

**UNIVERSITY COURT  
HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 7 October 2009  
at 4.00pm in Room 2/04, Craiglockhart Campus**

**PRESENT:** Dr L Burley (Court)(Convenor); Ms M Ali (Court); Ms K Bylinska (President NSA)(Court); Professor M Darlison (Biological Safety Officer)(Faculty of HLSS Representative); Mr M Mackay (UNISON); Ms M Philip (UNISON); Professor B Sloan (Court).

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs M Cook (Human Resources); Mr G Ferguson (Facilities Services); Ms L Young (Head of Health & Safety); Mr D Cloy (Governance & Management Services)(Observer); Mr J McDermott (Governance & Management Services)(Clerk).

**APOLOGIES:** Mr O Cruikshank (NSA)(Court); Mr D Davidson (Principal's Representative); Dr J Ensor (Principal's Representative); Mr J Goodlet (UNITE); Mr P Hughes (Facilities Services); Ms K Jackson (EIS/ULA); Professor J Kubie (Principal's Representative); Mr G McCarra (Court); Dr M Sanderson (EIS/ULA); Dr G Webber (University Safety Officer).

**1. WELCOME**

1.1 The Convenor welcomed members to the first meeting of the new Session, and especially welcomed the new members: Ms Ali, a new lay member of Court; Professor Sloan, the new member of Court drawn from the Academic Board; and Ms Bylinska, the new NSA President. It was noted that Mr Cruikshank was the new second student member.

1.2 The Convenor also welcomed Mr Ferguson, Assistant Director of Facilities Services, who was attending in place of Mr Hughes and Mr Cloy, who attended as an observer as part of his induction to the University and his role as Head of Governance & Management Services.

1.3 Thanks were expressed to the previous Occupational Health providers, especially Jean Tennant, the OH Nurse, who normally attended meetings. It was noted that the new OH provider would shortly identify representation to the Committee. A paper on the overall arrangement was considered later in the meeting.

1.4 The apologies were noted.

**2. TERMS OF REFERENCE, CONSTITUTION AND CURRENT MEMBERSHIP**

**(HS(09/10)01)**

2.1 The Committee noted, as normal at the first meeting of the session, its terms of reference, Constitution and Membership.

- 2.2 It was noted that the second position from the Faculty of Health, Life & Social Sciences remained vacant, as did certain of the other positions.

**DECISION:**

- 2.3 The Clerk to take appropriate action towards filling the vacant positions.**

**3. ANNUAL CYCLE OF BUSINESS**

**(HS(09/10)02)**

- 3.1 The annual cycle of business was approved as a reasonable expectation of standing items for consideration at meetings of the Committee. It was noted that, there would of course, be other items brought to the Committee in the course of the year.

**DECISION:**

- 3.2 To approve the Annual Cycle of Business.**

**4. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 20 MAY 2009**

**(HS/09/19)**

- 4.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 20 May 2009 were approved as an accurate record subject to the inclusion of the correct title of Professor Fernandes.

**5. MATTERS ARISING**

**a) Emergency Evacuations Reports (Item 6 (a))**

- 5.1 The Head of Health & Safety reported that further to the previous meeting, the required steps were being taken to encourage safe exit from the Canaan Lane building. The Assistant Director of Facilities Services reported that the Public Address system at Merchiston was to be replaced. The information was welcomed.

- 5.2 In response to concern expressed by the President of NSA, it was reported that stalls and other displays in the foyer at Merchiston could safely be accommodated through proper liaison with Facilities Services staff. The reassurance was noted.

**b) Complementary Therapies and Health & Safety Standards for Extraction of Aromatic Outputs (Item 9)**

- 5.3 The Head of Health & Safety reported that an extractor fan was in place and that the situation would continue to be monitored.

**6. ACCIDENT STATISTICS**

**a) Summary Statistics**

**(HS(09/10)03)**

- 6.1 A paper detailing the analysis of accident statistics during the period 6 April to 6 September 2009 was discussed and noted.

- 6.2 It was noted that there was a slight increase in the number of accidents since the last reporting period and against the same period in the preceding year. The main cause of accidents during this reporting period was manual lifting and it was noted that staff had been reminded of the requirement for appropriate training before undertaking this activity.

**b) Serious Accidents / Hazardous Incidents/Fire Incidents (HS(09/10)04)**

- 6.3 A paper summarising the serious accidents and hazardous incidents occurring during the period 6 April to 6 September 2009 was discussed and noted.
- 6.4 It was noted that there had been no serious accidents to students, staff or visitors/contractors during the reporting period. It was further noted that no fire incidents had occurred during the period.
- 6.5 It was reported that each of the hazardous incidents had been investigated and the required action taken to address the cause. The steps required to deal with trees that had become dangerous on the Craighouse Campus were explained. The Committee noted that expert opinion had been received and the proper channels gone through to involve the City Council, which had jurisdiction in such matters. A current instance was reported as being subjected to this rigour.

**7. EMERGENCY EVACUATION REPORTS**

**a) Scheduled (HS(09/10)05)**

- 7.1 It was noted that in order to avoid disruption to the examination process, no scheduled evacuations had been conducted during the period 6 April to 6 September 2009.

**b) Unscheduled (HS(09/10)06)**

- 7.2 A paper detailing unscheduled evacuations from University property during the period 6 April to 6 September 2009 was received and noted.
- 7.3 The number of unscheduled evacuations at Riego Street and West Tollcross had again decreased since the previous reporting period, however, it was reported that there had subsequently been a sharp increase. Steps were therefore being taken to reinforce the appropriate behaviour to the new intake of residents. The assistance of NSA was recognised as important and the President undertook to liaise accordingly with the Health & Safety team.

**8. HEALTH AND SAFETY NOTICES SUMMARY (HS(09/10)07)**

- 8.1 A paper was received and noted that detailed the Health and Safety Notices issued during the period 6 April to 6 September 2009 by the Health and Safety Team when a hazardous situation is observed or highlighted and requires immediate action.
- 8.2 In total three notices had been issued and all related to the control of contractors. It was reported that this was a relatively small number in comparison to the total number of contracts carried out, which were estimated at involving around 2,400 'staff days' during the period. It was noted that two of the notices had related to one contractor and as a consequence this contractor would not be re-engaged by the University. With regard to the third instance, the contractor had introduced new procedures to ensure that appropriate controls were in place.

- 8.3 It was noted that the issuing of notices was taken very seriously by the University and that a culture of continuous improvement was fostered, bolstered by random sampling to ensure compliance and imposition of sanctions if breaches occur.
- 8.4 It was agreed that Facilities Services staff would work with colleagues in the Health & Safety team to ensure that future reports would include suitable contextual information.
- 8.5 It was noted that one of the notices related to on-going work on the roof at Merchiston and it was suggested that the parapets on that roof may no longer meet industry regulations. Reassurance was given that part of the current project was to ensure the future safety of persons working on the roof. It was also noted that access to the roof space was strictly controlled through the permit system and that risk assessments were expected to be conducted routinely prior to any instance of a person working on a roof.

**DECISION:**

- 8.6 Future reports to include contextual information including: the number of contracts undertaken in the reporting period; the seriousness of each notice served; learning points identified and action taken following the issuing of the notices.**

**9. UPDATE ON PREPARATIONS FOR ANY FLU PANDEMIC (HS(09/10)08)**

- 9.1 A paper was received to inform the Committee of the preparations underway with respect to the University being affected by flu. It was noted that: contingency plans were in place; advice was being taken on an on-going basis from the appropriate authorities; updated information was regularly issued to staff and students through various channels including the website [www.napier.ac.uk/flu](http://www.napier.ac.uk/flu); and that a constant monitor was being maintained on staff sickness absence. At present it seemed that staff were not being affected to any significant extent, although the possibility remained of an outbreak similar to that reported to be affecting a local secondary school.
- 9.2 It was noted that the Students' Association was fully involved in the contingency planning process as well as fulfilling an essential role in communicating with the student body, especially regarding the induction of new students. It was noted that student nurses would, in the conduct of their placements, be included in any programme conducted by the Lothian Health Board to vaccinate front-line healthcare staff. Other students and staff would be eligible for inclusion in any general vaccination programme of the public at large.

**10. UPDATE ON OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH PROVIDER (HS(09/10)09)**

- 10.1 The Committee received and noted the report which informed it of the appointment of Connaught Compliance Services Ltd as the provider of an Occupational Health Service to the University from 1 October 2009. It was noted that a period of transition was anticipated until the end of December, by which time the provider would be expected to be at full speed. In the meantime, it was noted that staff currently subject of referrals had been written to with the new arrangements. It was further noted that contact details and other information on

the new provider was available on the [HR staff intranet](#) site and that briefing sessions were to be held for supervisors and managers.

- 10.2 It was noted that First Aid issues had historically been of particular interest to the Committee and it was agreed that implementation of the previously agreed approaches with regard to First Aid and Surveillance would be delayed until the new provider has concluded some needs analyses. It was noted that a report would be submitted to the next meeting with specific proposals.

**DECISION:**

- 10.3 To receive a report at the next meeting informed by the outcome of the needs analyses into the management of first aid across the University and the requirements of health surveillance.**

**11. GENDER SENSITIVITY, EQUALITY, OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES (HS(09/10)10)**

- 11.1 The Head of Health & Safety introduced the paper as an outcome of the sub-group looking at Gender Sensitivity and Health and Safety Policies. The sub-group had worked through the TUC checklist and had addressed a number of issues that had been identified. There was noted to be work on-going with regard to certain aspects, including revising the policy on new and expectant mothers and on home working. It was welcomed that the disability leave policy had been adopted by the University.

- 11.2 The Committee was invited to endorse two proposals: that the Committee should receive additional statistics, disaggregated as detailed, to enable it to monitor gender or other trends apparent in sickness absence; that the Flexible Working Policy should be further communicated. Whilst these were supported, caution was expressed with regard to potential implications under the Data Protection Act of disaggregating statistics to too low a level. It was also noted that the Flexible Working Policy had recently been widely communicated.

**DECISION:**

- 11.3 To endorse the proposals, noting the above.**

**12. RISK MANAGEMENT – UNIVERSITY ‘TOP RISKS’ EXCEPTIONS REPORT (HS(09/10)11)**

- 12.1 The Committee received and noted the first monitoring report of the academic year regarding the top risk which relates to preparing for a major incident. There was no change in the status of the mitigating actions compared to the last report.

**13. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Wednesday 10 February 2010;

Wednesday 19 May 2010.

To take place in the Castle Room, Craighouse Campus, commencing at 4.00 pm