

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE
ANNUAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT 2015/16

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper provides the annual report for year 2015/16.

The summary of health and safety initiatives and incidents for the year is as follows:

- A strategic approach outlined for the academic year involved continuation of internal audits, review of health and safety risk register, updating of the Health and Safety Policy, development of new policies, campaigns on health and wellbeing and safety training.
 - Internal health and safety audits were carried out of two units, Aberdeen University Student Association and Aberdeen Sports Village.
 - The Health and Safety Risk Register was reviewed and will be further reviewed in the academic year 2016/17.
 - The University Health and Safety Policy has been updated.
 - New policies were drafted and adopted for safety tours and use of mobile phones and driving.
 - Health and Wellbeing campaigns were held during the year to promote use of internal facilities and to promote physical activity, good diet and nutrition, cancer awareness and smoking cessation.
 - During the year, the University invested significant amount of time and resource in providing training and developing online training.
- There was a reduction of 13% in staff injuries and an increase in near miss reports of 113%. The number of reportable injury accidents to staff during the reporting period was 5, compared to 4 in the previous year.
- There were eight fire incident logged in the year (10 in the previous year). There were no injuries from these fire incidents.

1 INTERNAL HEALTH AND SAFETY AUDITS

1.1 The central safety team carried audits on the following:

- Clinical Skills Centre (CSC)
- Assisted Reproductive Unit (ASRU)
- Aberdeen University Student Association (AUSA)
- Aberdeen Sports Village (ASV)

1.2 Audit recommendations are assigned to priority categories: Priority 1, Priority 2 or Priority 3. Priority 1 recommendations are defined as major issues which result in significant non-compliance with the requirements of the University Health and Safety Policy. There were two Priority 1 recommendations in the above audit report for ASRU and three for AUSA. The ASRU priority actions have been completed. AUSA has undergone a restructure and is planning to complete all priority 1 actions in September now that a new CEO and a management team is in place.

2 HEALTH AND SAFETY RISK REGISTER

2.1 The risk of death or serious injury could arise from the University's activities unless health and safety risks are adequately controlled.

2.2 To help manage this risk, the University's Health and Safety Committee developed a Health and Safety Risk Register which breaks the corporate risk down into 28 separate risks. A summary of the entries in the Health and Safety Risk Register is in **Appendix 1**. All these risks are due a review by the Health and Safety Committee this year.

3 UNIVERSITY HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

3.1 The University Health and Safety Policy was updated in the year. The Policy has been through a due consultation process and is awaiting final approval.

4 NEW HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

4.1 New policies as follows were drafted and approved during the year:

- Safety Tours Policy
- Use of Mobiles and Driving Policy

4.2 The Safety Tours Policy came into effect in March 2016. The Policy requires senior executives to carry out at least six safety tours in the academic year. A number of safety tours have been carried since March and a number of actions have been raised to address health and safety concerns or issues. The safety tours are also proving very useful in terms of recognising good health and safety practices.

4.3 The Use of Mobile Phones and Driving Policy prohibits the use of mobiles, hand held or hands free, while driving on University business. This Policy helps to reduce the risk of vehicle collisions due to distraction caused by phone conversation while driving.

5 ACCIDENTS IN THE UNIVERSITY

5.1 A summary of serious accidents in the University during 2015/16 is provided in **Appendix 2**.

5.2 There were four injury accidents to staff and one to a member of the public/visitor during 2015/16 which required reports to the Health and Safety Executive.

6 CONTACTS WITH THE HEALTH AND SAFETY ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES

- 6.1 There were no enforcement contacts with the Health and Safety Executive or the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in the year.
- 6.2 There were contacts with the Health and Safety Executive for Genetically Modified Organism applications.
- 6.3 During the year the Health and Safety Executive informed us that they intend to carry out routine inspection in connection with our GMO authorisations and containment level 3 labs. The inspection has not taken place as yet.

7 FIRE SAFETY

- 7.1 The Health and Safety Committee received updates on progress with fire safety improvements following the carrying out of fire risk assessments and has been satisfied with the progress reported.
- 7.2 There were eight fire incidents in the year (10 in 2014/15). None of these fires caused any injury or serious damage. There were two fires started deliberately, one at the Chaplaincy and the other at St Mary's. A person was arrested and questioned but was not charged. In all cases our fire detection and alarm systems worked well and buildings were evacuated in time. Some lessons have been learnt and as a result, security patrols were tightened up and evacuation drills increased in frequency from once a year to twice a year.

8 IONISING AND NON-IONISING RADIATIONS

- 8.1 The University is provided with a comprehensive radiation protection service covering both ionising and non-ionising radiation through an agreement with NHS Grampian. The agreement includes the services of a Radiation Protection Adviser and a Laser Protection Adviser. The Committee maintains a Radiation Hazards Sub-Committee to keep radiation safety matters under review and the Sub-Committee receives reports from the two advisers.
- 8.2 There was an inspection carried out by SEPA at Foresterhill in March. They recommended that the Foresterhill licence should include the new Rowett building and that any redundant radioactive sources be identified and disposed off.

9 GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS (GMO)

- 9.1 The Committee maintains three Genetic Modification Safety Sub-Committees (covering Foresterhill, Old Aberdeen and the Rowett Institute of Nutrition and Health) which review and approve research and teaching projects involving genetically modified organisms and monitor the work for compliance with agreed precautions. All the Sub-Committees have reported that arrangements for controlling work with genetically modified organisms are satisfactory.
- 9.10 The Health and Safety Executive approved the amalgamation of Rowett Institute and Foresterhill authorisations for GMO work after the relocation of Rowett Institute to new site at Foresterhill.

10 HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- 10.1 Health and wellbeing days were held at Old Aberdeen (January 2016) and at Foresterhill (April 2016). The events were well attended and staff were able to receive handy tips on diet and nutrition, physical exercise, relaxation, mindfulness, emergency first aid, cycling, jogging and running, posture, indoor plants. Height, weight, BMI and blood pressure checks were also available for staff at the events.
- 10.2 The University took part in World Cancer Day by raising awareness on causation of cancer, risk factors and prevention.
- 10.3 Smoking cessation sessions were held with the help of NHS Grampian.

10.4 The University also took part in Britain's Healthiest Workplace 2016 survey and it is due to receive a report in September. The report will highlight the strengths and weaknesses of health and wellbeing programmes and recommendations for improvement.

11 SAFETY TRAINING

11.1 Senior management team attended one day Safety for Senior Executive Course that covered corporate and personal responsibilities as well as risk assessment and risk management.

11.2 Managing Safely course for line managers has been tested and is being rolled out this year.

11.3 University has invested in online training package for all staff due to be rolled out in October once all of the technical issues have been resolved. The package includes modules on general health and safety, fire safety, manual handling, lone working, display screen equipment training and assessment, stress and resilience, wellbeing, personal safety, environmental awareness, risk assessment and travel safety.

11.4 Safe and defensive driving training has taken place for those who drive on University business. Further training is planned to cover all areas of the University.

11.5 University also provided Biological Safety; Fire Safety; First Aid; Manual Handling Training and Gas Cylinder Safety Training to key individuals.

APPENDIX 1

HEALTH AND SAFETY RISK REGISTER

Note: Risks have been scored using the same 6x6 matrix which is used for the University's corporate risk register.

Risk register at July 2016 – risk ranked in order of gross risk score

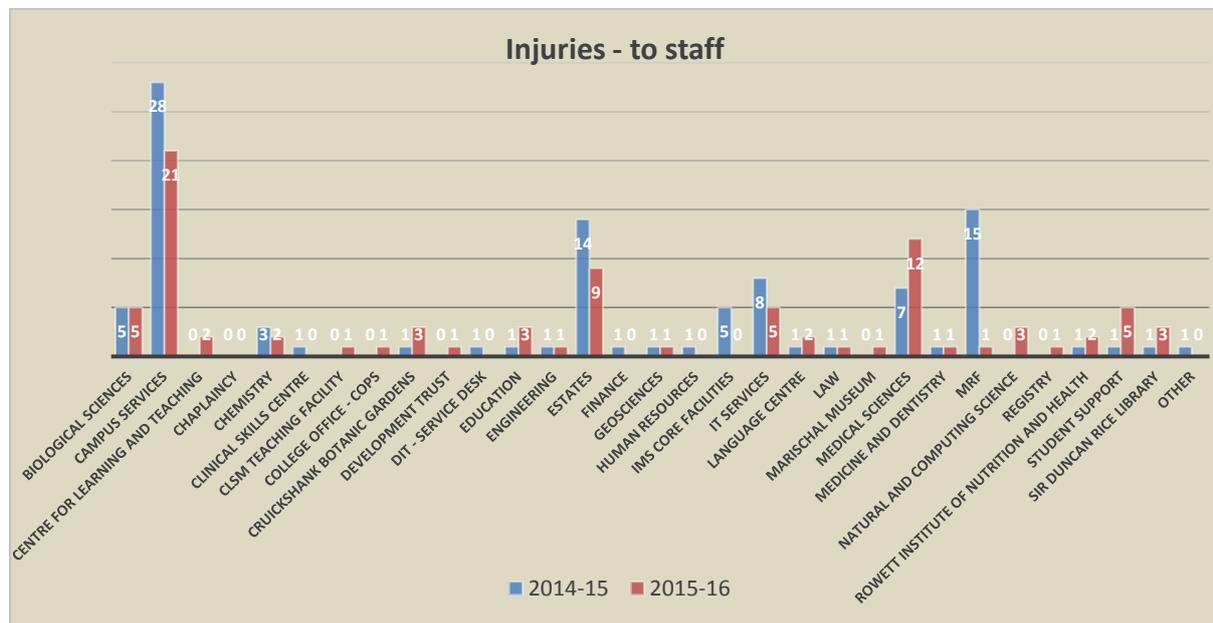
Rank	Risk title	Risk Score - gross	Risk Score - net
1.	Fire	30	12
2.	Asbestos	30	6
3.	Construction and estate maintenance hazards	24	12
4.	Condition of safety critical aspects of the estate	24	12
5.	Electricity	24	12
6.	Fieldwork hazards	24	12
7.	Students' Association activities	24	12
8.	Vehicle movements on campus	20	10
9.	Slips and trips	20	12
10	Laboratory/workshop hazards	20	10
11	Personal safety	20	9
12	Halls of Residence	20	8
13	Food Safety	20	8
14	Use of vehicles on the public roads	18	12
15	Travel on University business	18	12
16	Ionising and non-ionising radiations	16	4
17	Genetic modification	16	4
18	Printing and binding operations	16	6
19	Catering	16	8
20	Sports facilities	16	8
21	Children invited onto campus	16	8
22	Legionella	15	5
23	Work at heights	15	5
24	Manual handling	15	9
25	Asthmagens	15	9
26	Work related stress	15	6
27	Work placements for students	12	8
28	Computer workstation ergonomics	10	4

ACCIDENTS TRENDS IN THE UNIVERSITY DURING 2015/16

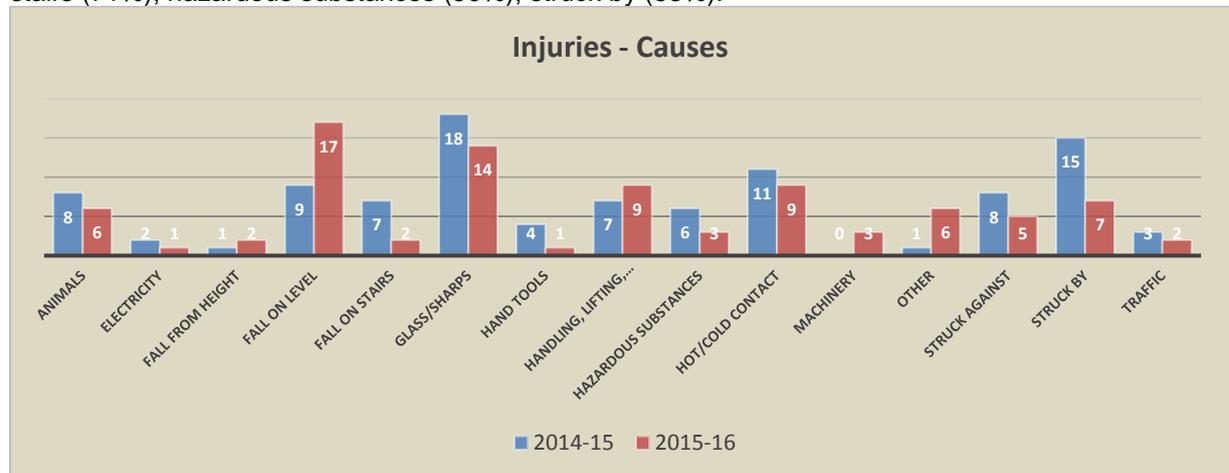
1) STAFF INJURY ACCIDENTS

There were 87 injury accidents to staff recorded on the database in the year (100 in 2014/15) representing a 13% reduction in actual numbers and an 8 % reduction when normalised to per thousand full time equivalent employees.

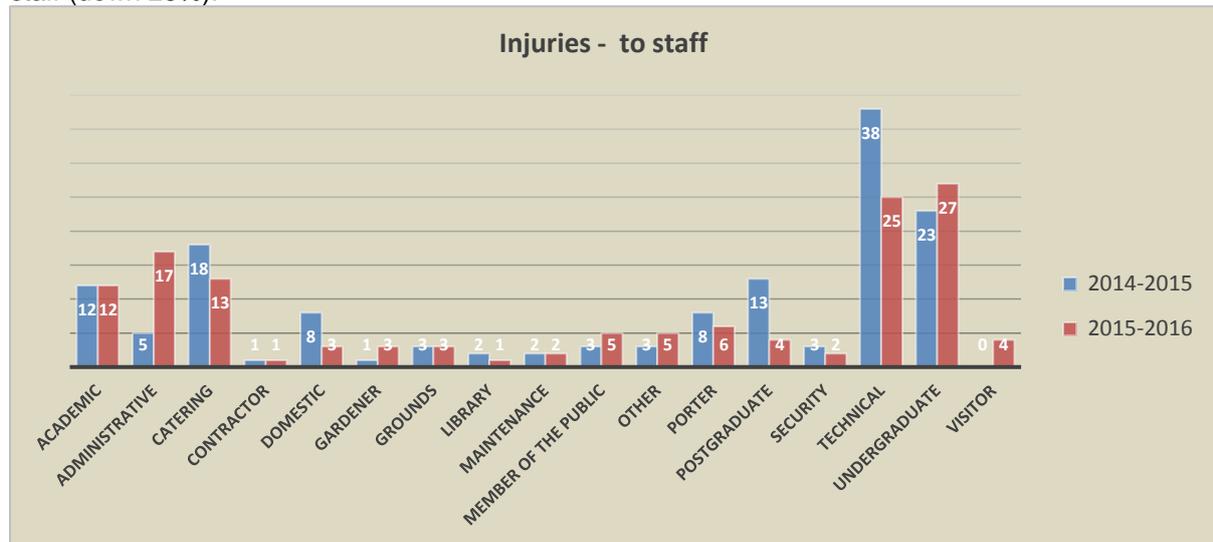
The breakdown of staff injuries by units or departments is shown below. An excellent level of reduction in injuries is shown in Medical Research Facility (93%), a good level by Estates (43%), IT Services (37%), Campus Services (25%) and there are departments with zero injuries.



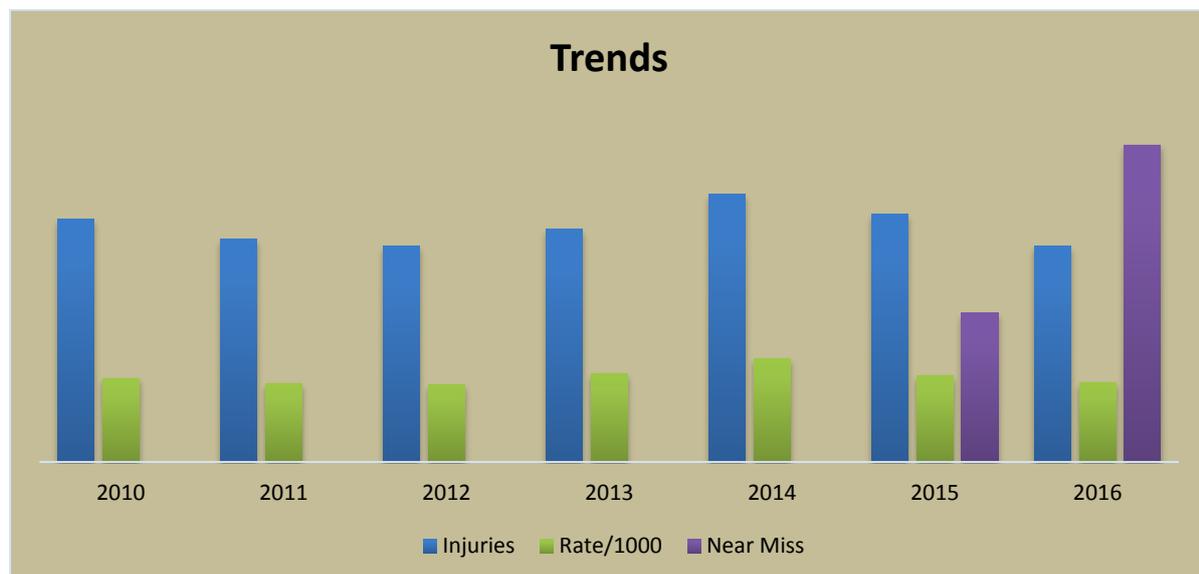
The above shows increases in injuries recorded in Medical Sciences and Student Support of minor injuries. The causes of injuries to staff are various as shown below, nearly 20% being due to falls from slips and trips (an increase of 89%), 16% due to puncture or cuts from glass or needles (a decrease of 22%), 10% due to handling lifting and carrying (an increase of 28%) and 10% due to contact with hot surfaces or objects (a decrease of 18%). There were also reductions in animal bites (25%), falls on stairs (71%), hazardous substances (50%), struck by (53%).



The data broken down into staff groups or jobs types is shown below. In the year 28% of the injuries were sustained by Technical staff (down 34%), 20% by Administrative staff (up 240%), 15% by Catering staff (down 28%):



The long term trend in staff injuries is as follows. University encourages reporting of near misses and injuries. There has been a 113% increase in the number of near miss reports, a 13% reduction staff injuries and an 8% reduction in rate of injuries per thousand employees.



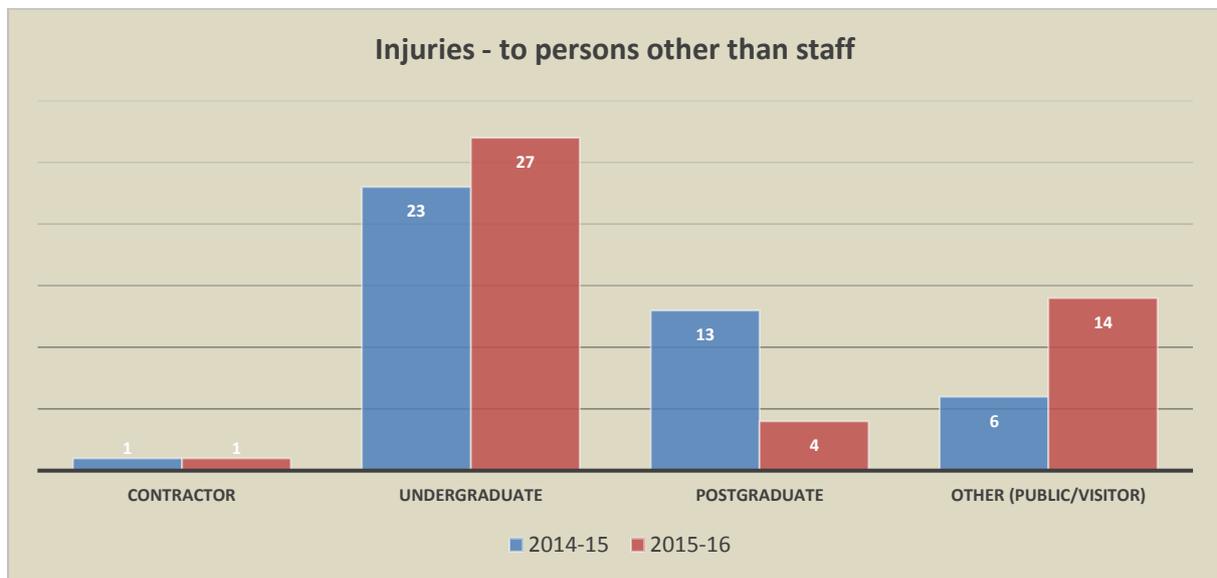
There were 5 injuries to staff (4 in 2014/15) that were reportable to the Health and Safety Executive as follows:

- A member of staff while cutting grass lost his balance and fell off a wall fracturing his ankles.
- A member of staff tripped on front steps of Clinical Research Centre, Royal Cornhill Hospital and fractured her ankle.
- A member of staff slipped on the floor of Regent building, falling and resulting in a fracture to her left elbow.

- A member of staff was switching on lights at the stage door of the arts lecture theatre, water had accumulated in the area from recent heavy rain making floor waterlogged and slippery. As he touched the switch, there was a flash, the member of staff was startled and he fell over straining groin and back. There was no electrical fault found. A sump pump had been installed to drain the water, it was then permanently wired in to work automatically to keep the area dry.
- A member of staff slipped on a 'pseudo path' where the grass is worn down resulting in a trimalleolar fracture and a dislocated ankle whilst walking from Polwarth to the Suttie café.

2) INJURY ACCIDENTS TO PERSONS OTHER THAN STAFF

There were 46 injury related accidents in the year to students and visitors (43 in 2014/15) representing an increase in actual numbers of 7%. While there is an increase in injuries to undergraduates of 17%, there is a 69% reduction in injuries to postgraduates. 85% of the injuries reported to undergraduates were in the lab environments with 50% due to hazardous substance contact and 35% due to needle stick or cuts due to sharp objects. The breakdown and trend is as follows:



There was one injury to a member of the public/visitor requiring transportation to hospital for treatment and reported to the Health and Safety Executive as follows:

- At the Suttie centre, a volunteer patient fell while descending the main spiral stairs and during the fall grabbed the handrail and twisted his knee. This resulted in a ruptured tendon in his right knee.