

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

**University Health & Safety Executive Committee**

Minutes of the meeting of the University Health and Safety Executive Committee held on  
Thursday 17 June 2010.

Present: Mr N Sanders (Chair), Mr K Sloan, Professor A Easton, Ms S Foy, Ms R Roke.

Apologies: Mr J Baldwin (Registrar), Mr R Wilson, Ms Y Salter Wright, Professor M Whitby (Pro-Vice Chancellor), Ms J Horsburgh (Director of Human Resources), Mr A Twiss.

In Attendance: Dr I MacKirdy, (Secretary and Director of Health and Safety), Ms J Rawlinson (Assistant Secretary)

26/09-10 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 1 March 2010 be approved.

27/09-10 Attendance of Health and Safety representatives at Faculty lunches (minute 14-09/10 refers)

REPORTED:

(by Ken Sloan, Registrar's representative)

a) That the Faculty of Science had declined the offer of Health and Safety presentations to their Faculty lunch this term given other priorities faced by the Faculty Board and in light of the presentation that they had received last year and the support that the laboratory-based Departments had received from Health and Safety Advisors over the course of the year.

(by the Director of Health and Safety)

b) That members of the Health and Safety team had been invited to attend the joint Faculty lunch of the Faculty of Social Science and the Faculty of Arts.

28/09-10 Report from the University Health and Safety Committee

CONSIDERED:

A report of the meeting of the University Health and Safety Committee held on the 20 May 2010 (Paper UHSEC 15/09-10), including recommendations by the University Health and Safety Committee regarding:

- a) The replacement of the current health and safety policy statement with the proposed Policy Statement: item 2 of the Report (UHSC 15/09-10 Revised).
- b) The Health and Safety Policy and Guidance on Student Placements: item 3 of the Report (UHSC 16/09-10 Revised).
- c) The Occupational Health Surveillance document: item 4a of the Report (UHSC 18/09-10).

REPORTED:

(by the Director of Health and Safety)

- i) That the Committee had noted that it was supportive of the withdrawal of 'Safety in the University' and its replacement with more accessible and understandable health and safety guidance
- ii) That the incidence of reportable injuries to staff in 2009 was above the average for other similar campus based universities
- iii) That the incidence of reportable injuries to students had been lower than the sector average in each of the last 5 years
- iv) That WHRI had made excellent progress on issues raised by the inspection and audit that was carried out in September 2008, and that all high priority actions had been completed and all other actions were in progress.

(by Nick Sanders, Chair)

- v) That the University Health and Safety Committee had noted the importance of the Joint Inspections and the value of not informing staff and those responsible for the area in advance.

(by the Director of Health and Safety)

- vi) That the University was being prosecuted for failure to prevent access to dangerous parts of machinery in relation to the Kirton incident, and that the supplier of the machinery was also being prosecuted.

29/09-10 Health and Safety Policy Statement: (UHSC 15/09-10 Revised).

RESOLVED:

That the current health and safety policy statement should be replaced with the new Policy Statement taking into account the feedback from the Committee on the wording in relation to: 'challenging assumptions', 'adaptability' rather than 'flexibility', and 'must' rather than 'shall'.

RECOMMENDED:

That the University Council consider and approve the new Health and Safety Policy Statement (UHSC 15/09-10 Revised 2).

30/09-10 Health and Safety Policy and Guidance on Student Placements: (UHSC 16/09-10 Revised).

REPORTED:

(by the Director of Health and Safety)

That an extra paragraph be included in the 'Principles' to clarify that there were three parties to any placement: the placement provider, the student, and the University, and that it was important that each party had a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee were supportive of the Student Placement Health and Safety Policy and Guidelines whilst noting that:

- i) A list of students that were to undertake student placements should be given to the Director of Student Support, to enable consideration of any additional support needs.
- ii) The Student Placement Health and Safety Policy and Guidelines should be reviewed prior to the academic year 2011/12 taking account of student feedback.
- iii) The Director of Health and Safety would revise the wording to highlight the three parties to any placement..

RECOMMENDED:

That the University Council consider and approve the Health and Safety Policy and Guidance on Student Placements (UHSC 16/09-10 Revised 3)

31/09-10 Occupational Health Surveillance: (UHSC 18/09-10).

REPORTED:

(by the Director of Health and Safety)

- a) That the comments raised by Trade Union representatives on the health surveillance questionnaires had been taken on board and that Occupational Health would review the questionnaires.

(by Sandra Foy, Trade Union Representative)

- b) That there was concern that some questions were too intrusive, and that the questionnaires were too long.

(by Ken Sloan, Registrar's Representative)

- c) That statements in relation to data protection should be made to ensure all were clear how data would be used and held.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the Committee approve the Occupational Health Surveillance document: (UHSC 18/09-10).
- ii) That the Director of Health and Safety would consult Trade Union representatives on the revised health surveillance questionnaires.
- iii) That the Director of Health and Safety would place statements on the Occupational Health webpage in relation to data protection to ensure all were clear how data would be used and held.

32/09-10 Replacement of 'Safety In The University'

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Director of Health and Safety on the proposed withdrawal and replacement of 'Safety In The University' (Paper UHSEC 16/09-10.).

REPORTED:

(by the Director of Health and Safety)

- a) That in order for the Health and Safety team to be fully supportive to departments the removal of 'Safety in the University' was required and that the action plan detailed how it would be replaced with new guidance on the website and consultation with key stakeholders prior to launch at the end of September 2010.
- b) That a hard copy of the Health and Safety information on the website would be held in the Health and Safety Department, and would also be made available in departments to staff who have no computer access.
- c) That the Health and Safety Department would utilise good examples of information from other Universities and institutions.

(by Andrew Easton, Head of the Department of Biological Sciences)

- d) That the proposals were very useful and that the use of the website would make the information more accessible, easier to update and more user friendly.

(by Nick Sanders, Chair)

- e) That the action plan was good in principle, albeit with challenging timescales, but active participation and consultation was encouraged in order to get the information correct.
- f) That delegated authority needed to be established to ensure that amendments to the Health, Safety and Well-being documentation were not as cumbersome as for that of 'Safety in the University'.

RESOLVED:

- i) That a clear delegation process would be put in place to ensure that where amendments were required in the future and that these were technical in nature, the Director of Health and Safety would have the authority to make such changes, but where matters were more contentious or were policy matters, these issues would be consulted and discussed as part of the Committee process.
- ii) That the website should clearly highlight where policies had been approved and were in existence, and where new policies were under consultation and subject to approval.

RECOMMENDED:

That the Council approve the withdrawal of "Safety in the University" in September 2010 and its replacement with the new Health, Safety, and Wellbeing manual on the web.

33/09-10

Fire Safety

RECEIVED:

A report from the Director of Health and Safety on fire safety that included a briefing on changes in legislation (Paper UHSEC 17/09-10).

REPORTED:

(by the Director of Health and Safety)

- a) That the Committee should note that there had been major changes in 2006 to fire safety regulations with the introduction of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- b) That a prioritised action plan for the review and assessment of fire safety had been developed, which involved working with other relevant groups including the Operational Risk Management Group and other key stakeholders.
- c) That the training of staff in fire evacuation should be reviewed by the Operational Risk Management Group and clarification was required as to where these responsibilities should sit, whether that be with designated individuals or that all staff have a responsibility for this.
- d) If specified fire wardens were no longer in place, the responsibility to ensure that staff evacuate from buildings during fire alarms would be the responsibility of line managers.

(by Ken Sloan, Registrar's Representative)

- e) That the Committee should monitor progress even if these matters were discussed and progressed by other forums.
- f) That other key committees such as the Building Committee and the Finance and General Purposes Committee should have an awareness of relevant issues.
- g) That the use of local incident response teams would need clarity to ensure that there was no ambiguity about who was responsible for what.

(by Sandra Foy, Trade Union Representative)

- h) That there needed to be somebody responsible for ensuring staff left the building during fire alarms, that fire wardens play a visible role, and without these key people, staff may remain in buildings to finish off work or phone calls.

(by Nick Sanders, Chair)

- i) That the briefing on the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 was helpful and the Committee welcomed the prioritised programme.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the Committee should receive an update on fire safety at least annually.
- ii) That the Committee should receive a progress report from the Director of Health and Safety at the next meeting.

34/09-10 Pulse Stressor Survey

RECEIVED:

An interim report from the Director of Health and Safety on the initial findings from the Pulse survey regarding stressors (Paper UHSEC 18/09-10).

REPORTED:

(by the Director of Health and Safety)

- a) That department reports had been issued to Heads of Departments for them to commence work on their local action plan, and that feedback in Pulse 2010 on work-related stressors was less favourable than in 2009, although it was generally no worse than in 2008.
- b) That the Central Pulse Action Team would meet next week to consider the findings of Pulse in greater detail.
- c) That the Director of Health and Safety would provide further information on the underlying issues and progress by relevant departments at the next UHSEC meeting.

(by Sandra Foy, Trade Union Representative)

- d) That staff expectations on training and development had not been met, particularly where they were not wholly relevant to their job role.
- e) That staff were concerned about their workloads in departments where staffing levels had been reduced.

(by Julie Rawlinson, HR Manager)

- f) That whilst feedback on training and development was negative, this was possibly due to the introduction of the annual review process where

training needs would be identified, which may have raised staff expectations.

(by Ken Sloan, Registrar's Representative)

- g) The results reflect the year that the University had been through and that it was inevitable that staff would raise concerns about resources, security, and training and development.
- h) That given the current economic climate staff may feel insecure in their roles and were requesting broader training and development in order to gain further development to assist them in gaining alternative work.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee would receive a more detailed report at its next meeting on work related stressors from the Director of Health and Safety.

35/09-10

Date of Next Meeting

REPORTED:

That dates of future meetings would be announced when the Committee Calendar for 2010/11 was finalised.