSEC to be held on 20 December 2021.

Principal Business**3. Compliance Update**

The Director of Estate Operations introduced the compliance report and provided an update on key issues and progress since the last HSEC meeting. It was noted that the report had been presented to the Buildings Committee on 2 December 2021. The HSEC were advised that progress had been made across all areas of the compliance programme. The overall level of compliance across the Estate stands at 93%. It was noted that this figure has remained the same since the last meeting of HSEC. The target for the Estates team remains achieving as near to 100% compliance as possible.

The Committee was advised that progress on clearing remedial work would be delayed until a new maintenance programme is introduced.

The Director of Estates Operations reported there would be a pause in the mobilization of the new maintenance contract which was currently due to commence in April 2022. Unite the Union has raised concerns regarding what they understood to be “the complete outsourcing of Estates Management maintenance services”. A working group has therefore been established with the Assistant Staff Trade Unions and Estates. The working group will explore in detail what is being proposed by the Estates Division with regard to the proposed way of handling the maintenance, compliance and safety issues across the Estate in the future and explore the concerns that have been raised by the Assistant Staff Trade Unions regarding outsourcing in the Estates Division. It is hoped that the working group would propose an alternative way forward if significant concerns remain following those discussions.

Jocelyn Wyburd has been appointed to chair the working group, which will hold its first meeting on 16 December. If the group cannot reach an agreement on the way forward, the matter will be considered jointly by the Buildings Committee and UAJB at an extraordinary combined meeting of the two committees in Lent term. The group will work in the spirit of true collaboration, good faith, trust and transparency.

The HSEC noted that existing maintenance contracts would conclude at the end of March 2022. The Estates team were working to ensure appropriate maintenance cover from within the existing supply chain. It was further noted that a new Contract would require a 3-month mobilization period to allow for appropriate recruitment of staff, provision of training and the transfer of systems and data. If required, emergency resource would be sought to provide for any gaps in coverage. The HSEC agreed that the best outcome would be an arrangement which did not jeopardise safety, or relationships with Trade Unions, suppliers, and staff.

The HSEC agreed that an extraordinary meeting of the HSEC would be arranged to take place in late January or early February for an update on this issue.

Action: Dee Vincent

The Director of Estates explained that the Buildings Committee had requested an analysis of the historic backlog of compliance remedial works. It was noted that the current backlog is falling but remains a concern. The HSEC were advised that much of the backlog could be dealt with in the early phase of a new maintenance contract. It was recognised that any incoming Contractor would have a large pool of resources available to deliver the tasks quickly and efficiently.

4. HSE and Other Enforcement Agency Actions, Visits, and Information:

The Director of Health and Safety reported that three inspections had taken place since the last meeting of the HSEC. These were the joint visits by the Environment Agency and the Counter Terrorist Security Advisors, both under the Environmental Permitting Regulations for the University's use of radioactive material and associated security measures and the Health and Safety Executive all visits were proactive, and no issues were reported.

The HSEC were also advised of an ongoing visit to the Gurdon Plant Sciences from the Health and Safety Executive regarding the University's use of large genetically modified organisms and plants.

The Committee noted the visits.

5. Unconfirmed minutes of the Consultative Committee for Safety (CCFS).

The HSEC noted the unconfirmed minutes of the CCFS meeting held 17 November. The HSEC were advised that reviews of the committees would be conducted, including CCFS and HSEC. The reviews would consider Committee terms of reference, work, scope and reporting routes. It would also look at information flow between Committees.

The HSEC noted the minutes.

6. University Safety Office Health and Safety Survey

The Director of Safety Governance and Assurance introduced the Safety Survey and provided a detailed update to the HSEC. Discussion of the data by the Safety Office senior leadership team has commenced; an action plan would be created to move items forward during 2022. It was noted that phase 2 of the website development would enable a more effective working collaboration between the Safety Office and other University departments and institutions. It was further reported that a systems analysis workshop would take place in January 2022, following which all Safety Office documents, systems and processes would be reviewed. The Committee noted the commencement of audits for non-responding departments and those departments who had scored low in the survey results and may require more assistance.

The HSEC noted that 76% of departments had now responded to the survey. The Committee remained clear that the missing quarter of non-respondents should be contacted as a priority and it was agreed the covering e-mail should come from the HSEC chair. The Director of Safety Governance and Assurance will take this forward and report back to a later HSEC.

Action: The Director of Safety Governance and Assurance

The Committee was advised that that a third of University departments do not have a functioning permit to work system in place. The HSEC noted that the Estates Division had created an e-permit system which allows digital sign off for access permits and work permits. The HSEC noted that the Safety Office staff are working with colleagues within the Estates team and will utilise the system. Progress on this item will be reported back to the HSEC at a later date.

The HSEC agreed that the survey results should be shared with Heads of Institutions and Departmental Safety Officers and Schools. Moving the summary information from Section 3 into Section 2 will better highlight key areas of concern.

Action: The Director of Safety Governance and Assurance

The HSEC expressed thanks to all staff involved in the production of the comprehensive Safety Survey.

7. Safety Report Update:

7.1 The Director of Health and Safety reminded the HSEC that in December 2020 the cost for the removal of a sealed radioactive source from the University had been discussed. It was agreed that HSEC would approve a contribution centrally from the Safety Office to cover the removal of radioactive sources.

The HSEC was advised that an incorrect code had been used on recent import/export documentation which had resulted in a tax liability to the University. It was noted that this is not a health and safety issue but as HSEC agreed the expenditure for the removal of the radiation source, the Committee would need to be appraised of the administrative error and financial liability. It was noted that the error was not made by the Safety Office staff.

The HSEC was assured that systems are to be put in place to mitigate against any reoccurrence of the error.

7.2 The Director of Health and Safety Work explained that in relation to staff working abroad there is good awareness of travel risk, however, a recent issue with two University researchers working overseas has highlighted the complexities of interactions between different organisations in relation to health and safety.

The Director of Health and Safety and other colleagues would review all contracts to ensure they are written in a robust manner with clearly defined roles and responsibilities in respect to health and safety.

The HSEC noted the updated.

8. Any Other Business:

The Registry reported that in line with good governance, a review of the HSEC would take place during 2022.

9. Date of next meeting of the HSEC

17 March 2022, 10.30am – 12 noon

Other HSEC dates for 2022 are as follows:

9 June 2022, 10.00am - 11.30am

15 September 2022, 10:00am – 11:00am

8 December 2022, 10.00 – 11.30am