

APPROVED  
CIRCULATED

HS (12/13) 24

UNIVERSITY COURT  
HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 08 May 2013  
At 4.00pm in Room 7 B.14 Sighthill Campus

- PRESENT:** Ms M Ali (Court) (Convenor); Mr N Ballantyne (Court); Mr M Mackay (UNISON); Mr R Mason (EIS/ULA); Ms V Wood (Business School); Mr R Wright (Faculty of Health, Life & Social Sciences)
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Ms L Young (Head of Health & Safety); Dr G Webber (University Safety Officer /University Secretary); Mrs H Mizen (Governance Officer)(Acting Clerk); Ms D Watt (Governance Services – observing); Mr S Hughes (Health & Safety Advisor) for items 1 -8
- APOLOGIES:** Professor Dame Joan Stringer DBE (Principal & Vice-Chancellor); Mr J Goodlet (Faculty of Engineering, Computing & Creative Industries); Professor M Darlison (Biological Safety Officer); Dr M Sanderson (EIS/ULA); Mr P Hughes (Director, Property & Facilities Services); Dr V Ellis (Court); Ms M Cook (Director, Human Resources); Mr T Zanelli (President NSA)

**1. WELCOME**

- 1.1 The Convenor welcomed all participants to the meeting and in particular Mr Hughes who was attending to present item 8 and Ms Watt who was attending as an observer.
- 1.2 The apologies were **noted**.

**2. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 06 FEBRUARY 2013**

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- 2.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were **approved** as an accurate record.

**3. MATTERS ARISING**

In the absence of the Director, Property & Facilities, the University Secretary reported on items 3.1 to 3.3 as follows:

**a) Control of Contractors (minute 3.3)**

- 3.1 All contractors working onsite had been notified of the University's requirements that all fire doors were to remain closed and in no circumstances were fire extinguishers or other objects to be used to wedge doors open. In response to concerns about ongoing issues of fire exit corridors being used for storage purposes, the Committee was assured that this was being addressed and would be monitored by Property & Facilities.

## **b) Pedestrian Safety Issues around Craiglockhart Campus (Minute 3 (C))**

3.2 The Committee noted that:

- the University's property advisers, Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL) had been asked to explore with the City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) the potential to install pedestrian barriers along the pavement between the exit from the Craiglockhart campus and the pedestrian crossing on Colinton Road. As the CEC had responded that they sought to de-clutter roads and where possible remove existing barriers, the University had agreed with JLL that any such application was unlikely to be successful
- Lothian Buses had been approached with regard to removing the bus stop opposite the campus wall and this would be followed up by the Director, Property & Facilities  
**(Action: PH)**
- the possibility of creating a new path was discussed but it was agreed that this might only require the "gap" in the wall that led to the main road near the bus stop being closed. It was agreed that the University should first ensure that there were no tree roots or other impediments to this, including checking whether this route might be classified as a public right of way  
**(Action: PH)**

## **c) Emergency Evacuation Reports (minute a) 5.2)**

3.3 It was confirmed that flashing beacons had been installed in the new music facilities at the Merchiston campus and that these would be activated with the fire alarms. In response to a comment that there were other soundproofed facilities at Merchiston where beacons would be necessary it was **agreed** that an audit of the new rooms created at the campus was to be conducted and a report provided to the next meeting.  
**(Action: PH/ EAY)**

3.4 It was confirmed that the tannoy systems were tested monthly rather than weekly and that Property and Facilities would ensure that the system operated at the Merchiston campus extended to the muster points at the back of the campus.  
**(Action: PH)**

## **d) Concerns regarding the Occupational Health Service (Minute 8)**

3.4 In the absence of the Director, Human Resources, as the Committee had agreed that the new occupational health provider should send a representative to attend its meeting, this would be requested of them.  
**(Action: MC)**

## **4. HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT HS (12/13) 18**

4.1 The Head, Health and Safety presented the Report. It was noted that the Committee's role was to comment on it prior to its submission to the University Court and assist the Court in the discharge of its duties with regard to the health, safety and well-being of the University's staff, students and visitors.

4.2 The key points of the Report were highlighted including: the introduction of Health and Safety co-ordinators, the Health and Safety Audits and the successes with a variety of health promotion and environmental activities and initiatives including a popular

Wellbeing Module for pre-registration students in the Faculty of Health, Life & Social Sciences.

4.3 A number of points were made in the discussion:

- The Health and Safety audits would assist areas with compliance and advice and guidance could be given e.g. with Display Screen Equipment assessments which would help to address the increase reported in muscular skeletal disorders
- A considerable amount of work was being done with the Research Institutes in particular, to identify gaps in compliance and provide bespoke advice and guidance
- The number of RIDDOR<sup>1</sup> incidents was higher than the average for other institutions whilst the total number of accidents was lower than the national average with respect to both staff and students
- The current Occupational Health contract for nursing and midwifery students was with NHS Lothian and service delivery was good; the University would consider whether to re-tender or extend the current contract for 2 years when it came up for renewal at the end of 2013
- It was commented that the colour charts were difficult to read for those with colour blindness due to the use of red and green and that the colours on the colour coded boxes on some of the charts were hard to differentiate due to being so small

4.4 In noting and welcoming the excellent, comprehensive Report and the significant work and achievements which it reflected, the Committee **agreed** that for the preparation of future Reports:

- i) the key risks, trends and issues and remedial actions to be taken should be highlighted to add value to the Report; and
- ii) the University's standards on accessibility (which would include the use of colour) were to be communicated to all external providers to ensure their contributions met these requirements

4.5 The Committee **agreed** these specific revisions to the current report:

- a) Appendix 1: Health and Safety Report: insert a table at the foot of page 11, with the top five risks which required further action;
- b) Appendix 1: as above: insert on page 12 some narrative on the increase in RIDDOR incidents
- c) Appendix 3: Occupational Health Service Report: insert " Following a review of provision, the service was re-tendered in [insert month/year] and a new provider selected. Consequently, the OH Service will be delivered by the new provider [insert name] with effect from [insert date]"

**(Actions EAY)**

**5. ACCIDENT STATISTICS FOR JANUARY TO APRIL 2013 HS (12/13) 19**

**a) Summary Statistics**

5.1 The number of accidents was **noted** and their main cause reported as sharp objects.

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<sup>1</sup> Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995

**b) Serious Accidents/Hazardous Incidents/Fire Incidents**

- 5.2 The two serious accidents involving members of staff and the measures taken in response were **noted**.
- 5.2 One hazardous incident was reported and the action taken to ensure procedures were adhered to was **noted**.
- 5.3 One fire incident at a student residence was **noted**.

The Committee otherwise **noted** the report.

**6. EMERGENCY EVACUATION REPORTS FOR JANUARY TO APRIL 2013**  
**HS (12/13) 20**

**a) Scheduled**

- 6.1 The Committee **noted** the scheduled evacuations which had been carried out at all University facilities except Merchiston (due to the current programme of works) and that these had been assessed as satisfactory. A problem identified with the tannoy system at the Craiglockhart campus was being addressed by Property and Facilities. The Committee was advised that a scheduled evacuation would be carried out at the Merchiston campus once the Co-location Project works had been completed.
- 6.2 The Committee noted that the majority of scheduled evacuations carried out at student residential accommodation had been assessed as satisfactory and this was an improvement on the last reporting period.

**b) Unscheduled**

- 6.4 The details of unscheduled evacuations during the period were received and **noted**.

The Committee otherwise **noted** the report and welcomed the overall improvement.

**7. HEALTH AND SAFETY NOTICES SUMMARY:**  
**JANUARY TO APRIL 2013** **HS (12/13) 21**

- 7.1 The summary of Health and Safety Notices issued during the reporting period was received and **noted**.

**8. HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES ONLINE DATABASE**

The Health and Safety Advisor was invited to give an oral report and advised members prior to demonstrating the Hazardous Substances online database, that it had been developed to ensure that the Fire Service could respond swiftly and appropriately in the event of an emergency arising from the use of such substances. The Committee noted that:

- the database had been developed for internal purposes by the Health and Safety Team, the Senior Technician in the School of Life Sciences and colleagues from Information Services
- It comprised over 2,300 items most of which were held at the Sighthill Campus
- There were three main account users i.e. the Health and Safety Team, Heads of relevant departments and their area administrators and the Security Office, only the first two categories of which could update or amend the content

- Reports could be run by School/service, location or substance and further interrogation was possible e.g. by hazard type
- As the primary driver had been to ensure that all the hazardous chemicals had been included in the data base, the ability to carry out COSHH<sup>2</sup> assessments had not yet been developed; this may however be possible as a future project if resources were to become available

The Committee **noted** the very useful presentation and thanked the Health and Safety Advisor for attending.

## 9. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH REPORT HS(12/13)22

9.1 The Head, Health and Safety introduced the report in the absence of the Director, Human Resources. It was commented that in minute 7.2 of the last meeting, the Committee had sought more narrative in the reports to explain rises or decreases in the statistics and other than a brief explanation given of mental & behavioural disorders under the heading “Trend Analysis” this had not been forthcoming. The Committee **agreed** that this should be sought in the future from the new provider and otherwise **noted** the report.

**(Action: MC)**

## 10. ANNUAL REVIEW OF COMMITTEE EFFECTIVENESS HS (12/13) 23

10.1 As with all Committees of Court, the Committee conducted its self-evaluation of its effectiveness. The Clerk captured members’ comments to prepare a response for the Convenor’s approval prior to submission to the Chairman of Court; the final version is appended to the minutes.

10.2 The main points **agreed** were: the terms of reference and constitution remained appropriate; the Committee had effectively fulfilled its remit over the past year; the incoming NSA President would be advised of the importance of a student voice on the Committee and strongly encouraged to attend meetings; and members with poor attendance records would also be reminded of their obligations.

## 11. Meeting Dates in 2013/14

11.1 These were **noted**. As no objections were raised they were confirmed as:

09 October 2013  
05 February 2014  
07 May 2014

All meetings would be held at 4pm and venues arranged at each of the campuses.

## 12. Valedictions

On behalf of the Committee, the Convenor extended its best wishes to the Principal on her forthcoming retirement and to Mr Zanelli who was completing his second term of office as NSA President.

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<sup>2</sup> Control of Hazardous Substances to Health