

1. HEALTH, WELLBEING AND SAFETY POLICY

Synopsis

This document sets out the University of Aberdeen Health, Wellbeing and Safety Policy. This Policy applies to all employees of all Schools/ Departments.

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Approval

Approved by: University Court

Date: October 4th 2016

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3. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

- 3.1 The University of Aberdeen is committed to the health, wellbeing and safety of those who work, study or visit at the University. This Policy states this commitment and outlines the responsibilities and arrangements to ensure that this commitment is implemented in a manner which ensures that this commitment is made good.
- 3.2 The University of Aberdeen has updated the current Health and Safety Policy to include Wellbeing as it is being increasingly recognised that the working environment can have a significant impact on the wellbeing of individuals. The wellbeing of individuals depends on the interaction of the individual's social, physical and psychological resources and their context. The University of Aberdeen recognises that wellbeing at work arises from the interaction between the worker and the workplace and as a result, the University of Aberdeen will strive to ensure that work and study at the University will positively impact on the wellbeing of individuals

4. DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Hazard	An activity, process or substance which has the potential to injure or cause harm to an individual
Risk	The probability of somebody being harmed by the hazard and how serious the harm could be
Risk Assessment	The process of identifying hazards, evaluating the risk from the hazards, deciding upon and implementing appropriate controls to reduce the risk
Inspection	A formal critical examination of the workplace to identify hazardous conditions and implement corrective actions and to improve operations and
Audit	A systematic examination of the efficiency, effectiveness and reliability of the health and safety arrangements and drawing up plans for corrective
Accident	An event which results in injury or ill-health
Near Miss	An event not causing harm, but had the potential to cause injury or ill health
Fieldwork	Any work carried out off-site by staff or students for the purpose of teaching, research or other activities while representing the University
Health Surveillance	An ongoing series of health checks to detect ill-health effects at an early stage



5. HEALTH, WELLBEING AND SAFETY POLICY

We are fully committed to the health, wellbeing and safety of our colleagues and students and we will do all that is reasonable to make good our commitment.

The University's Strategic Plan 2015-2020, places people at the heart of its vision. Our mission is to be recognised globally for our research and teaching, and to provide a learning and working environment that enables all members of our community to realise their potential. We will support this ambition by ensuring that the health, wellbeing and safety of our whole community of staff, students and visitors remains paramount.

The University Court has overall responsibility for setting and reviewing the University's Health, Wellbeing and Safety Policy and ensuring its effective implementation across the University.

In accepting this responsibility, the University will:

- Recognise that health, wellbeing and safety is a core and integral aspect of good institutional management
- Delegate responsibility for health, wellbeing and safety management throughout the University and support those with such responsibilities through the provision of appropriate training, professional development and central support
- Ensure that all senior University personnel and managers are aware of their responsibilities for health, wellbeing and safety and that they promote positive attitudes and provide active leadership.
- Embed, maintain and promote the highest standards of health, wellbeing and safety, and aspire to be leaders in this respect in the higher education sector
- Establish a system of performance monitoring and audit to monitor compliance with University, sector and legal standards
- Ensure a collaborative approach is developed and maintained for the effective resolution of health and safety issues between Trade Unions, staff safety representatives and University management
- Provide appropriate resources to ensure that a safe and healthy working environment is provided and maintained.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Diamond', written over a dotted line.

Professor Sir Ian Diamond

Principal and Vice-Chancellor

17 October 2016

6. POLICY

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR HEALTH, WELLBEING AND SAFETY

6.1 University Court

The University Court has ultimate responsibility for overseeing health, wellbeing and safety matters at the University and ensuring that good governance is practised.

6.2 Operating Board

The Operating Board plays a key role in providing leadership and strategic direction for health, wellbeing and safety concerns and ensuring that these matters are effectively integrated into management thinking and decision-making at all levels of the University. The Operating Board has delegated authority from the University Court to set and periodically review the University's Health, Wellbeing and Safety Policy and to take action to ensure its effective implementation in academic Schools and across Professional Services.

The University's Health and Safety Committee reports to the Operating Board.

6.3 University Management Group

The Principal has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Health, Wellbeing and Safety Policy.

Collectively, it is the responsibility of the University Management Group to play a lead role in championing the health, wellbeing and safety culture within the University. These senior managers have a key role in actively promoting and reinforcing the Health, Wellbeing and Safety policy by their actions.

Alongside the Principal, the University Secretary, Vice-Principals, Heads of Schools and Professional Services Directors are responsible for the embedding and implementation of the Policy in their areas, and for providing individual and collective leadership for health, safety and wellbeing matters more generally. They are responsible for dissemination through the College and School structure and across Professional Services of an effective system for ensuring the health, wellbeing and safety of staff, students and members of the public.

The University Secretary will convene the University Health and Safety Committee and is also the member of the University Management Group charged with overseeing the University's arrangements for the management of health, wellbeing and safety.

6.4 Heads of School and Professional Services Directors

It is the responsibility of the Heads of School and Professional Services Directors to play a key role in championing health, wellbeing and safety within their respective School or Directorate. They are expected to set a clear leadership example and to promote high standards of health, wellbeing and safety. They must promote a culture of continuous improvement in health, wellbeing and safety and empower staff to take responsibility for health, wellbeing and safety matters as part of their everyday activities.

Heads of School and Professional Services Directors are responsible for ensuring that all activities under their control are conducted in compliance with the relevant statutory provisions and in accordance with the University's Health, Wellbeing and Safety Policy.

This will be achieved by:

- Developing a local Health, Wellbeing and Safety Policy
- Preparing, maintaining and reviewing relevant risk assessments and the implementation and maintenance of relevant controls
- Ensuring effective procedures for emergency response and ensuring that staff are aware of any actions required by them
- Ensuring that staff understand their Health, Wellbeing and Safety responsibilities
- Ensuring staff are trained and competent for performing their duties
- Ensuring that contractors employed can meet the University's health and safety standards and they are monitored to ensure these standards are met
- Ensuring that appropriate arrangements are in place for consultation on health, wellbeing and safety matters, where necessary by formation of a local health and safety committee
- Ensuring that all accidents and near misses which have, or had, the potential to cause injury, impaired health, environmental damage or damage to property are reported, investigated and that appropriate corrective actions are implemented
- Setting a clear leadership example and actively promoting a high degree of health, wellbeing and safety awareness throughout the School or Directorate Service
- Appointing an appropriate number, dependent on the size and risk profile of the School or Directorate, of Local Safety Coordinators
- Communicating and cooperating with the Central Health and Safety Team, Estates Directorate and other shared building occupiers
- Reporting annually on the health, safety and wellbeing activities and performance of the School or Directorate.

6.5 Supervisory Staff

Individuals with responsibility for managing or supervising other employees, contractors, students or visitors, no matter the duration, are responsible for the health, wellbeing and safety of those under their care or control.

This will be achieved by:

- Ensuring that staff and students understand their responsibilities for health, wellbeing and safety

- Ensuring that staff are trained to an appropriate level to enable them to conduct their work safely
- Allocating work to only those who are competent and capable of conducting that work safely
- Ensuring that work areas are kept clean and tidy; that emergency equipment and escape routes are kept clear and free of obstructions
- Maintaining plant and equipment to a safe operational standard in line with our legal requirements, University policy and the manufacturer's guidelines
- Taking appropriate precautions for the purchase, use and disposal of equipment or substances to prevent injury or damage to health
- Reporting and investigating near misses and accidents and ensuring that any corrective actions are implemented and that any modifications to working practices are brought to the attention of those that may be affected
- Involving staff and students in maintaining and improving safety performance
- Promoting a high level of safety awareness and setting a clear example of health, wellbeing and safety leadership.

6.6 Staff

All staff have a responsibility for their own health, wellbeing and safety and to contribute to an institutional culture that supports health and safety.

They can achieve this by:

- Cooperating with managers and supervisors in health, wellbeing and safety matters
- Understanding the actions required of them in emergency situations
- Ensuring that their workplaces are kept tidy and that emergency escape routes are kept clear and unobstructed
- Reporting to their supervisor any accident, near miss or dangerous situation which they become aware of.

6.7 Local Safety Coordinators

Local Safety Coordinators are formally appointed by the Head of School or Professional Services Director to assist with the implementation of health and safety arrangements. The main task is to assist the Head of School or Director on health and safety matters and to liaise with the Central Health and Safety Team for advice and support.

Where required, the Local Safety Coordinator will receive training appropriate to their role and the risk profile of their School or Directorate.

Local Safety Coordinators will:

- Set a clear leadership example and actively promote a high degree of health, wellbeing and safety awareness throughout the School or Professional Service
- Assist the Head of School or Director in implementing the institutional Health, Wellbeing and Safety Policy and their local arrangements
- Assist the Central Health and Safety Team with safety audits, inspections, accident investigations, *etc.*

6.8 Central Health and Safety Team

The Central Health and Safety Team provides specialist advice and support to Schools and Directorates and actively leads and promotes health, wellbeing and safety across the University.

The Team will support the University by:

- Providing leadership and direction on all health, wellbeing and safety matters
- Promoting a strong and consistent health, wellbeing and safety culture across the University
- Improving the University's management systems and procedures for health, wellbeing and safety to achieve best practice in the Higher Education sector
- Providing suitable and sufficient specialist advice to support Heads of School and Directors in the implementation of their duties
- Monitoring and auditing compliance and performance to continually improve the health, wellbeing and safety across the University
- Acting as a focal point for reporting and communicating on health, wellbeing and safety across the University.

6.9 University Health and Safety Committee

The University Health and Safety Committee's remit is to ensure that a collaborative approach is taken to the management of the health, wellbeing and safety of all at the University. Where necessary it will advise, recommend and decide upon measures taken to improve health, wellbeing and safety at the University.

Specifically, it will:

- Advise the Operating Board on matters relating to general Health, Wellbeing and Safety policy
- Recommend to the Operating Board actions necessary to implement Health, Wellbeing and Safety policies and campaigns
- Monitor the extent of compliance with the University Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy and recommend actions to address areas of non-compliance
- Maintain standing sub-committees to consider matters in relation to the use of ionising and non-ionising radiation and work with genetically modified organisms
- Provide a forum for discussion and consultation on health, wellbeing and safety matters
- Promote continuous improvement on health, wellbeing and safety matters
- Report at least three times a year to the Operating Board.

The composition of the Committee will include:

- Operating Board appointees
- Nominees from each of the Colleges
- Representatives from appropriate Professional Services Directorates
- Representatives from Trade Unions with negotiating rights
- Representatives from AUSA.

6.10 Specialised Committees

In addition to the University Health and Safety Committee, the University maintains a Radiation Hazards Sub-Committee and three Genetic Modification Safety Sub-Committees.

These Committees address, review and where necessary approve any work with both ionising and non-ionising radiation and lasers, and genetically modified organisms respectively.

7. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE AND COUNSELLING

The University provides an Occupational Health Service, which all members of staff are entitled to consult on health related matters. Staff are encouraged to discuss issues relating to work with their line managers, but can consult the Occupational Health Service at any time for medical advice and assistance. The service is staffed by professional occupational health advisers, and consultations are held in strict medical confidence.

The Occupational Health Service will also provide support and guidance to University managers in relation to matters related to the health and fitness to work of their staff members.

The Occupational Health Service will also provide health surveillance to staff members and postgraduate students based on the outcome of risk assessments.

The University also provides a Counselling service for staff that aims to:

- help share problems, or issues that are causing distress,
- enable individuals to reach a greater understanding of themselves,
- help work through problems to find resolutions, and
- undertake consultancy, training and support for staff.

8. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR HEALTH, WELLBEING AND SAFETY

The University has a number of organisational units that include, but are not limited to: Colleges, Schools, Research Institutes, Centres, and Professional Services Directorates. Within each of these discrete organisational units, a number of functional teams and disciplinary 'departmental' identities also continue to exist.

For the purposes of this document the main organisational units will be referred to as Schools (i.e. academic sections led by a Head of School), and Directorates (i.e. Professional Services functions led by a Director).

It should be noted that where inter-disciplinary research teams (e.g. Research Institutes or Centres) or functional areas within a Professional Services Directorate operate autonomously or do not fit into the School or Directorate framework, the appropriate 'lead' in those areas will be deemed to have the responsibility of a Head of School or Director as outlined below.

This document is a support document which provides a framework that each of these organisational units will be required to implement in order to manage health, wellbeing and safety in that functional area. This is to be regarded as a minimum, and where necessary, Heads of School or Directors should implement further local arrangements applicable to their specific risks and operations.

8.1 Policy

In addition to the overarching University Health, Wellbeing and Safety Policy, each Head of School or Director must prepare a local Health, Wellbeing and Safety policy which outlines the organisation and arrangements they have put in place. It should include the procedures which are outlined in the rest of this document. It must be signed by the Head of School or Director, reviewed annually and brought to the attention of all staff in that area.

The local policy will typically include the following:

- A statement of local policy, reflecting the University's overarching policy and outlining the expectations of the School, Institute or Directorate in respect of health, wellbeing and safety and local commitment and support in respect of this.
- An organisational structure of how health, wellbeing and safety is managed at a local level
- An explanation of the role and function of those with management or supervisory positions with regard to safety management

- An explanation of the role and function of any individual with specific safety responsibilities or duties
- Local arrangements for consulting on safety, either via a specific local safety committee or at management meetings
- Details of the practical arrangements and procedures in place for management of risks generated from the School or Directorate's activities.

8.2 Organisation

Heads of School and Directors are ultimately responsible for the management of health, wellbeing and safety in their area. Appropriate delegation via the line management chain will, however, be undertaken. As a result, individuals in a School or Directorate who manage staff, organise work, or have a supervisory role will be responsible for doing so in a safe manner.

In addition, each Head of School or Director must ensure that a suitable number of roles are identified, with appropriate responsibilities assigned, to ensure that the management of health, wellbeing and safety is devolved throughout their area. These roles may be administrative, support or may be specialist depending on the specific requirements of the School or Directorate. If a safety role forms a major part of an individual's duties, then this should be incorporated into that individual's job description. Care should be taken when allocating roles in respect of existing responsibilities and workloads. Dependent on the nature of the role, it may be necessary to include safety elements into the functions of a particular post to ensure that these considerations are built into the functions of the School or Directorate.

Examples of specific safety roles that may be identified are given below.

8.2.1 Local Safety Coordinator

Depending on the School or Directorate's risk profile Heads of Schools or Directors will appoint one or more Local Safety Coordinators (LSC) to assist them in the safe running of their area.

The Central Health and Safety Team is to be advised of the appointment of an LSC. Where multiple LSCs are appointed, one should take a lead role in communication with the Central Health and Safety Team.

The role of the LSC is:

- To assist and advise the Head of School or Director on health and safety matters
- To liaise with the Central Health and Safety Team on all health and safety matters and to provide a focus for health and safety in the School or Directorate
- To deal with straightforward requests for health and safety advice and resolve simple health and safety enquiries and issues at local level

- To assist in coordinating audits, inspections, investigations and other health and safety initiatives
- To monitor compliance with safety policies and plans
- To assist in coordinating implementation of University requirements, and assist in ongoing management of these requirements pursuant to implementation.

All staff will also have access to Wellbeing Coordinators.

8.2.2 Floor Checkers

Floor Checkers are appointed by Heads of School or Directors to assist with:

- The evacuation of buildings following activation of the fire alarms
- Reporting the status of fire zones to the person in charge of the evacuation.

At no point should Floor Checkers put their own safety at risk during an evacuation. Due to the diverse organisation of Schools and Directorates, alternative arrangements to Floor Checkers may be put in place to allow effective evacuation of buildings.

8.2.3 First Aiders

Schools and Directorates are required to make adequate provision for first aid for staff and extend this provision to students and visitors. Schools and Directorates must ensure that staff appointed as first aiders receive adequate training, with the minimum being an approved course via a recognised first aid training provider.

Where a School or Directorate has identified risks to health that may require more than 'standard' first aid response *e.g.* hazardous chemicals, hazardous fieldwork, *etc.* then appropriate specialist training and first aid provision for those activities must be provided.

8.2.4 Radiation Protection Supervisors

Where a School or Directorate undertakes work with ionising radiation, there is a requirement under the Ionising Radiations Regulations that one or more suitable persons must be appointed as the local Radiation Protection Supervisor and their names recorded in the local rules applicable to that area.

The duties of the local Radiation Protection Supervisor are:

- Identification and registration of radiation workers
- Distribution, collection and administration of dosimeters
- Local training for radiation workers
- Supervision of 'Controlled' and 'Supervised' radiation areas

- Administration of classified radiation workers – annual medicals and dose reports
- Record keeping – ordering, usage and disposal records
- Local rules and risk assessments
- Investigation of accidents involving radioactive sources.

8.2.5 Laser Protection Supervisors

Where a School or Directorate undertakes work with Class 3 or Class 4 Lasers, a Laser Protection Supervisor must be appointed if the Laser Protection Adviser considers it necessary and this appointment must be confirmed in writing. The Laser Protection Supervisor are responsible for the control and safe use of the laser in the area specified in appointment letter, including training and quality assurance checks where required.

8.2.6 Other Roles

As part of the risk assessment of their activities, Heads of School and Directors may identify additional roles that require the appointment of individuals with specific training *e.g.* biological safety advisors or rescue teams trained in the use of breathing apparatus or in undertaking rescue at height, *etc.*

Schools and Directorates must ensure that these individuals are trained appropriately, including refresher training where necessary and that any specialised equipment is purchased, and where required, inspected and maintained as necessary.

8.3 Local Health and Safety Committees

While the University Health and Safety Committee is considered to meet legal requirements, it is recognised that for certain Schools or Directorates a local Health and Safety Committee may be needed. This is likely to apply to larger Schools and Directorates or those where the risk profile requires dedicated scrutiny. Where a dedicated committee is deemed to be not required, health, wellbeing and safety should be included on agendas of meetings which involve representation from across the School or Directorate in order to ensure that discussion takes place around any areas of concern and solutions identified and implemented.

The local Committee will:

- Assist local managers in the development of workable and effective policies, procedures and arrangements
- Identify and support development of effective local procedures for any areas of risk identified
- Monitor and review the local policies, procedures and arrangements to ensure they are still suitable and sufficient
- Be chaired by the Head of School or Director (or a senior deputy) and will consist of representatives from all the various disciplinary or functional groups within the School or Directorate.

8.4 Multi-User Buildings

In many situations within the University, buildings are occupied by staff who are employed within different Schools or Directorates and there is a joint responsibility to establish suitable arrangements for safety management within these buildings. Building users must ensure there is close liaison and consultation between the various occupants, especially so for arrangements that affect the building as a whole e.g. fire safety arrangements, first aid provisions, *etc.* A Building User Group should be formed by the lead occupier to achieve joint arrangements. All building occupiers should contribute to the development of local procedures.

8.5 Planning for Health and Safety

Schools and Directorates are expected to plan their health and safety activities, including setting objectives and targets, and planning activities to meet those objectives and targets. These plans should include:

- Identification of arrangements for the local implementation of new University Health and Safety Policies
- Process for carrying out inspections and risk assessments
- Arrangements for any occupational health surveillance
- Safety induction training, safety training and refresher training, *etc.*

Heads of School and Directors should ensure adequate resources (time, budget and staff allocation) for health and safety.

8.6 Risk Assessment

Schools and Directorates must have in place procedures to identify hazards and undertake risk assessments for their activities and implement any corresponding control measures. These procedures must be documented and must make clear the responsibility of staff to risk assess activities conducted by the School or Directorate.

Significant findings from risk assessments must be recorded and communicated to those undertaking the work.

Further information on the process for conducting a risk assessment and assessment templates for generic activities can be found on the Central Health and Safety Team web pages.

8.7 Equipment Maintenance and Examination

There shall be a collaborative approach between the University's Estates Directorate and other Directorates and Schools as follows:

- Estates is responsible for maintaining the fabric and services of the buildings. No inspection of or alteration to the fabric or services of any building should be made without first consulting the relevant Estates Clerk of Works for that building. This is to ensure that, amongst other essential precautions, asbestos is not disturbed.
- All faults with the fabric or services of the building should be reported to the Estates Fault Desk, either by phone or online.
- Equipment contained within buildings that Estates is responsible for will be examined and maintained as part of Estates planned programme.
- Maintenance and inspection of other equipment within buildings that Estates is not responsible for, will be the responsibility of the relevant School or Directorate, unless other arrangements have been formalised.

8.8 Information, Supervision and Training

All individuals who visit or work at the University of Aberdeen will require relevant information on the risks they may face while at the University and how to avoid harm while on campus. This information can be shared in a number of different ways.

- Visitors – must be provided with information *e.g.* evacuation routes, muster points, first aid arrangements, etc. This should be provided as an introductory safety briefing at the start of a meeting or session.
- Contractors – in addition to the information provided to visitors, contractors shall be given information such as on how to minimise risk to staff and students from their activities and to reiterate that work on the fabric or services of University buildings can only be conducted following consultation with the relevant Estates Clerk of Works and the University's Asbestos Coordinator
- Students - shall be given information on emergency arrangements, evacuation routes, *etc.* If they participate in practical work, including fieldwork, they shall be given further, more specific information.
- Staff (including postgraduate students) – There shall be a training plan in place for staff and postgraduate students who must be provided with adequate health and safety training. This applies both to induction to the University and on being exposed to new or increased workplace risks.

Information can be provided as lab briefings, lab handouts, departmental codes of practice and other appropriate means. Training can be achieved through formal training courses, but 'on-the-job' training is also essential.

8.9 Accident / Near Miss Reporting and Investigation

The University of Aberdeen requires that all accidents and near misses are reported without prejudice. This is to ensure that investigations can take place to determine whether the safety arrangements have broken down, to learn lessons and, where necessary implement improvements to prevent recurrence of the accident.

- All accidents and near misses, and incidents of work related ill-health must be reported as soon as possible via the University's online reporting system
- Schools and Directorates must investigate all accidents or near misses to a level appropriate to the nature of the accident in order to determine the root cause of the accident, to learn lessons, and to take appropriate measures to minimise a recurrence of the accident
- The Central Health and Safety Team may request additional information from Schools or Directorates about accidents and may take the lead in investigating certain accidents, dependent on the severity of the accident.

8.10 Monitoring and Review

In order to ensure that any management systems and arrangements are continuing to function as intended, regular monitoring is required to ensure that the system is working. All Schools and Directorates shall ensure that periodic inspections and reviews or audits are planned and carried out to check and ensure that safety management systems are effective and are working properly.

8.10.1 Inspection

Inspections include physical inspections of work areas including the physical structure of the building, housekeeping, working practices, *etc.* They should normally be conducted by two or three people. It is beneficial for those persons responsible for managing the area to be present, both to ensure expected practices are in operation and to show management commitment to safety.

For low risk environments, *e.g.* offices, annual inspection is suitable, but for higher risk environments *e.g.* laboratories or workshops, there should be two or three inspections per year.

Actions arising from inspections shall be recorded. Timescales and responsible persons shall be identified to close out these actions and they should be followed up to ensure satisfactory closure. Findings and actions arising from inspections should be reported to the Head of School or Director and to the next appropriate safety committee or management meeting where health and safety is an agenda item.

8.10.2 Audit

The Central Health and Safety Team will conduct audits of Schools and Directorates on a programme based on the perceived risk profile of Schools and Directorates. The audit will concentrate on ensuring that Schools and Directorates are complying with both the health and safety management arrangements as laid out in the University Health, Wellbeing and Safety Policy and the local Policies implemented by the Schools and Directorates.

8.10.3 Review

Although the Central Health and Safety Team arrange and conduct audits of the health and safety management systems of Schools and Directorates, each School or Directorate shall annually review its progress towards meeting its health and safety objectives. A local report on health and safety performance, in a format to be specified by the Health and Safety Committee, must be returned to the Committee on an annual basis.

9. REVIEW RECORD

Date of Review	Issue	Detail of Amendment	Reviewed by
October 2015	1 Draft	New document	Allan Petrie
January 2016	2 Draft	Minor amendments following review by Local	Allan Petrie
March 2016	3 Draft	Minor amendments following H&S Committee	Allan Petrie
June 2016	4 Draft	Minor amendments following H&S Committee	Allan Petrie
August 2016	5 Draft	For review by the UMG	Naveed
August 2016	6 Draft	Amended 6.3 to include Heads of School in	Naveed Qamar
September	7 Draft	Amended following PNCC and Operating Board	Naveed Qamar