



Safety Newsletter



June 2023

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Safety Office Training Information

The Safety Office has developed a Safety Training Matrix ([Training | Safety Office \(cam.ac.uk\)](#)) detailing the training that those responsible for or who are appointed to one or more safety roles either must or should complete. The matrix indicates where refresher training is required and at what intervals. Should you have any questions please email safety@admin.cam.ac.uk.

Safety Office Staff Updates

Welcome to new members of the Safety Office:

- ❖ Mick Stanner joined us on 6 June as the new PAT safety testing technician
- ❖ Mhairi Smeeton will join us on 4 July as Safety Auditor

Update: Elizabeth Moore unfortunately did not join us but instead took up a permanent role in UAS Finance Division

Departure- farewell and thanks to:

- ❖ Diane Grover, SO Administrator, on 28 April to take on a new role in the Department of Biochemistry

Change of role:

- ❖ Simon Hoer from Assistant Radiation Protection Officer to Senior Safety Manager – Biological



Update from the Biological Section

New Senior Safety Manager - Biological. We are delighted to announce that Dr Simon Hoer has accepted the role of Senior Safety Manager – Biological and will start his new role in mid-June. Simon has a wealth of biological knowledge having worked in the fields of Virology, Molecular Biology, Mitochondrial Disease and Hypoxia. On the successful completion of his PhD Simon began his working career in Cambridge, then moving to Vienna and Oxford before returning to Cambridge and eventually joining the Safety Office in 2017 as the Assistant Radiation Protection Officer. While in this role he has successfully completed the training necessary to be accredited as a Radiation Protection Advisor, providing advice to users and Departments as well as running numerous safety training courses. In his new role Simon will focus on biological safety. He looks forward to continuing his close ties with the Clinical and Biological School Safety Officers and to making new contacts across the University. He has plans to review existing and develop new biological safety training along side his core role of providing competent safety advice and support.

Radiation Protection

The Safety Office will be seeking a deputy RPA to replace Simon Hoer who is moving into biological safety. The Radiation Team will once again be short staffed during a very busy year but, as always, please don't hesitate to contact us if any problems or questions and we appreciate your patience and understanding if any delays in responding.

We are currently liaising with the Nuclear Safeguards inspectors and departmental RPSs to implement requirements under the Nuclear Safeguards Regulations (NSR). The regulations require strict control and accountancy of certain radioactive materials to prevent use for "non-peaceful purposes".

A reminder that material which meets the description of nuclear material under NSR is as follows:

- Uranium metal, alloy or compound
- Thorium metal, alloy or compound
- Ore containing a substance from which the above source materials can be derived
- Plutonium 239
- Uranium 233.

ALL such material must be declared to the Safety Office and there are very few exceptions to reporting. Any plans for new acquisitions (including transfers) must be discussed with local RPSs. We have also had reports of people not being aware that uranium and thorium items are radioactive so a general reminder may be needed.

And finally, a note that regulators have problems both with employers who fail to employ suitable advisers and also with employers who fail to follow RPA advice, as a recent HSE prosecution shows (<https://press.hse.gov.uk/2023/04/19/company-fined-for-putting-workers-at-risk-of-exposure-to-radiation/>)

Please don't hesitate to contact us if any questions or problems in following policy, audit actions and other advice given.



Accident / Incident Section

- 1. Are you new to AssessNET?** We are still getting reports from staff and students being unaware of the online accident reporting system. If this applies to you, please ‘**Read on...**’
 - Visit the (<https://www.safety.admin.cam.ac.uk/subjects/accidents-and-incidents>) Accidents and Incidents webpages to find out all about this on-line system
 - There is a Frequently-Asked-Question section (<https://www.safety.admin.cam.ac.uk/subjects/accidents-and-incidents/frequently-asked-questions>)
 - There are two software training manuals available for downloading: one for DSOs/Departmental Administrators (termed ‘Registered Users’) (<https://www.safety.admin.cam.ac.uk/system/files/hsd092e.pdf>) and one for all other University staff/students (‘Portal Users’) (<https://www.safety.admin.cam.ac.uk/system/files/hsd093e.pdf>)
 - Online training videos will be created and released in due course.

IMPORTANT: If you are a DSO or Departmental Administrator and are not aware of the AssessNET system and/or have not registered yet, please contact the Accidents/Incidents team by email: accidents-incidents@admin.cam.ac.uk who will help you to get set up.

- 2. Timeline for submitting and completing accident/incident records.** We kindly ask all staff and students to submit any adverse events (injuries, near misses, property damage, environmental incidents, etc) without delay on AssessNET. The Safety Office is then able to provide support to departments during investigations where needed and also to comply with any RIDDOR reportable incidents. DSOs should complete accident/incident reports as soon as possible, but no later than 2 months unless an investigation is still ongoing. In these situations, it would be helpful if the DSO could make a comment within the ‘Investigation’ or ‘Notes’ section.
 

- 3. Safety Alert – Microwaving food in bags.** One department had a small fire in a microwave when a foil-lined paper bag containing food was placed into a microwave. The bag caught fire, which luckily was swiftly extinguished.
 

The department and the Safety Office consulted with the University’s Estates Division Fire Safety Consultant. The decision was taken that **no foil-lined paper bags are to be used in any microwave throughout the University.** A Safety Alert to all departments was sent via the Fire Safety Yammer. Departments are advised to do the following:

- Provide clear instructions about how to use microwave ovens.
- Place a clear signage on what items can’t be heated in the ovens.
- Communicate to all members of the department that foil-lined paper bags must not be used in microwave ovens.



Accident / Incident Section contd

- News from the Fire Safety Team of the Estates Division.** The Estates Division now have a dedicated Fire Safety Team who are available to support and give advice on Fire Safety within the University. The team includes Mick Marsh (Fire Safety Manager), Dave Rees (Deputy Fire Safety Manager) and Tammy Robinson (Fire Safety Advisor). The team have set up a Fire Safety community yammer page



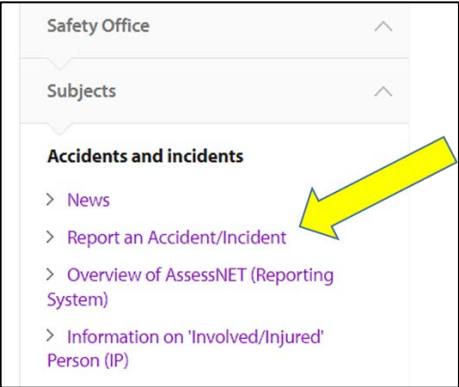
(<https://web.yammer.com/main/org/universityofcambridgecloud.onmicrosoft.com/groups>) where you can find relevant fire safety guidance documents and fire safety information. Please note that the page is not monitored daily and any fire safety queries should be sent to the fire safety team (universityfiresafety@admin.cam.ac.uk).

- Accidents/Incidents involving Estates Division staff or contractors.** Important message to DSOs, Departmental Administrators and First Aiders. If any serious accident/incident (eg major injury such as a suspected fracture, a fall from height or transfer to A&E/hospital) involves a member of staff from the Estates Division or one of their contractors, please immediately inform the Estates Division; Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team. Contact:
 - Peter Dempsey, Mobile: 07720 160499
 - Pauline Haggart, Mobile: 07510 923997



What is new on the Safety Office Accident/Incident webpage?

- Data handling of accident/incident records.** Accident/incident reports contain sensitive and confidential information. Any personal data will be used for health and safety purposes to enable the University to meet and monitor relevant legal obligations and its duty of care to staff, students and others. There is a new sub-section on the Accident/Incident webpage that has further information on data handling and record retention: <https://www.safety.admin.cam.ac.uk/subjects/accidents-and-incidents/information-data-handling>
- Separate sub-section for submission of accidents/incidents.** There is now a separate sub-section for the reporting of accidents/incidents that leads directly to the accident reporting 'Portal'. Simply click on 'Accidents and Incidents' on the 'Subjects' drop-down list and the 2nd sub-section is to 'Report an Accident/Incident' (see screenshot)





Accident / Incident Section contd

3. **New incident category - Environmental incidents.** An Environmental Incident is an event that may cause harm or potential harm to an environmental receptor e.g. air, water, land, wildlife or local habitat. We have created this new incident category on AssessNET to enable reporting of such incidents. The incident category can be found alongside the other selectable options:



The category contains specific questions about the nature of spills: what type of substance, volume of spill, where the spill occurred, etc.

Future training

- **Accident/Incident investigation course.** There has been a slight delay with the roll-out of this course. We plan to launch this course during the Michaelmas term.
- **AssessNET Software online training course.** The development of this online training has also been delayed, but we still aim to produce this course later in the year. We will inform all our 'Registered Users' once this course becomes available.

Contact details of the Accident/Incident Team:

Email: Accidents-Incidents@admin.cam.ac.uk

Phone (Cornelia Gewert – Safety Office Accident Incident Manager):

Office: 01223 339535;

Work Mobile: 07395 308157



Audit Section

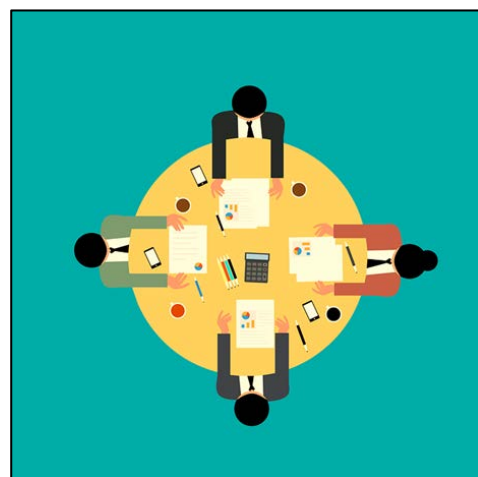
Are you looking to improve safety but not sure where to spend your precious time?

We at the Safety Office have made a commitment to visit and help you all within the next two years or so. We'd love to see how you're getting on and help you share your successes too.

Our audit visits will give you focus, direction and priority to take the next steps in continually improving your safety management systems.

With upwards of 200 departments, faculties, non-school institutions, and other functions to visit, this is the biggest investment in auditing we've been able to bring to support you on the ground and will require the work of a new team being recruited in the Safety Office.

You may be asking what can you expect from our visits? Don't worry, we'll guide you through the process once we've agreed the dates to visit you and your sites. Here are a few pointers to get you warmed up though.



Preparing for the audit

- The audit is an opportunity to learn and improve on your current levels of safe assurance. We don't expect you to try to perfect everything in advance.
- We'll reach out with a list of documents and records with plenty of notice. Where you have these, please send them over to us so we can make the most of the short time we'll have with you onsite.
- It is helpful for us to be able to chat to people of differing roles and levels. We'll work with you to set up some discussion meetings so that we can hear how safety works 'on the ground'.

During an audit

- We'll need a little time from your Head of Departments (or equivalent) who will be leading safety for the function. We'll also need more time from you as the DSO and a building/facilities manager to take us around the sites and talk things over as we walk.
- We'll introduce ourselves and the plan during an opening meeting and will be able to give a summary overview of some celebrations and opportunities in a closing meeting at the end of the audit visit.

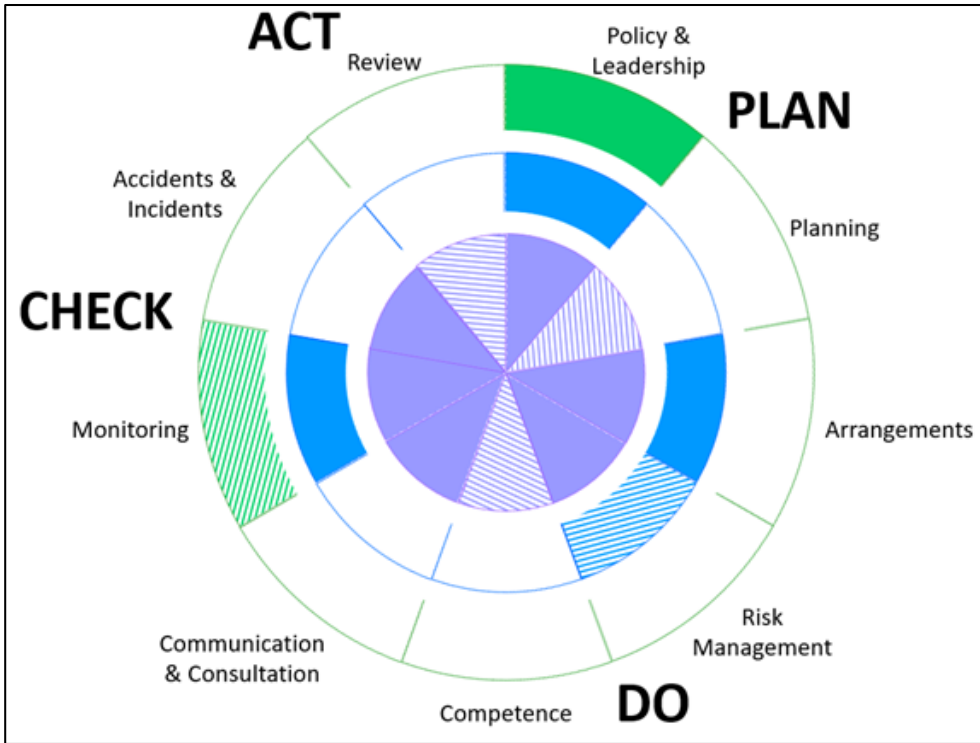
After the audit

- You will receive an audit report, clearly demonstrating where you can focus your available time to make the biggest ongoing impacts.
- It will contain visualisations to quickly show your improvement from audit to audit and a 1-page summary which can be used to communicate widely across the function.
- And you will receive a list of opportunities all with priorities to help you on your journey till the next audit comes along.



Audit Section contd

Rory Feilen (raf71@cam.ac.uk) will be leading the new team and he looks forward to meeting many of you very soon. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out.



Core level	Good practice	Continual Improvement
Inner circle	Middle layer	Outer layer
You understand your most significant hazards and you have implemented some controls to reduce these. You comply with many legal obligations and risk to individuals is not high. There is opportunity to organise your procedures into an effective management system to lower risk further.	Your system proportionally manages relevant hazards, providing a reasonably low level of risk to individuals, University and its reputation. Compliance to legal obligations is very good.	Your system is highly robust. Risk to individuals, University and its reputation is very low and your system demonstrates your commitment to continual improvement*.

A partially filled section means you are working towards that level

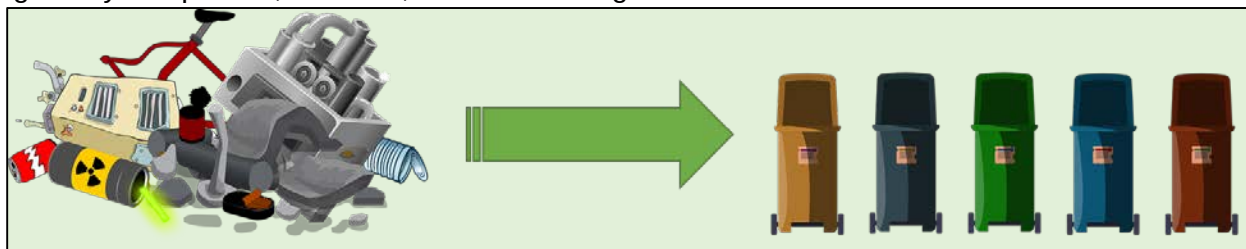
*A system at this level would be in a very good position to consider certification such as ISO14001.



Chemical Safety

A new supplier for the disposal of hazardous waste

The University recently concluded the tender process for a supplier to handle the disposal of its hazardous chemical and hazardous electrical waste. The Safety Office worked with the Procurement Services to consider a range of metrics including customer service, sustainability, regulatory compliance, and cost, before awarding the contract to **TRADEBE**.



What happens now?

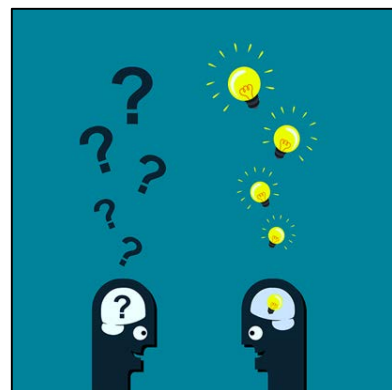
- Collections will continue under the University's existing supplier until 31 July 2023.
- TRADEBE will take over the collection service for hazardous chemical waste and hazardous WEEE (hazardous waste electrical and electronic equipment – specifically fluorescent tubes, batteries, fridges, and freezers) from 1 August 2023.
- The service will remain centrally funded and the University's two on-site waste chemists will continue in their existing roles. But TRADEBE will help the University meet its sustainability targets by offering fewer road miles, more online processes to cut down on wastepaper, and more efficient storage of waste on site.
- TRADEBE staff will be out and about across campus in the coming weeks to look at how we do things now and how they can help us:
 - reduce the accumulation of hazardous chemical waste in store areas;
 - make sure waste is separated according to hazard class; and
 - make it easier for us to meet and report on our compliance and legal requirements.They might have some questions for you, so please help where you can.

What's happening next?

DSOs, lab managers, facilities staff, technicians and anyone who deals with hazardous waste (including hazardous WEEE) in your department can meet TRADEBE representatives at one of three Supplier Events with the University's new Hazardous Waste contractors scheduled for:

- **Tuesday 27th June** at the Yusuf Hamied Department of Chemistry (City centre) 10am–3pm
- **Monday 3rd July** at the Maxwell Centre (West Cambridge site) 10am–3pm
- **Tuesday 4th July** (<https://training.cam.ac.uk/fin/event/4774884>) at the Clifford Allbutt Lecture Theatre (Addenbrookes site) 10am–3pm

SHARPSMART who will provide a Bio-Hazardous waste collection service and Returnable Sharps Bin service, will also be present.



The two suppliers will alternate presentations throughout each day; see the UTBS booking links above for presentation times. The suppliers will showcase the waste collection and treatment strategy for the University including their equipment so you will be able to see what some of the new items will look like. You can drop in and attend any combination of presentations. The suppliers will answer any of your questions about the new services.

If you are interested in attending one of the events, (<https://training.cam.ac.uk/fin/course/pp9>). Refreshments will be available.

If you have any questions that cannot wait until the events, please contact Margaret Glendenning (chemicalsafety@admin.cam.ac.uk) in the Safety Office or Claudia Conti (claudia.conti-perkins@admin.cam.ac.uk) in Procurement.



Physical Safety

1. Safe Use of Ladders. Several ladder accidents have been reported recently, some of them quite serious, and we would like to raise everyone’s awareness about the safe use of ladders. Everyone can contribute to staying safe by doing the following:

➤ **DSOs and Facility Managers** should ensure that all ladders, kick-stools, and platforms are inspected regularly, in line with the Work at Height regulations, for any defects and damage. Inspections must be recorded; one way to evidence the inspection is to fix a tag directly onto the equipment. Regular checking should be captured in logs and each ladder should be given an equipment identifier for this purpose. Statutory inspections should occur annually for internal ladders and every 6 months for ladders used or stored outside. Although inspections are a legal requirement it should not be used to identify if the ladder is safe to use, individuals should always perform a pre-use inspection on the equipment every time they use it to make sure it is fit for purpose. The following checklist can be used for the inspections, but also can be used by the user to ensure the ladder is installed and used safely



➤ **All users** of ladders and other height equipment should ensure that they have read and understood the ‘Working at height’ leaflet (*HSD152 – Working Safely at Height*; <https://www.safety.admin.cam.ac.uk/system/files/hsd152p.pdf>) and that they have the necessary training to use these safely. Please talk to your DSO who will be able to help.

➤ Before using the equipment, you must visually inspect the equipment and check that the ladder is ‘in date’ with regards to the regular inspection. If the equipment is ‘out-of-date’ or damaged, report it to the DSO without delay and attach a ‘Do not use’ sign to the equipment.



➤ **Contractors and external engineers/visitors** should have their own equipment to complete the job they are being employed to do, this includes equipment to access work to be completed at height. Contractors should not be allowed to use University owned equipment, no matter how small or urgent the job is. If contractors do not have their own equipment to complete the job safely then it cannot be undertaken at this time.

➤ **Beware of telescopic ladders.** A serious accident occurred involving a newly purchased telescopic ladder. When trialling the new ladder, all of the individual telescopic rungs of the ladder unexpectedly collapsed and the (advertised) safety-catch preventing the collapse of multiple rungs failed. The department decided to not use these types of ladders at all. If your department is thinking of purchasing this type of ladder, ensure that it is from a reputable supplier, is not on a product recall list (eg due to the ladder being a fake product) and that all users have undergone the relevant training for the correct way to erect the ladder and training for working at height. A full risk assessment should be carried out before any new equipment is used for the first time.



Physical Safety contd

2. Pre-travel risk assessments

The implementation of **Peregrine Foresight**, the new electronic platform for pre-travel risk assessments, is underway. The Safety Office team has been working with Peregrine over the spring to configure the system to fit the University's requirements, and we are now completing testing. The tested version will then be used in five pilot academic institutions over the summer: Departments of Archaeology, Education, Engineering, Materials Science, and the Faculty of Law. A full roll out to other institutions in the University will follow over the autumn.



We are happy to come and talk to DSOs and Departmental Administrators at any point to show you the new system and discuss a suitable timescale for roll-out to you, so anyone who's keen to hear more over the summer but isn't in one of the pilot departments, please do get in touch.

You may also find it useful to know that the introduction of Peregrine Foresight is one of a number of new things being launched this summer and autumn designed to support academics, students and anyone who travels or works internationally on University business. There will be communications and more information about these related initiatives coming soon.

Contact: Gillian Weale, Head of Helpdesk Operations (email: glw33@cam.ac.uk) and/or Andrea Eccles, Head of Physical Safety (email: andrea.eccles@admin.cam.ac.uk)

1. Display Screen Equipment (DSE) risk assessments



A procurement exercise is underway to secure a supplier for an electronic solution to support DSE risk assessments. This will cover all staff and postgraduate students in the University. We hope to have identified a preferred supplier by the end of the summer, with implementation starting in September.

Contact: Gillian Weale, Head of Helpdesk Operations (email: glw33@cam.ac.uk)