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HS (20/21) 001

**EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY
HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting held on **28 May 2020** at 11am via web ex

PRESENT: D Cloy (University Secretary) (Convenor); R Adams (Lay Member, Court); J Dickson (School Support Manager, Business School); M O'Reilly (Lecturer, School of Health and Social Care); C Wilson (Technician, School of Engineering and Built Environment); D Conner (Senior Technician, School of Applied Science); G Hutchison (Dean, School of Applied Science & Biological Safety Officer); S Paterson (Unison); M Taylor (EIS); A Steyven (School of Computing) C Malcolm (Project/Workshop Technician, School of Arts and Creative Industries).

IN ATTENDANCE: K Dewar (Director, People & Services); S Groat (Director, Property & Facilities); E Young (Head of Health & Safety); S Hughes (Health & Safety Advisor); R Younger (School of Arts and Creative Industries); M MacVarish (School of Health and Social Care); M Masson (Governance Officer & Clerk)

APOLOGIES: G Moran (Vice President, ENSA); A Nolan (Principal & Vice Chancellor); Dr N Cimini (EIS); M Sanderson (EIS), D Baird (Unison)

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS & APOLOGIES

- 1.1 The Convenor welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted. A particular welcome was extended to Stephen Paterson who was attending his first meeting as Unison member, Rachel Younger who was standing in for Mike Sanderson and Mairi MacVarish who was observing.
- 1.2 The Convenor noted that a paper on the Covid pandemic was on the agenda with a focus on the health and safety response in the run up to lockdown and in the time since. However now that the route map for moving out of lockdown had been published in Scotland, a project group had been established at University level to plan and prepare the University's response looking towards the start of Trimester 1. A number of work streams had been established including one for Health and Safety which included representatives from Trade Unions, Property and Facilities, Human Resources and the Health and Safety Department to aid planning. The group would be involved in taking forward priorities for a safe return to campus in line with the route map and key health and safety guidance such as that emerging from Public Health Scotland. It was noted that the Group had met initially on 27th May 2020.

2. **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 13 NOVEMBER 2019 - HS(19/20)009**

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2019 were approved as an accurate record.

3. **MATTERS ARISING**

3.a **Field Trip Guidance:** Guidance had been incorporated into staff training material but was not yet available on online via moodle. The Head of Health and Safety would bring a paper on safeguarding in the research domain to a future Research Integrity Committee.

3.b **Fire wardens – Merchiston:** the Health and Safety Adviser had met with Deans at Merchiston and a Senior Fire Co-ordinator had been appointed from within the staff group.

3.c **Use of drones/unmanned ariel vehicles policy update:** policy and accompanying guidance including a risk assessment had been disseminated to Deans, Directors and other relevant staff.

3.d **Disabled access doorway, Craiglockhart:** mats had been put down in the affected area and there had been no further complaints.

3.e **Updates to membership:** a paper with the current membership was on the agenda for the meeting.

4. **HEALTH & SAFETY COVID-19 HS(19/20)010**

4.1 The Head of Health and Safety introduced the paper which summarised the measures taken moving into lockdown, consideration of issues during lockdown and the key areas of focus looking forward.

4.2 The Committee noted the work that had been undertaken against a background of changing guidance. A small number of staff had continued to work on campus during lockdown in support of students in residential accommodation and staff involved in managing security and campus maintenance. Risk assessment had been an important aspect in supporting these staff groups during lockdown and would continue to be an essential feature for all categories of staff in the next phase.

4.3 A framework setting out the next steps and guidance for different sectors returning to work would be published soon by the Scottish Government. It was expected that home working would continue for a large number of staff. For those who were required to return to campus, safety was paramount and work to ensure a safe return, including risk assessment was essential. The framework when published would set out all areas to be considered including cleaning regimes, considerations for physical distancing and advice on managing catering provision.

- 4.4 The Committee noted that Covid required immediate reporting under RIDDOR but that there had been no incidents to date.
- 4.5 A member raised a query about whether swab testing regimes would be used. Discussion followed and it was agreed that swab testing may be something that could be reviewed in the context of cleaning risk assessments. It was acknowledged that a consistent framework was needed whilst recognising that different cleaning regimes may have to be put in place for specialist areas/or those areas where there was a greater footfall e.g. laboratory cleaning, i-points etc. This may help to allay concerns that had been expressed by some staff working in public facing roles together with other measures to ensure appropriate distancing. These measures would be identified via the risk assessment process.
- 4.6 The Director of People and Services reassured the Committee that ULT was focussed on ensuring a safe return to campus in a measured and controlled way. The default position was that staff who could work from home would continue to do so.
- 4.7 The Committee noted that report.

5. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH (OH) SERVICE REPORT- HS(19/20)011

- 5.1 The Director of People and Services introduced the report. There were no major issues at this time and HR staff were working closely with the service provider to improve the service level. The contract for the service provider had been extended by 6 months.
- 5.2 In terms of the absence statistics, a decline in reported absences had been noted during the lockdown. This was not surprising as staff were less likely to report an absence of illness when home working and was a trend common across the wider sector. Mental health remained a key priority in the weeks ahead with a shift towards online mental health support. A new online module for all staff in mental wellbeing was available as well as other essential skills training.
- 5.3 HR staff were also reviewing how to support staff with the correct set up and kit for home working and staff may be permitted to access to the campus in the weeks ahead to collect items to improve their working environments.
- 5.4 The Committee commended the input of Dr Russell Martindale of the School of Applied Sciences in promoting mindfulness training. The training had been well received and allowed colleagues to connect.
- 5.5 The Occupational Health Service Report was noted.

6. HEALTH & SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT – HS(19/20)012

- 6.1 The Head of Health and Safety provided an overview of the key highlights in Health and Safety Annual Report. The Committee noted that no statutory Health and Safety notices had been issued.
- 6.2 The Committee welcomed the report and the comprehensive account of health and safety business. A summary would be provided to University Court and the full report made available on the Health and Safety website. It was noted that there would be merit in promoting some of the positive Health and Safety messages in the report to staff, prospective students and their parents to build confidence about the campus environment. An overarching risk assessment setting out how the campus would operate would provide an opportunity to demonstrate the measures that would be put in place to support a safe return to campus.
- 6.3 Clarification was sought in terms of the Occupational Health referral numbers and whether repeat referrals were included. The Director of People and Services confirmed that the number was for individual referrals. The roll out of the new absence management policy had led to an increase absence because more staff were now being reported in the system. In addition Occupational Health referrals were being made earlier to support colleagues manage their sickness absence.
- 6.4 The Committee noted the report.

7. HEALTH AND SAFETY MANUAL HANDLING POLICY - HS(19/20)013

- 7.1 The Health and Safety Adviser introduced the manual handling policy which formalised requirements for manual handling in line with legislation and regulations. The Health and Safety Department will support training requirements via e-learning and face to face training going forward.
- 7.2 The Committee approved the policy.

8. ONLINE TRAINING UPDATE – Verbal Report

- 8.1 The Health and Safety Adviser confirmed that all staff had been sent a reminder about the requirement to complete the online training that was available. The uptake had been positive to date and that this would continue to be monitored. The Committee noted the update.

9. ACCIDENT STATISTICS SEPTEMBER 2019 TO FEBRUARY 2020 - HS(19/20)014

- 9.1 The Committee noted the accident statistics.

10. EMERGENCY EVACUATION REPORTS - HS(19/20)015

- 10.1 The Emergency Evacuations Report was noted.

11. HEALTH & SAFETY NOTICES SUMMARY - HS(19/20)016

11.1 The Committee noted the Health and Safety Notices summary.

12. MEMBERSHIP OF THE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE - HS(19/20)017

11.1 The Committee noted the membership.

13. PROVISIONAL MEETING DATES FOR 2020/21

17 November 2020 - 1330-1530

27 April 2021 - 1330-1530

Venues to be confirmed