



Safety Newsletter



September 2023

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Safety Office General Updates

- **New initiative: DSO Networking Event**

The Safety Office has launched a new initiative to support DSOs on 06th September 2023. The School of Clinical Medicine at Addenbrooke's Hospital was the chosen venue for the first DSO networking event that attracted 12 DSOs. They were joined by Simon Hoer, Conny Gewert, Mhairi Smeeton, Keff Tibbles and Mark Elsdon.

The ideas and topics raised and discussed at the network event were discussed at the next Safety Office meeting. It was exciting to see the degree in commonality between the DSO ideas and requirements and the delivery plans now taking shape in the Safety Office. This issue of the Safety Newsletter is therefore timely, providing the opportunity to share with you some of what we are doing.

The 2022 Deloitte audit of departmental safety management identified a number of actions. In response, the Safety Office and IT colleagues are looking to identify IT solutions to better support Departments manage safety. Many of the issues raised at the networking event fall within scope (for example; Health and Safety Management Systems, user-friendly templates and forms plus sharable training and competence records). In the next couple of months you might be approached by Nexer Consultants on Teams to assist them in gathering information. If you have been approached and have agreed to meet Nexer Consultants on Teams, thank you and if wish to be involved in helping to scoping of this project and have not been contacted please contact Safety@admin.cam.ac.uk.

Next DSO Networking Event: early to mid-December 2023 at a venue in Downing Street

- **Safety Office Website.** The Safety Office has plans to launch a new user oriented SharePoint website, making it easier for everyone to find information quickly. As you can imagine this is a big piece of work mainly because it will require a change the way we deliver the valuable safety advice and guidance currently found within our excellent but sizable pdf documents.

Auditing. As some of you are aware, the new Safety Office audit team has started a new schedule to audit Departmental Safety Management (see separate Auditing Section in this Safety Newsletter). Their work will provide an important insight into how Departments currently manage safety and the variety of systems and practices currently in place. The audit findings will therefore not only be valuable to the Safety Office and University because they will provide measureable data about the current systems, the findings will inform the future digital Departmental Safety Management project mentioned above.



Safety Office Staff Updates

Safety Office Staff Updates

Welcome to new members of the Safety Office:

- ❖ Laura Curran joined us in August on a 9 month TES contract as a Senior Administrator

Joining the Safety Office soon:

- ❖ **Three new Safety Co-ordinators:** We advertised and are about to welcome three new staff to the Safety Office. Each hopes to develop a career in H&S and the Safety Co-ordinator role has been designed to provide on the job safety training and upskilling opportunities, while bringing administrative support to the Safety Office.



Safety Office Training Information

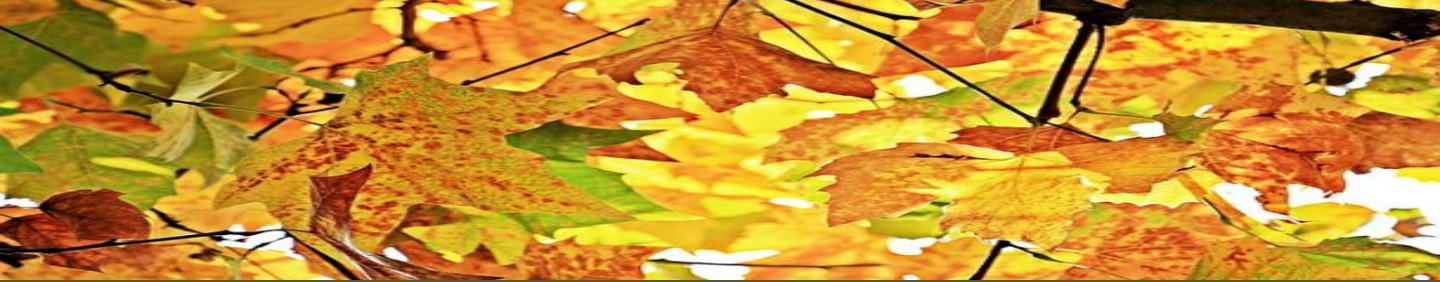
- **New Safety Training Matrix.** The Safety Office has developed a **Safety Training Matrix** (<https://www.safety.admin.cam.ac.uk/training>) detailing the training that those responsible for or who are appointed to one or more safety roles either must or should complete. The matrix indicates where refresher training is required and at what intervals. Should you have any questions please email safety@admin.cam.ac.uk

University of Cambridge Safety Training Matrix by Role Title							
Role Title (Full or Part time)	Training Course						
	IOSH Safety for Executives and Directors	HoD Essentials	DSO Essentials	Principle Investigators, Do you know how to fulfil your H & S responsibilities?	IOSH Managing Safely 3 day accredited course	Accident Investigation	Risk Assessment
Senior Leaders and Governance staff							
Head of Department							
Supervisor / Manager							
Principle Investigators							
Departmental Administrators						Where relevant	Where relevant
Departmental Safety Officer					safety trained		Where relevant

- **New Training for new Head of Department (HoD).** The new **‘Head of Department Safety Essentials’** training course has been launched and while mandated for all new HoDs, it is our intention to strongly encourage all HoDs to complete this training.
- **DSO Training.** The DSO training course has been relaunched so, even if you have attended previously all DSOs are welcome to attend.
- **Unable to attend a booked course? Courtesy and consideration do matter.**

The Safety Office provide some excellent training courses across a broad range of subjects that can all be booked through the Safety Office website. We often have waiting lists for all our courses and therefore find it frustrating when people do not attend and do not let us know. We understand that urgent work issues on the day sometimes prevent people attending, but recently we have had a number of people just not turning up.

We would appreciate it if you would cancel any booked course that you know you will not be able to attend, even at short notice to allow others on the waiting list to be notified and hopefully attend in your place. This will not only help to reduce our waiting lists but also prevent courses being delivered with reduced audiences and available spaces. Your consideration in this matter would be appreciated.



Safety Office Training Information (contd)

- **Postgraduate Training.** The Post Graduate (PG) in-person course has been rewritten and will be launched in October as '**Staying Safe at the University of Cambridge (an introduction to Health and Safety at the University)**'. This new online course will be appropriate for a wider audience. Finally, in addition to several new self-taught online safety courses already available, the Safety Office will be launching a number of other new courses shortly.
- **New Online Courses.** The Safety Office has recently launched two new online courses (available on the moodle site <https://www.vle.cam.ac.uk/login/index.php>)



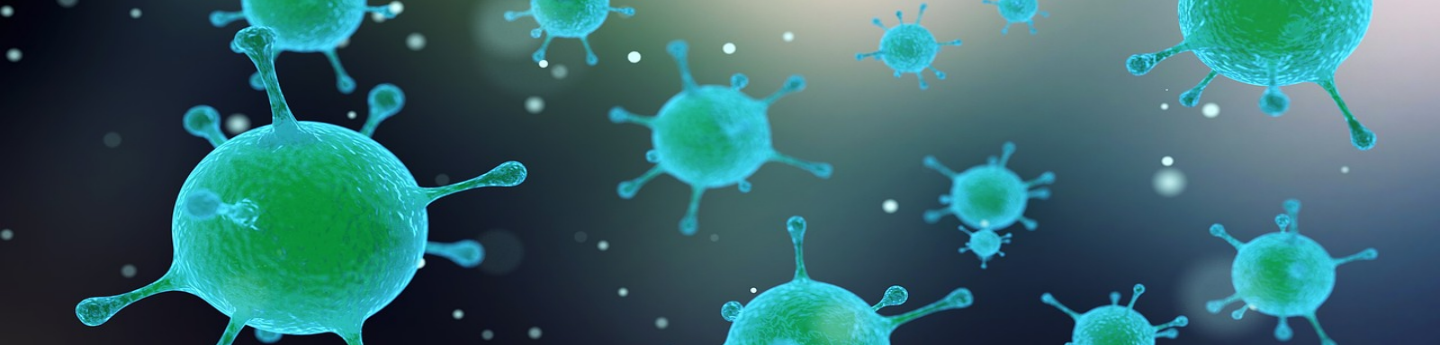
Glass and sharps hazards in the laboratory.

A very high proportion of accidents reported to the Safety Office from around the University involve sharps of one sort or another. This 30-minute online course looks at how you can reduce hazards when working with glass and sharps.

Lone working

This 40-minute course introduces how lone working can be managed safely in the University of Cambridge through risk assessment. It explains what is meant by the term “lone working”, how it can impact safety and what regulations guide lone working within the University.





Communicable Diseases Section

The Helpdesk is still here to provide advice and guidance to Departments and Faculties if you have queries about cases of infectious diseases. It's very unlikely that outbreaks or cases will be linked to the workplace but the Helpdesk should be notified of any cases brought to your attention of:

- E.coli 0157 or E coli STEC infection
- Food poisoning
- Hepatitis A, B or C
- Measles
- Mumps
- Rubella (German measles)
- Meningococcal meningitis
- Septicaemia
- Scarlet fever
- Tuberculosis (TB)
- Typhoid or paratyphoid
- Whooping cough (pertussis)



This is so we can report according to Department of Education guidance, and help co-ordinate any response required by the public health authorities.

The Helpdesk can advise on other infectious diseases, and also any queries about vaccination or implications for travel.

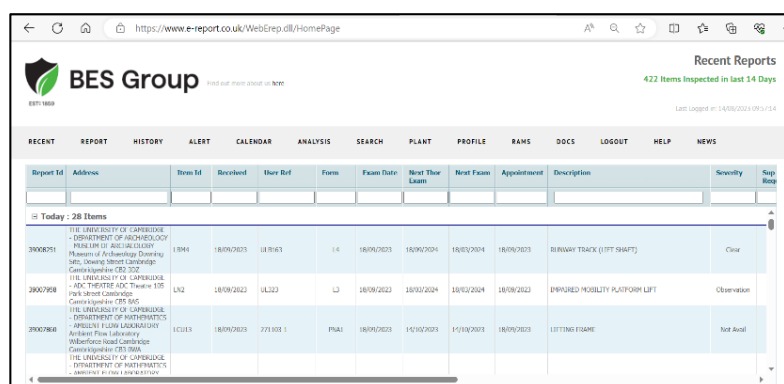
Do share this with colleagues in your Departments and Faculties; those responsible for HR and managing staff may find this especially relevant.

Contact us:

Covid-helpdesk@admin.cam.ac.uk

01223 339514

E-report is the BES group database and where you will find all of your certificates and written schemes of examinations for all your lifting equipment, lifting accessories equipment and pressure vessels. It will help you to manage the statutory inspections of these assets within your department. Below is a screen shot of the database, access will be given only for the asset data that you are responsible for.



We also need to reduce the number of PNA (plant not available) reports, which currently stands at over 700 for the whole university. If you have PNA's against your assets please contact BES and get these booked in for inspection asap, or if they are no longer in use or have been scrapped they need to be removed from the system, BES can do this once they have been informed. It is important to remember that assets without a valid inspection certificate should not be use as this is not only against the relevant legislation but we are also not insured to use them.

There are currently no more group online training sessions organised. If you were unable to attend one of the recent sessions but still require training on the system, please contact Nick Langley directly and arrange to do this face to face with him at a convenient time for you both. His contact details are below. Nick is also the person to contact for access to e-report, please note all data is arranged by University building code, Nick will need to know exactly what buildings you are responsible for to ensure you have access to all your asset data.

07799 656967
Nicholas.langley@besgroup.com
besgroup.com



Physical Safety contd.

Pre-travel Risk Assessments



There have been some delays in starting the pilot of Peregrine Foresight, the new platform for completing and approving pre-travel risk assessments, but this is now scheduled to go ahead

in five departments from November. At this point, there will be a lot more information made available about the new system and how to use it, and we will be starting to schedule roll out across the rest of the University. So, expect to hear from us further towards the end of Michaelmas Term about timings for bringing your institution on board.

One of the chief benefits of moving pre-travel risk assessments to an electronic platform will be the ability to more easily support travellers when things go wrong. Until Foresight is fully implemented there is no central record of where our staff and students are travelling, so the Safety Office is relying on information from Key Travel to determine if we have travellers overseas when there is an incident, such as the earthquake in Morocco on 9 September. Please encourage your travellers to book their flights and accommodation through Key Travel, as well as take out University travel insurance, so they can take advantage of the additional support from the travel agency if their plans are disrupted. A new protocol for managing travel-related incidents is in development and will be considered by HSEC later in Michaelmas Term.

Heads of Institution will be updated on Peregrine Foresight implementation and other travel and international support service developments by the PVC (Research) at the Head of Institutions Briefing on 18 October.

For more information, do contact either Gillian Weale, Head of Helpdesk Operations or Andrea Eccles, Head of Physical Safety



Accident / Incident Section

- Accident Reports for Safety Sub-Committees - help from DSOs needed.** The termly Safety Sub-Committee meetings are approaching The Safety Office has to produce accident reports for the meetings that take place in October. We kindly ask all our DSOs (and other registered users on AssessNET) to log into AssessNET and check that all accident/near miss records have been completed so that these can be signed off by the Accident/Incident Manager. All incident records that have the 'green' notepad icon in the incident record list are 'complete' – no further input is needed.

Easy: Turn



into



!

Incident reports that have a 'red' pen and paper icon indicate that they have incomplete sections left: please complete the 'red' sections to turn them 'green'.

- Safety Alert – Beware old laboratory wash bottles.** One department had a near miss involving a very old and deteriorated laboratory wash bottle. When the user squeezed it to dispense acetone, the bottle burst and sprayed acetone over the bench and the user. Fortunately, no injury was sustained and no fire occurred (i.e. if a lit Bunsen burner would have been close). Please communicate to all members of the department to regularly check the conditions of wash bottles and remove/replace those that show signs of decay.



- News from the Estates Division.** The Estates Department switched on 01st July 2023 their accident and incident reporting to AssessNET (made by Riskex) to bring it in line with the rest of the University Departments. Please remember: if any serious accident/incident (eg major injury such as a suspected fracture, a fall from height or transfer to A&E/hospital) involved a member of staff from the Estates Division or one of their contractors, please immediately inform the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team of the Estates Division. Contact:
 - Peter Dempsey, Mobile: 07720 160499
 - Pauline Haggart, Mobile: 07510 923997

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

Departmental safety auditing – safety management systems

Are you concerned that managing safety in a department takes too much time?

Do you get worried that despite your best efforts, you might be missing something and putting people or 'your compliance' at risk?

Does managing safety in your department fill you with dread? It's not long till Halloween – perhaps this is the time to address the fear of safety audits.

Ideal safety management system

When you have a strong safety management system in place it starts to run more smoothly with less effort and starts to drive its own improvement.

It is clear to everyone where the risks in a department lie, and everyone works together to focus on those areas.

Each person clearly knows and understands their areas of responsibilities and tasks don't fall between the cracks or get duplicated.

You don't feel that you must remember all the safety actions in your head all the time alongside all your other responsibilities. You don't feel that it is all on you to enable safe activities.

And the system is responsive to changes in the department meaning you should have confidence that new and heightened risks are seen and acted on.

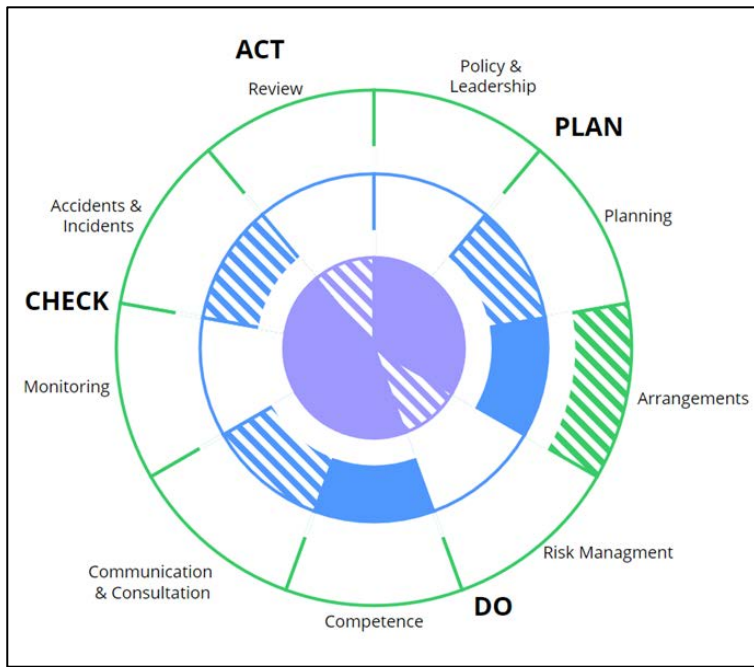
I bet that sounds good, but do you know how to get there?

We are here to help you. A safety management system audit looks at the areas of your current safety arrangements and plots each on a level of maturity. We don't score you so there is no pass or fail to be concerned about.

When you can see the strengths of your system, then you can also put focus on the other areas to make them equally effective. Then you can look to invest the time this will save you into taking the next steps in each of the levels. We call this a journey of continual improvement and both the audit and your maturing safety management system will enable you to concentrate on that more interesting part of safety management.



Audit Section contd



Here is an example of a post audit visualisation. The inner circle we call Core Assurance and filling this will be your initial target – completing the management cycle. If and where there are gaps, we'll work with you to agree and prioritise actions to fill that core level. With those in place you'll have the basics for a system that starts to run itself, though there is plenty of opportunity to develop that further and keep making your lives easier and safer.

It is part of the University's Health and Safety Plan that all Departments (you can find the wider definition of this under the University H&S Policy) are audited within 3 years and we have been contacting many of you already.

'But we just don't have time for an audit right now!'

We've seen how busy departments and their people are and we appreciate how much focus must often be placed on funding, research, teaching, marking, administrating and making the countless fascinating activities in each of your departments run each year. We've planned the audit process to minimise the impact on each individual.

And we strongly believe that any time you invest in the audit process you will earn back through the plan we provide you to help improve your system going forwards.

Here is an example of the time we expect from a department (though this varies a depending on the size and complexity of the department). Times will also vary with the maturity of your system. For example if it is hard to find documents this can take longer but may point to finding solutions to make documentation more accessible in future, helping everyone with their safety processes as well as future audits.



Audit Section contd

	Before the audit	During the audit
Head of Department	-	~2 hours
Department Safety Officer (DSO) Possibly supported by other safety or administrative roles	~2 – 6 hours - coordinating sharing of documents - arranging the audit schedule with guidance from the Safety Office. This varies by extent of system and document control process.	~2 hours Plus some time to support site tours (see below)
Around 3-6 other members of the department	-	~ 20-60 minutes
Plus time for 'guides' of a tour of each site – often DSO though might include area managers or other safety positions who have an understanding of the safety within the sites.		



Biological Safety

- **Settlement over lack of consent for use of HeLa cell line**

Nature News reports on the recent out-of-court settlement of the descendants of Henrietta Lacks (whose cervical cancer biopsy gave rise to the widely used HeLa cell line) and Thermo Fisher. It highlights why consent for use of tissue in research or DNA analysis and the respectful treatment of donations as required under the Human Tissue Act is so important. Please direct any queries on the subject of licencing requirements for human tissue to hta@admin.cam.ac.uk. Detailed human tissue related information is also available at:

<https://www.safety.admin.cam.ac.uk/subjects/biologicals/human-tissue-act>

- **HTA self-audit questionnaire**



On the note of compliance with the HT Act, we will send out a revised HTA self-audit question set as a Microsoft Forms survey to all departments holding human tissue under a HTA licence, soon. Please direct any HTA related emails to hta@admin.cam.ac.uk

- **Tick bites and Lyme's Disease**

During this summer period there were a number of suspected/confirmed cases of Lyme's Disease reported on the online accident reporting system AssessNET. These occurred whilst staff and students were on field trips in the UK. Some departments have already robust risk assessments in place for field trips that mention specifically tick bites. If there is the possibility of tick bites during field trips conducted by your department, there are several good sources of information that will help to create information for staff and to address this hazard (including control measures!) in already existing risk assessments.

The Safety Office has worked together with Occupational Health, the Communicable Diseases Team and the Safety Officer of the School for Biological Sciences to identify and endorse the following websites when looking for further advice:

- **UK Health Security Agency:**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/lyme-borreliosis-epidemiology/lyme-borreliosis-epidemiology-and-surveillance#:~:text=Lyme%20disease%20is%20monitored%20in,the%20quarterly%20Health%20Protection%20Reports>
- **TravelHealth Pro** (for overseas travel, but website has a good factsheet on bite avoidance): <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/factsheet/38/insect-and-tick-bite-avoidance>
- **NHS:** <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/lyme-disease/>
- **Lyme Disease UK:** <https://lymediseaseuk.com/>