

Agricultural Activities Policy

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 are relevant to all activities carried out on the University campus, or by University staff. The regulations set minimum standards for the protection of individuals from risks related to work activities, which would include any and all agricultural activities, and require suitable and robust risk controls to be implemented where there are particularly high-risk areas or activities. A number of other regulations also have direct applicability to agricultural activities. Activities carried out by University Grounds Staff are covered separately under other policies and arrangements.

This Policy applies across the University's campuses, including Gibbet Hill, Westwood and Wellesbourne. The Policy also applies to all agricultural activities managed or carried out by University staff at off-campus sites as part of research projects. This Policy is supported by arrangements, instructions, and guidance, which are available on the University's Health and Safety web pages.

Under the provisions of Regulation 26, Safety Regulations and associated University Health and Safety Policy document, it is the duty of all staff, students and others working in the University to comply with this Policy, together with any other instructions, rules and guidance that may apply.

Core Principles

1. All agricultural activities carried out by staff and students must be risk assessed against the requirements of the Health and Safety Executive's guidance on safety in agriculture (HSG270) and such risk assessments must be documented, shared with those carrying out such work and must form part of the associated training and supervisory arrangements.
2. Particular attention must be paid in the risk assessment to specific agricultural risks including: Work equipment (especially moving parts, power take-off shafts and other rotating machinery, conveyors and chainsaws; vehicles and mobile plant (especially the risk of overturning); personal exposure to noise and vibration; risks from overhead cables and underground services; confined spaces such as grain silos and slurry pits; respirable dusts, vapours, fumes and mists; pesticides and veterinary medicines; biological risks (including a number of diseases, known as Zoonoses, which can be transferred from animals to humans); and, other risks associated with working with livestock or in the proximity of wild animals.
3. Due consideration must also be given in risk assessments to generic risks (covered in separate University policies) which are also applicable to agricultural activities, including construction related work, working at height, electrical safety, manual handling and lone working.
4. Where agricultural activities are to be carried out by University staff and students away from University campuses, whether on sites in the UK or overseas, the documented risk assessments must be completed well in advance of such work commencing and must be shared with the appropriate Health and Safety Officer or Health and Safety Adviser so that they can check for completeness and support the individual carrying out the risk assessment as required.
5. All reasonable steps must be taken to prevent access by members of the public (and children in particular) to areas where agricultural activities are being conducted.

6. All staff and students involved in agricultural activities must be provided with the required training as identified within the risk assessments and records of training and competence maintained: in particular those supervising staff and students engaged in agricultural activities must be competent to do so.
7. The risk assessments must also document any work-wear and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) required by staff and students involved in such work, and this should detail the arrangements for the maintenance, storage, cleaning and drying of such PPE.
8. The risk assessment must also detail the relevant emergency and first aid arrangements required, bearing in mind such work is often carried out in remote areas where communication and access to medical treatment or the emergency services might be challenging.

Responsibilities

Heads of Departments are responsible for the implementation of this Policy with regard to risk assessment of all agricultural activities carried out by their staff and students and the implementation of suitable risk control measures applicable to such agricultural activities. Heads of Departments are responsible for ensuring that such activities carried out off-campus are similarly assessed and controlled, and that there is appropriate cooperation between their staff and students and the representatives from any host employer.

All staff within departments must comply with this Policy and the associated arrangements, instructions and guidance.

The Director of Health and Safety is responsible for advising on the standards and regulations that must be achieved in order to meet legal requirements; for keeping the University's Health and Safety website up to date with the related policy documents; and for ensuring that spot checks and audits are carried out to provide assurance that activities are being carried out in compliance with this Policy.

Review

This policy will be reviewed when any legal requirements change or at least once every three years.

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