

University Health and Safety Policy

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Related documents: *All Health and Safety related policies, procedures, guidance and guidelines detailed on the [Safety Office - Safety Hub Library](#)*

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2 Purpose and Scope

This policy explains how the University of Cambridge¹ fulfils its legal and ethical responsibilities to protect the health and safety² of staff, students, and anyone affected by its activities. It also reflects the University's commitment to meeting its statutory duties and building a proactive, collaborative culture that supports the wellbeing of its entire community.

This policy details roles and responsibilities and University level arrangements for health and safety. It applies to all staff, students, contractors³, and visitors, and is designed to be used across every part of the University of Cambridge, including academic and administrative departments, institutes, schools, faculties, divisions, and Non-School Institutions (NSIs). Throughout this document, the term *Department* is used broadly to refer to all University management units.

Because the University's activities are wide-ranging and complex, and legal duties are significant, each Department is responsible for defining and recording its own arrangements for putting this policy into practice. These arrangements should outline who is responsible for what, how the Department will meet University requirements, and how health and safety responsibilities are passed through the organisation.

Not following the University's health and safety requirements may result in disciplinary action and could also lead to legal consequences from enforcement authorities.

Colleges manage their own health and safety, but the University and Colleges work together on issues affecting the wider University community.

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years.

3 Definitions

For the purposes of this document the terminology, definitions and abbreviations used in this Policy are detailed in Appendix 1.

¹ In its capacity as employer under the corporate body '*The Chancellor, Masters, and Scholars of the University of Cambridge*'.

² Note that where the term health and safety is used in the University's Policy, it encompasses fire safety. The University Fire Safety Policy can be found at: <https://www.em.admin.cam.ac.uk/estate-operations/health-safety-compliance/university-fire-safety>

³ Whilst undertaking or engaged in University activities, where specified by contract.

4 University of Cambridge Health and Safety Policy Statement of Intent

The University's work is wide-ranging and often at the cutting edge of research and innovation. This means that some activities inevitably involve risk. We take these responsibilities seriously, and we expect everyone - staff, students, apprentices, visitors, and anyone else involved in our work - to play their part in protecting the health and safety of our community.

While the law does not require us to eliminate all risk, it does require us to manage it responsibly. This involves carrying out thoughtful risk assessments, making informed decisions, and staying aware of the potential hazards we may encounter, whether on University premises or working elsewhere. Our aim is always to strike the right balance: enabling world-leading research and teaching to flourish while ensuring that work is carried out safely and responsibly.

The University of Cambridge has a primary duty to provide and maintain a safe and healthy environment for everyone who works, studies, or visits here. Managers have a key role in achieving this, but health and safety is a shared responsibility. Every member of our community, whatever their role, contributes to creating a safe and supportive environment.

We hold ourselves to high standards in all aspects of our work, and health and safety is no exception. By committing to strong safety management, continuous improvement, effective leadership, and collective accountability, we can ensure that our pursuit of excellence never comes at the expense of people's wellbeing.

Signed



Professor Deborah Prentice
Vice-Chancellor

5 Organisational Responsibilities

5.1 Duty of Care

The University has a clear chain of accountability for health and safety that runs from the University's Council and General Board, through the Vice Chancellor team to Heads of Department, Line Managers and finally, every individual. Everyone is responsible for the work they oversee, the people they supervise, and anyone who may be affected by their actions.

This Section provides details on how health and safety governance works in the University, and Section 6 expands on this to provide details on specific roles and responsibilities.

5.2 Health and Safety Governance

The devolved and autonomous structure of the University requires a clear and robust approach to health and safety governance to ensure consistent standards, clear accountability, and effective coordination across Schools, Departments, Non-School Institutions and Professional Services. Although this Policy sets out the overarching responsibilities, the subject-specific health and safety procedures specify the detailed actions that employees, managers, Heads of Department and others must take to fulfil those responsibilities in practice.

These governance relationships, from senior bodies through to local responsibilities, are summarised in Appendix 2: Health and Safety Governance and Organisation, which provides a visual overview of the structure described in this section.

5.3 The Council and The General Board

The Council is the principal executive and policy-making body of the University. It has general responsibility for the administration of the University, for the planning of its work, and for the management of its resources. The General Board is responsible for the academic and educational policy of the University, and advises the University on questions relating to such policy. Together, they hold corporate responsibility for health and safety and for considering how their decisions affect the wellbeing of the University community.

Members are responsible for:

- setting high expectations for health and safety
- approving the Health and Safety Policy and considering safety in major decisions
- ensuring the University has the right systems, resources, and expert advice
- monitoring performance and reviewing key reports
- assuring that major risks, including emergencies, are well controlled.

The Audit Committee reviews the effectiveness of internal control systems through its internal audit programme, which includes periodic audits on matters related to health and safety.

5.4 Health and Safety Executive Committee (HSEC)

HSEC is a joint committee of the Council and the General Board. It oversees the development, implementation and monitoring of the University's Health and Safety Policy and strategy. It

reviews progress against the University Health and Safety Plan at the start of each academic year and monitors key performance indicators throughout the year. It provides assurance to the Council and the General Board and escalates issues requiring senior governance attention.

5.5 Consultative Committee for Safety (CCfS)

CCfS is responsible for advising HSEC on all matters concerning safety in the University. It provides a formal mechanism for consultation between the University and Trade Union Safety Representatives. It considers health and safety matters affecting staff, shares concerns and good practice, and supports the cooperative approach required under health and safety legislation. This aligns with the responsibilities of Safety Representatives to participate at University-level consultation forums.

5.6 University Safety Committees

University-level safety committees provide thematic or specialist oversight (for example, through sub-committees focused on areas of risk). They support CCfS and HSEC by reviewing University-wide performance, considering specialist matters and advising on improvements thus ensuring effective governance across specialist risk areas.

5.7 School and Divisional Safety Committees

Schools and major Divisions may convene safety committees to support local oversight across multiple departments or services. These committees help ensure consistency of standards, facilitate shared learning, and monitor local risks and performance. They also provide a route for escalation of significant issues to HSEC where appropriate.

(School/Divisional Safety Officers support this structure and may be appointed where needed.)

5.8 Departmental Safety Committees (DSCs)

Departmental committees oversee local arrangements, review hazard and risk registers, monitor incidents, track actions and ensure staff consultation. Departments too small to justify a committee must retain health and safety as a standing item at management meetings.

6 Roles and Responsibilities – University Administration

6.1 Vice-Chancellor (VC)

The Vice-Chancellor is the University's principal academic and administrative officer and, as chief executive, holds delegated authority for academic, corporate, financial, estate, and personnel management. As such, the Vice-Chancellor has overall accountability for health and safety.

The Vice-Chancellor will:

- ensure the University maintains an up-to-date Health and Safety Policy and that it is communicated effectively
- ensure appropriate supporting structures, systems, and procedures are in place to implement this Policy and related arrangements
- agree how performance will be measured, monitored, and reported, including the use of key performance indicators
- agree the University's health and safety objectives.

The Vice-Chancellor also has the authority to take any executive action needed to prevent serious harm to individuals or to the University. In exceptional circumstances, this may include the immediate closure of University buildings, sites, operations, or activities.

Day-to-day executive responsibility for health and safety management, including any necessary executive actions, is delegated to the Principal Administrative Officer, and the Director of Health, Safety and Regulated Facilities.

6.2 Registry⁴

The Registry leads the Unified Administrative Service (UAS) and supports the Vice-Chancellor, the Council and the General Board in ensuring that the University's health and safety management system is implemented effectively. The Registry is accountable for health and safety across Professional Services and plays a key role in promoting a positive safety culture.

The Registry will:

- provide leadership that supports safe, responsible working across Professional Services
- seek assurance from UAS Divisional Heads that health and safety risks are identified, controlled and monitored
- take reasonable steps to ensure compliance with University health and safety policies, procedures and relevant legislation
- work with the Director of Health, Safety and Regulated Facilities to maintain safe operations and support continuous improvement.

⁴ At the time of writing, the Academic Secretary is undertaking the principal administrative officer aspect of the Registry duties

6.3 Director of Health, Safety and Regulated Facilities (HSRF)

The Director of Health, Safety and Regulated Facilities provides strategic leadership and oversight of the development of the University's Health and Safety Policy and strategy and provides independent, expert advice to support their effective implementation. The Director is responsible for ensuring the University has competent safety advice across all areas of risk and that its safety management system remains robust, proportionate and continually improving.

The Director will:

- develop, review, and evaluate the University's health and safety management system to ensure it is fit for purpose, and supports continuous improvement
- act as the professional lead for health and safety, ensuring competent advice and appropriate specialist support are available across the University
- oversee monitoring, audit and review activities that provide assurance to senior governance bodies that risks are being properly controlled
- take reasonable steps to ensure that required specialist safety roles are appointed and maintained under authority delegated by the Council
- ensure effective cross functional working as appropriate, for example between Staff Support Services and HR

6.4 Director of Estates

The Director of Estates is responsible for the University estate, building fabric, services and major capital projects, and holds a number of statutory duty holder responsibilities.

The Director of Estates will:

- ensure buildings and building services are safe, well maintained and legally compliant
- fulfil statutory responsibilities for fire, asbestos and water safety
- ensure construction and refurbishment projects meet legal and University requirements
- maintain effective systems for statutory inspections and remedial work.

6.5 Estates Division Statutory Compliance Team

The Estates Division (ED) Statutory Compliance Team⁵ ensures that buildings and engineering systems across the University estate meet all legal safety requirements. The team oversees statutory inspections, testing and maintenance, and provides the information and assurance needed to keep buildings safe, compliant and fit for use.

The Statutory Compliance Team will:

- manage statutory inspections and testing of building systems and safety-critical equipment

⁵ The Estates Division Statutory Compliance Team includes specialist advisers for fire [for the purpose of discharging duties under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005], asbestos (for the purpose of discharging duties under the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012), and water (with regard to the control of Legionella and other waterborne risks in accordance with the Approved Code of Practice L8 and HSG274).

- maintain accurate compliance records and ensure actions are completed
- provide technical compliance advice to departments, Estates colleagues and project teams
- support duty-holders in meeting legal obligations across fire, water, asbestos, lifting equipment, pressure systems and other regulated areas
- identify compliance gaps or risks and work with relevant teams to resolve them promptly.

6.6 Estates Division Asset Management Team

The ED Asset Management Team oversees the information, planning and lifecycle management of the University's buildings, infrastructure and fixed assets. The team ensures that asset data is accurate, accessible and used to support safe, compliant and well-planned estate management.

The ED Asset Management Team will:

- maintain accurate, up-to-date asset and building-services records to support safe operation and compliance
- provide reliable asset information to departments, project teams and maintenance teams
- coordinate asset ownership where buildings have multiple occupiers or shared systems
- support long-term estate planning by identifying asset condition, lifecycle needs and investment priorities
- ensure statutory inspections and maintenance programmes are informed by current asset data
- work with the Statutory Compliance Team, Programme Delivery and departmental building managers to resolve gaps, risks or unclear asset responsibilities.

6.7 Estates Division Programme Delivery Team

The ED Programme Delivery Team is responsible for planning and delivering construction, refurbishment and infrastructure projects across the University estate. The team ensures that all projects are designed and delivered safely, meet legal requirements, and support the long-term needs of the University.

The ED Programme Delivery Team will:

- plan and deliver construction and refurbishment projects in a safe, compliant and coordinated way
- ensure designers and contractors meet legal and University health and safety requirements throughout the project lifecycle
- embed health, safety and sustainability considerations into project planning, design and delivery
- work with the Statutory Compliance Team, Asset Management Team and departments to ensure projects integrate safely with existing buildings and systems
- maintain clear project documentation and communication to support safe decision-making and handover.

6.8 Director of Human Resources

The Director of Human Resources oversees the employment lifecycle and ensures work-related health issues are managed effectively.

The Director of Human Resources will:

- ensure systems exist to identify and manage work-related health concerns
- work with Staff Support Services to support staff health, capability and wellbeing
- embed safe working practices within HR policies and procedures.

6.9 Director of Finance

The Director of Finance oversees financial strategy, procurement and financial controls.

The Director of Finance will:

- ensure purchasing processes consider health and safety requirements
- ensure procurement decisions reflect safe installation, use and maintenance of equipment and materials.

7 Roles and Responsibilities – Departmental

7.1 Heads of Department⁶

Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring their department works safely and complies with University health and safety requirements. They provide local leadership, set expectations, and make sure appropriate arrangements are in place to manage risks effectively.

Heads of Department will:

- provide clear leadership and promote a positive safety culture
- sign the Departmental Health and Safety Statement of Intent on the University's Safety Hub
- appoint (in writing) a Departmental Safety Officer (DSO), a Departmental Fire Safety Manager (DFSM), and any other required safety role-holders^{7,8}, and provide them with the authority and resources they need to carry out their responsibilities
- ensure risks are identified, evaluated and recorded on the Safety Hub's Hazard and Risk Register
- ensure University-mandated safety systems, including the Safety Hub, Peregrine Foresight (for overseas travel), and any other required platforms, are used appropriately within the department, and that staff and students understand their responsibilities when using them
- ensure any contractors engaged directly by the department are managed in line with University requirements
- ensure all staff and students receive appropriate local induction and that training needs are identified, delivered and recorded
- ensure staff and students are competent, appropriately trained and properly supervised
- ensure the department's safety management system is robust and proportionate to its activities, and consult with staff and Trade Union Safety Representatives on matters relating to their health and safety
- maintain an effective Departmental Safety Committee (or, where a committee is not justified, ensure health and safety is a standing item at management meetings)
- ensure incidents and near misses are reported promptly and that departmental actions arising from investigations are completed
- ensure suitable emergency response arrangements are in place, monitor performance and cooperate with audits and inspections.

⁶ Head of Department includes: Heads of academic departments and of other academic institutions, Chairs of Faculty Boards that are not divided into departments, Heads of a Centre, Institute or other body under the supervision of the General Board or Council, such as a Non-School Institution (other than the Unified Administrative Service), and the Heads of Divisions within the Unified Administrative Service, and is the person who has authority for the implementation of University Health and Safety Policy.

⁷ Biological Safety Officer (BSO), Laser Safety Officer (LSO), Radiation Protection Supervisor (RPS) etc. (See Section 7.7)

⁸ Where no appointment is made the Head of Department will be deemed to be carrying out the roles.

7.2 Academic Staff, including Principal Investigators⁹, and Staff with Teaching Responsibilities

Academic staff, including Principal Investigators (PIs) and staff with teaching responsibilities, are responsible for managing the health and safety of the research and teaching activities they lead. They ensure that risks are properly assessed, controlled and reviewed in line with University policies and legal requirements.

Academic staff, PIs and teaching staff will:

- assess the risks associated with their work, including new processes, equipment and activities, and keep risk assessments up to date
- implement appropriate control measures, check they are effective, and reduce risks as far as reasonably practicable
- provide clear information, instruction, training and supervision to staff, students and visitors
- ensure hazardous substances, equipment and machinery are used safely, maintained appropriately, and subject to statutory checks
- maintain competence records for users of equipment or hazardous materials
- coordinate with collaborators and partners to manage shared risks
- report accidents, incidents and near misses, support investigations, and pause work if safety may be compromised
- ensure safe arrangements are in place for all teaching activities, including laboratory work, and appoint a deputy when absent.

Principal Investigators will also:

- identify and assess risks at the proposal and planning stage of research projects
- ensure the costs of risk control measures are built into project funding applications
- review project risks throughout the life of the work
- highlight any health and safety issues in research bids that may affect the University or the department, enabling informed decision-making.

7.3 Line Managers and Supervisors¹⁰

Line Managers and Supervisors oversee day-to-day work and have responsibility for applying the University's and Department's health and safety requirements within their teams. Their duties reflect the level of authority they hold to make decisions and act.

Line Managers and Supervisors will:

- apply University and departmental health and safety arrangements in their area of responsibility

⁹ A Principal Investigator is normally a member of academic or senior research staff who is the recipient of funds provided by the University, a research funding body or other benefactor and as such they are responsible for the health and safety management of research work under their control.

¹⁰ An inclusive term to describe all those who have a duty to manage any aspect of work activity, whether carried out by staff or students.

- ensure staff and students receive local induction and that training needs are identified, delivered and recorded
- ensure team members complete required safety system tasks (e.g., DSE assessments in Cardinus) and act on any actions identified
- make sure their teams are competent, trained and properly supervised
- communicate relevant safety information clearly
- ensure risk assessments are completed, followed and kept up to date
- ensure teams follow safe procedures and know emergency actions
- check that safe working procedures are followed and that staff know emergency actions
- ensure incidents and near misses are reported promptly and support any investigations
- ensure equipment, materials and hazardous substances are used safely, maintained properly and subject to required checks
- monitor day-to-day work, address issues within their control and escalate concerns where needed
- consider staff health, wellbeing and capability when allocating work or assessing risks.

7.4 School and Divisional Safety Officers

School/Divisional Safety Officers may be appointed by a Head of School, or a Divisional Head within the Unified Administrative Service, to further support the management of health and safety across the School or Division. In higher-risk or larger areas, more than one Safety Officer may be appointed to ensure appropriate coverage.

7.5 Departmental Safety Officers (DSOs)

Departmental Safety Officers support Heads of Department to fulfil their responsibilities by implementing University and local health and safety arrangements. They provide day-to-day advice and coordination to help keep their department safe. Larger departments or those spread across multiple sites may appoint more than one DSO to ensure effective coverage.

DSOs will:

- support the development and maintenance of effective departmental safety processes
- monitor how well those processes are working and suggest improvements
- provide day-to-day guidance to staff and students on health and safety matters
- advise the Head of Department where issues require their authority or additional action
- respond to incidents within their competence and support local follow-up.

7.6 Departmental Fire Safety Managers (DFSMs)

Departmental Fire Safety Managers support their Head of Department by helping to implement the University's Fire Safety Policy and local fire safety arrangements. They coordinate day-to-day fire safety actions within the department to ensure that people, spaces and activities remain safe.

7.7 Other Local Safety Support Roles

Some departments may need additional specialist safety roles depending on the types of work they carry out. These roles provide expert support in managing specific risks.

These roles may include:

- Biological Safety Officers (BSOs) – support work involving biological materials or genetically modified organisms
- Laser Safety Officers (LSOs) – support activities using Class 3 or Class 4 lasers
- Radiation Protection Supervisors (RPSs) – support work involving ionising radiation.

These role-holders help departments assess risks, develop safe working practices and ensure compliance with relevant legislation and University requirements.

7.8 Employees

All employees play an essential role in keeping the University safe. Every employee is expected to take reasonable care of themselves and others and to follow the University's health and safety requirements.

Employees will:

- follow all relevant University health and safety policies, procedures and local rules
- take reasonable care of their own health and safety and avoid putting others at risk
- stop work or raise concerns if they believe an activity is unsafe
- use equipment, materials and protective measures correctly and never misuse safety systems
- complete required training and maintain competence for their role
- report hazards, unsafe conditions, accidents, near misses and work-related health concerns promptly
- follow emergency procedures and know local arrangements
- work respectfully and cooperatively with managers, colleagues, DSOs, Trade Union Safety Representatives and safety specialists
- contribute to a positive safety culture by setting a good example and encouraging safe behaviour in others.

7.9 Trade Union appointed Safety Representatives and Representatives of Employee Safety (ROES)

Trade Union-appointed Safety Representatives and Representatives of Employee Safety (ROES) play an important role in supporting safe working practices across the University. They represent staff on health and safety matters and work in partnership with managers, departments and central committees. They have recognised rights under health and safety legislation and are integral to effective consultation.

Safety Representatives will:

- represent staff on health and safety matters and act as a key point of contact for concerns raised by employees
- participate in departmental and University-level consultation on health and safety matters, including through the Consultative Committee for Safety and relevant sub-committees
- support inspections, investigations and reviews within their areas, raising issues that may affect safety or wellbeing
- work collaboratively with managers, departments, the Safety Office and other stakeholders to promote a positive health and safety culture
- help communicate health and safety information to staff and encourage good practice
- exercise their statutory rights to investigate concerns, accompany inspections, and access information needed to support health and safety improvements.

7.10 Students

Students are not employees¹¹, so many employee-specific duties in the Health and Safety at Work *etc.* Act 1974 do not apply to them. However, the University still has a legal responsibility to protect the health, safety and welfare of students and others affected by its activities. In turn, students are expected to follow safety instructions and behave in a way that protects themselves and others.

The University will:

- provide a safe and healthy environment for study, teaching, research and other University-organised activities
- ensure buildings, equipment, materials and facilities used by students are safe and well maintained
- assess and manage risks associated with teaching, research, fieldwork, placements and other learning activities
- provide clear information, instruction and guidance on safe working, including necessary training
- maintain effective emergency arrangements, including fire safety, first aid and support for vulnerable individuals
- investigate incidents and concerns and take action to prevent recurrence
- work with Colleges, partners and placement providers to help ensure students are safe during off-site activities
- maintain policies, procedures and support systems that safeguard student wellbeing and health.

Students also play an essential role in keeping themselves and others safe. They will:

¹¹ Students carrying out work for the University either under contract of employment (such as Graduate Teaching Assistants) or as part of training (e.g. demonstrations/tutorials) will be treated as employees under this Policy.

- take reasonable care of their own health and safety and avoid actions that could put others at risk
- follow the University's Health and Safety Policy and their department's local procedures
- follow safety instructions given by University staff
- report accidents, incidents, ill-health, hazards or concerns promptly
- complete required safety training for their course, research or practical activities
- behave responsibly in laboratories, workshops, studios and other higher-risk areas
- not introduce equipment, interfere with installations or remove safety signage without permission
- follow safety requirements for fieldwork, placements, study trips and any supervised or arranged activity.

7.11 Students' Union

The Cambridge Students' Union (CSU) is an autonomous organisation. The University expects CSU to manage its own health and safety and maintain a management system that reflects its activities and level of risk. The University will seek assurance that this system is in place and working effectively.

CSU will:

- align with the University's Health and Safety Policy
- provide annual evidence that a Health and Safety Management System is in place and operating
- obtain competent health and safety advice and incorporate it into its management system
- explain how they will address any significant concerns or reputational risks identified.

The Health and Safety Executive Committee (HSEC) and the University Safety Office will provide CSU with the support it needs to help ensure the safety of students taking part in academic and related University activities.

7.12 Subsidiaries

The University treats each of its subsidiaries as autonomous organisations. Subsidiaries are expected to manage their own health and safety and maintain a management system that reflects their activities and risk profile. The University will seek assurance that these systems are in place and working effectively.

Subsidiaries will:

- align with the University's Health and Safety Policy
- provide annual evidence that an effective Health and Safety Management System is in place and operating as intended
- obtain competent health and safety advice and incorporate it into their management system
- explain how they will address any significant concerns or reputational risks identified

- monitor and review statutory inspections of subsidiary-owned plant and equipment completed via the University's insurers, and address any faults or issues identified (these will not be managed by the University).

7.13 Building Occupiers

Building Occupiers are responsible for ensuring that the areas assigned to their department are used safely and kept in good condition. They help maintain safe buildings for staff, students, visitors and anyone else using the space.

Building Occupiers will:

- report unplanned maintenance needs to the Estates Division
- keep their areas clean, tidy and compliant with University safety, security and fire guidance
- carry out only those maintenance tasks formally delegated to them
- cooperate with other building users to manage shared risks
- consult Estates (or external landlords) before making changes to layout, structure or services
- report building-related safety issues and support remedial work in their areas
- clarify responsibilities for shared systems or equipment and ensure these are documented
- manage local work, equipment and processes to prevent injury or ill-health
- complete required assessments and approvals for embedded companies and ensure compliance.

8 Advisory and Support Functions

8.1 Safety Office

The Safety Office is the University's central source of competent health and safety advice. It develops the University's Health and Safety Policy, provides guidance, supports good practice and helps ensure that safety standards are applied consistently across all departments.

The Safety Office will:

- develop and maintain University health and safety policies, arrangements and guidance
- provide clear, competent advice on legal requirements and good practice
- deliver health and safety training where needed
- run a programme of audits, inspections and monitoring to support continuous improvement
- manage the University's accident and incident reporting system, analyse trends and support learning from events
- report on key performance indicators and provide assurance to senior committees
- support departments and the University during emergencies and major incidents
- act as the University's main point of contact with external enforcing agencies (with the Director of HSRF)
- support specialist licensing and regulatory requirements linked to teaching and research

Advice on fire, water safety, asbestos, capital works and asset management is provided by specialist teams within the Estates Division.

8.2 Staff Support Services

Staff Support Services brings together Occupational Health, the Staff Counselling Service and Staff Wellbeing. The service provides impartial, confidential support to help protect and promote the physical and mental wellbeing of staff and students, prevent work-related ill health, and ensure people are fit and able to work safely and effectively.

Staff Support Services will:

- provide statutory and regulatory health checks, including health surveillance where required
- advise on fitness for work, rehabilitation, return-to-work plans and work-related health concerns
- support staff experiencing personal, emotional or psychological difficulties through confidential counselling and therapeutic services
- promote mental and physical wellbeing through guidance, campaigns, resources and preventative programmes
- provide vaccinations and immunisations required for work activities, including travel
- advise on reasonable workplace adjustments tailored to individual health needs
- contribute to a healthier working environment by supporting managers to recognise and address wellbeing concerns early

- work closely with the Safety Office, HR, the Disability Resource Centre and external specialists to provide an integrated, coordinated support service.

8.3 Specialist Safety Advisory Roles¹²

The University appoints competent specialists to provide expert advice and support in areas where specific legal requirements apply. These roles help the University meet its statutory duties and ensure specialist risks are managed effectively.

8.3.1 Radiation Protection Adviser (RPA)

The RPA provides specialist advice to ensure the University complies with the Ionising Radiation Regulations 2017 (as amended). They support departments using ionising radiation by advising on safe practices, risk assessment and legal requirements.

8.3.2 Radioactive Waste Adviser (RWA)

The RWA advises on the safe and compliant disposal and management of radioactive waste under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 (as amended). They support departments in meeting the conditions of relevant permits.

8.3.3 Dangerous Goods Safety Adviser (DGSA)

The University retains a DGSA to provide expert advice on the transport of dangerous goods by road, sea and air. They help ensure compliance with the Carriage of Dangerous Goods and Use of Transportable Pressure Equipment Regulations 2009 and support departments in planning and conducting compliant movements.

¹² These roles may be supported by retained independent competent specialist individuals or outsourced to specialist advisers or companies.

9 Arrangements

The University's health and safety arrangements set out how risks are managed in practice across all areas of work, research and study. They provide a consistent framework that helps departments meet their legal duties while allowing flexibility to develop local procedures that reflect the nature, scale and complexity of their activities.

These arrangements work alongside the University's governance structure by translating policy commitments into practical actions and explaining how performance is monitored and improved day to day. They bring together the key elements of our Safety Management System - risk assessment, communication and consultation, training and competence, incident reporting, emergency planning, monitoring and continuous improvement.

9.1 Health and Safety Management System (Plan-Do-Check-Act)

The University's Health and Safety Management System follows the Plan-Do-Check-Act model (see Figure 1), which places responsibility for managing risks with the people best placed to control them.



Figure 1: Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle – Source: HSE

- **Plan:** identify hazards, assess risks and set clear expectations through policies, local procedures and departmental hazard and risk registers
- **Do:** implement controls, safe systems of work, induction and training
- **Check:** monitor performance through inspections, audits, incident reporting and review
- **Act:** make improvements where needed and ensure learning is shared across the University

This approach helps ensure risks remain well-controlled and that legal requirements are met across all activities.

9.2 University-Wide Policies and Procedures and Local Safety Management Systems

The University's Health and Safety Policy is supported by a suite of University-wide policies, procedures and guidance produced by the Safety Office and Estates Division. These documents set out how specific risks must be managed and provide clear, practical direction for safe working across all Schools, departments and services.

All University health and safety documentation is developed in consultation with key stakeholders, approved through the relevant University processes. Because of their legal status, policies and procedures are mandatory for all staff and must be followed without exception.

Policies, procedures and guidance are reviewed when legislation or circumstances change, and through regular scheduled review, to ensure they remain effective and up to date. All documentation is available through the Safety Hub Library¹³.

Given the breadth and complexity of the University's activities, each Head of Department must also maintain a local Safety Management System which includes:

- a signed Departmental Health and Safety Statement of Intent
- a current hazard and risk register on the Safety Hub
- appointed role-holders with clear responsibilities
- local procedures proportionate to the department's activities
- arrangements for monitoring, consultation, record-keeping and review.

Local systems must be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain effective and reflect changes in work, legislation or risk.

9.3 University Health and Safety Plan

Each year, the University sets its health and safety priorities through the University Health and Safety Plan. HSEC reviews progress from the previous year at the start of Michaelmas term, agrees the key objectives for the coming year, and monitors delivery through regular updates. Key performance indicators are used to track progress, identify areas requiring further attention and support effective decision-making. Updates on the Plan and its KPIs are reported to senior governance bodies as part of the University's annual assurance cycle.

9.4 Risk Assessment and Control

Risk assessment is central to how the University manages health and safety. All identifiable risks must be assessed so that sensible and sufficient control measures can be put in place. Effective

¹³ The Safety Hub Library can be found at:

https://universityofcambridgecloud.sharepoint.com/sites/UoC_SafetyHub/SitePages/Safety%20library/Safety-library.aspx

risk assessment supports safe systems of work and helps ensure that activities are carried out responsibly and safely.

The University will:

- ensure all activities are risk-assessed using a proportionate and practical approach
- apply the hierarchy of control to eliminate or reduce risks to the lowest reasonably practicable level
- maintain departmental hazard and risk registers through the Safety Hub
- require assessments to be reviewed regularly and whenever activities, workplaces or information change
- provide guidance, templates and specialist advice for higher-risk areas such as laboratories, workshops, fieldwork, radiation and biological work.

Departments may develop additional local procedures where work presents unique or higher-risk profiles.

Specific responsibilities for completing, communicating and following risk assessments sit with Heads of Department, Principal Investigators, Line Managers and Supervisors, as described in the Roles and Responsibilities section (Section 7). All staff and students must follow the control measures identified in risk assessments and raise concerns if they believe an assessment is out of date or no longer reflects the activity.

9.5 Training, Competence and Induction

Everyone must have the knowledge and skills required to work safely. Training supports competence, confidence and consistent good practice.

The University will:

- set minimum training requirements for all staff and students
- ensure every new starter receives a suitable health and safety induction
- provide specialist and mandatory training for higher-risk work (e.g., chemical safety, manual handling, fire safety, radiation, biological work, water safety)
- maintain access to online training and guidance materials
- expect departments to keep appropriate training records and assess local training needs.

Competence must be maintained through refreshers, supervision and continuous development.

9.6 Communication, Consultation and Engagement

Good communication and active consultation support effective risk management and a positive safety culture.

The University will:

- communicate policy updates, safety alerts and key messages through the Key Issues Bulletin, Safety Hub, email updates and local systems
- ensure departments communicate relevant safety information to their staff, students and contractors

- consult staff through formal safety committees and with Trade Union Safety Representatives
- encourage staff and students to raise safety concerns and participate in improvement initiatives
- provide clear routes for obtaining advice from the Safety Office, Estates Division and specialist advisers.

Safety committees at University, School and departmental level help ensure shared learning and consistent practice.

9.7 Monitoring

Monitoring and reviewing health and safety performance ensures that risks remain well-controlled and that arrangements work in practice. It provides assurance that standards are being met, highlights where improvements are needed and supports continual learning across the University.

The University will:

- undertake Safety Office audits on a rolling programme
- support departments with specialist inspections and statutory compliance checks
- monitor key performance indicators and emerging trends
- follow up on actions and provide advice where improvements are required
- report performance to senior governance bodies.

Day-to-day monitoring follows the line-management structure. Managers and supervisors are expected to check that safe working practices are being followed, that control measures are in place and effective, and that staff and students understand the requirements for their work.

Departments must also carry out internal inspections suitable for the size of the department and the level of risk. As a minimum, each department should complete an annual inspection, record any deficiencies and ensure that agreed remedial actions are completed. Additional monitoring also occurs through incident investigations, responding to concerns and learning from feedback.

Where particular risks require specialist oversight, the University also carries out targeted subject-specific audits as part of its wider assurance programme.

9.8 Incident Reporting and Investigation

Reporting incidents and near misses helps the University learn from experience and prevent future harm.

The University will:

- provide a clear incident reporting process through AssessNet
- ensure incidents, near misses and unsafe conditions are reported promptly by staff and students
- investigate incidents to understand root causes and contributing factors
- share lessons learned across departments where appropriate

- ensure statutory notifications (e.g., RIDDOR) are completed by the Safety Office
- support staff and students affected by incidents.

Departments must ensure staff know how to report concerns and that they complete any actions arising from investigations.

9.9 Emergency Arrangements

Effective emergency planning ensures the University can respond safely and consistently to foreseeable events. The University maintains central arrangements for fire safety, first aid, major incidents and business continuity, and provides departments with the information and support they need to manage local emergencies.

The University will:

- maintain clear fire safety, first aid and emergency response arrangements
- provide appropriate emergency contacts and escalation routes
- support departments during significant incidents and coordinate with emergency services where required.

Departments must ensure that:

- local emergency procedures are in place and communicated to staff, students and visitors
- Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) are prepared where required
- staff know what to do in an emergency and can access the equipment and information they need.

These arrangements help ensure that the University can respond quickly, protect people from harm and restore normal operations as soon as possible.

9.10 Estates-Related Arrangements

The University is responsible for maintaining safe buildings, facilities and building services across the estate.

The University will:

- maintain buildings, services, plant and equipment in a safe and legally compliant condition
- deliver statutory compliance programmes (e.g., fire safety, water safety, asbestos, lifting equipment, pressure systems)
- ensure construction, refurbishment and maintenance work follow CDM and other legal requirements
- manage contractors safely and ensure appropriate supervision
- provide clear lines of responsibility for building management and maintenance.

Building Occupiers must report issues promptly and comply with Estates Division guidance and requirements.

9.11 Specialist Arrangements

Some activities require specific policies, controls and specialist oversight.

The University maintains additional arrangements for:

- radiation protection
- biological and GMO safety
- chemical safety, COSHH and DSEAR
- laser safety
- waste management (including radioactive and hazardous waste)
- pressure systems and lifting operations
- workshop and engineering safety
- fieldwork, placements, travel and overseas work
- controlled water systems and Legionella management
- asbestos management.

Specialist advisers support compliance in these areas and provide competent advice to departments.

9.12 Review and Continuous Improvement

Health and safety management is an ongoing process of improvement.

The University will:

- regularly review this Policy and all associated arrangements
- act on lessons learned from incidents, audits and inspections
- respond to changes in legislation, guidance or working practices
- support departments in continuous improvement programmes.

Departments must ensure their local Safety Management Systems remain up-to-date and effective.

10 University Safety Systems

Departments are expected to use the University's approved health and safety systems to support good practice, meet legal obligations and manage risks consistently across all relevant areas of work.

10.1 Cardinus (Display Screen Equipment Management)

All relevant employees must complete a Display Screen Equipment (DSE) assessment through Cardinus.

Departments are responsible for monitoring completion, reviewing actions identified through assessments, and ensuring that any necessary adjustments or follow-up measures are put in place.

10.2 Safety Hub (Safety Management Platform)

The Safety Hub provides tools for communication, guidance and key safety management processes. Departments are expected to use the Safety Hub to support their local Safety Management System.

Departments must ensure that:

- the Head of Department signs the Departmental Health and Safety Statement of Intent
- the departmental Hazard and Risk Register is completed and reviewed at least annually
- the risk register review is considered and documented through the departmental Safety Committee, or where a committee is not justified, through management meetings where health and safety is a standing agenda item.

These actions ensure health and safety information is captured consistently and that risks are reviewed regularly.

10.3 Peregrine Foresight (Overseas Travel Risk Management)

Peregrine Foresight provides risk information, alerts and tracking for staff and students undertaking overseas travel. Departments must use this system to ensure travel risks are identified, assessed and appropriately managed before and during University-related trips. Completion of risk assessments in this system will also ensure cover under the University's travel insurance policy.

Departments must:

- ensure all overseas travel is recorded in Peregrine Foresight before departure
- verify that travellers have reviewed the risk information and guidance provided
- ensure travel risk assessments are completed and proportionate to destination risk
- use Foresight alerts to support travellers and respond to emerging incidents
- maintain oversight of staff and students overseas through the system.

These measures support safe, informed and responsible travel and ensure the University can respond effectively to international risks and incidents.

11 Legal requirements and guidance

The University's Health and Safety Policy is founded on the Health and Safety at Work *etc.* Act 1974 and all relevant statutory duties, supporting regulations and Approved Codes of Practice.

Specific legal requirements for areas such as fire safety, chemical and biological hazards, radiation, water safety, asbestos, construction and workplace safety are reflected in the University's policies, procedures and specialist arrangements. These documents explain how statutory duties are met in practice and are kept up-to-date in line with changes in legislation and good practice.

A maintained list of applicable legislation, standards and guidance is held by the Safety Office and is available through the Safety Hub Library

11.1 Associated Policies and Register

Document Title	Document Location
Policy and Guidance for Staff and Students Working, Managing, or Engaging in a Relevant Activity involving People Who Have Offended	Safety Hub Library
University Policy to Safeguard Students Studying and Working Away	Safety Hub Library
Fire Safety Policy	Safety Hub Library/Estates Division Website
University Register of Safety Legal Responsibilities and Obligations	Safety Hub Library

Appendix 1 Abbreviations and Definitions used in this Policy

Terms used in this Policy are defined as follows:

A	
ACoP	Approved Code of Practice
Audits	A formal, systematic, independent process for checking the implementation and effectiveness of the systems for managing health and safety
B	
BSO	Biological Safety Officer
C	
CCFS	Consultative Committee for Safety
CDM	Construction (Design and Management) Regulations
COSHH	Control of Substances Hazardous to Health
Contractors	Persons or companies who are under contract with the University to provide materials or labour to perform a service or to do a job (these can include those persons/companies contracted through the Estates Division or through the Temporary Employment Service)
CSU	Cambridge Students' Union
D	
Department	Generically to apply to all University of Cambridge management entities
DFSM	Departmental Fire Safety Manager
DGSA	Dangerous Goods Safety Adviser
DSC	Departmental Safety Committee
DSE	Display Screen Equipment
DSEAR	Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations
DSO	Departmental Safety Officer
E	
ED	Estates Division
G	
GMO	Genetically Modified Organism
H	
Head of Department (HoD)	This term includes Heads of academic departments and of other academic institutions, Chairs of Faculty Boards that are not divided into departments, Heads of a Centre, Institute or other body under the supervision of the General Board or Council, such as a Non-School Institution (other than the Unified Administrative Service), and the Heads of Divisions within the Unified Administrative Service, and is the person who has authority for the implementation of University Health and Safety Policy
Health and Safety	Used in its broadest sense to include both mental and physical health, as defined under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and associated legislation
HR	Human Resources
HSEC	Health and Safety Executive Committee
HSMS	Health and Safety Management System
HSRF	Health, Safety and Regulated Facilities

K	
KPI	Key Performance Indicator(s)
L	
LSO	Laser Safety Officer
N	
NSI / NSIs	Non-School Institution(s)
P	
PEEP	Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan
PI	Principal Investigator
R	
RIDDOR	Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations
Risk Profile	Summarises the threats facing the University, including their likelihood and potential impact, and considers how effective existing control measures are in managing those risks
Risk Register	Details all identified risks, including description, category, cause, likelihood, impact, responses, owners, and status
ROES	Representatives of Employee Safety
RPA	Radiation Protection Adviser
RPS	Radiation Protection Supervisor
RWA	Radioactive Waste Adviser
S	
Safety culture	The shared attitudes, values and behaviours that shape how people think about and manage safety in the workplace
Safety Management System (SMS)	A documented process designed to assess and manage safety risks in the workplace
Staff	Anyone employed by the University, including emeritus staff, affiliated title holders, Temporary Employment Service workers, apprentices and vacation interns, whether based in the UK or overseas
Student	Any individual registered as a student with the University
Subsidiaries	Defined as a company wholly owned or controlled by the University
U	
UAS	Unified Administrative Service
V	
VC	Vice-Chancellor
Visitors	Guests, visiting academics and fellows, visiting students, work-experience participants and members of the public

Appendix 2 Health and Safety Governance and Organisation

