

Draft

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

ACTION POINTS FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 11th JANUARY 2021 TO DISCUSS HEALTH AND SAFETY ARRANGEMENTS DURING THE COVID 19 PANDEMIC

Present: Mrs T Slaven (Convener), Dr A Anarson, Mrs L Benvie, Mrs S Blaney, Mr S Carle, Ms E Cassidy, Ms S Cooper, Dr N Curtis, Mr A Donaldson, Mrs D Dyker, Dr R Ebel, Mr N Edwards, Mr G Fisher, Mrs C Lawie, Mr D Malcolm, Professor I McEwan, Dr A Petrie, Mr R Philp, Dr S Pugh, Mrs K Smith, Mr E Stephen, Mrs J Walker, Mrs T White, Mrs D Wilson and Mrs V Amakiri (Clerk).

Apologies: None

| Item | Title | Responsible Person | Date |
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| 1 | <p>Introductions</p> <p>Mrs Slaven introduced herself as the University Secretary and Chief Operating Officer, who started with the university the previous week and has taken over as Convenor of this committee. Those present then introduced themselves and stated, for her benefit, which parts of the University they represented and/or their roles.</p> | | |
| 2 | <p>Risk Assessments in light of the Lockdown</p> <p>Mr Fisher gave an overview of the current situation outlining where the University currently is with regards to controls and government restrictions. Key points were that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Before the winter break the University had anticipated and planned for moving to Level 4;• In general, the national guidance has not changed, and the control measures should still be the correct ones for the risk in relation to new variant;• One exception was that there had been an increase in the physical distance from 1m to 2m in catering;• The risk assessment for the buildings remain valid, but everyone should ensure that the control measures in the assessments were followed;• Similarly, for Teaching risk assessments, however, risk assessments for specific activities might need to be more robust.• However, with the delayed return of most students there was time to do this. <p>Mrs Dyker added that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SDRL occupancies had been reduced;• No catering was currently available to reduce the footfall across the campus;• Although most bookable study spaces (other than in SDRL) were not available at present, some would be made available for online activities for those who don't have off-campus internet access etc.; | | |

- Footfall on campus was significantly less at present than before the break.

In response to a question she stated that the capacity in the halls of accommodation was just 150 students (from 2000) and the Asymptomatic Testing Centre had seen a reduction in numbers (80 on the previous Thursday, out of 120 were booked, and about 100 on Friday). The opening times had been reduced (now 10:00 – 13:00) due to the reduction in student numbers attending.

Mrs White explained that those shielding were now not allowed on campus and personal risk assessments needed to be redone. or revised. On a regular basis. In response to a question she explained that the guidance is still in the same place on StaffNet [here](#). Some changes were anticipated from the Scottish Government, but they had not been published yet, although the Covid Age form changed from time to time and the link was always to the latest one. Personal risk assessments should be repeated on a regular basis.

Mrs Dyker added that staff who had been granted access to campus on an “exceptional approval” basis has been rescinded, but new applications for those that need to be on campus would be considered.

Dr Rainer asked how often the assessments needed to be revised and whether we needed a University policy on this.

Mr Fisher responded that legislation states that risk assessments need to be reviewed when considered that they are no longer valid, which might be because of both personal change and external changes in guidance, so any recommended frequency would be only an indication. CPG always considers the “external environment” as a standing item and if there has been significant changes, then would put out communications to update community where necessary.

Post meeting note: An [FAQ](#) has now been published to cover this question.

Mrs Pugh commented that, due to the emergence of the new variant, controls prior to this current lockdown might be less effective and that the University should reconsider what activities that can be done as the controls might not necessarily be acceptable for new variant – especially if/when the lockdown was lifted and activities increased.

It was pointed out that as there are lower numbers of individuals on campus the risks remain low.

Mr McEwan asked Mr Fisher to expand upon what he meant by reviewing specific risk assessments and making them more robust.

Mr Fisher explained that risk assessments for teaching and research activities and, in theory, are valid and if controls are in place, then shouldn't be a problem. The fewer people there were on campus, the better, but there was no harm in

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| | <p>reviewing the controls and asking ourselves if we could do better than this. He gave examples such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E&F only were putting 1 person in an office instead of sharing as less people are on campus; • Some areas were reintroducing rotas, so numbers were better controlled; • Supervision was now more important, to ensure that, for example, students were cleaning their desks etc., before they left areas and upon entry; <p>He encouraged everybody to review their assessment and be more robust and more critical in the controls put in place if they can.</p> <p>Mrs White added that we should, in particular, consider the elements of mitigation that were more difficult to comply with.</p> <p>In response to a question from Mrs Pugh about whether the University checked that students who cannot access internet elsewhere and need to access the study spaces, Mrs Dyker responded that there were criteria for students booking study spaces, but the University didn't ask for evidence, took it on a trust basis, but there was little uptake of the study spaces before the winter break.</p> <p>Mrs Slaven thanked everyone and wrapped up meeting early.</p> | | |
| 3 | <p>A.O.B.</p> <p>GF & AP reiterated action from previous H&S meeting re communication to & from Schools. For clarity, Committee members were reminded to provide feedback on the areas they represent and the committees they attend in their areas where HS&W matters are discussed.</p> | All | ASAP |