



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

Health and Safety Guidance

Implementing Health and Safety Policy within Colleges/Corporate Services

GUIDANCE/28/IHSPC/10

This Guidance is issued to assist those with responsibility for managing health and safety risks in Colleges and Corporate Services. The primary responsibility lies with the Head of College/Corporate Service as detailed in the University Health and Safety Policy (UHSP/0/10). However in practice there will usually be a number of people involved in co-ordinating the management of risks and this guidance should be of value to all persons fulfilling this co-ordinating role.

Further information and advice may be obtained from the Health and Safety Unit.

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Implementing Health and Safety Policy within Colleges/Corporate Services

Executive Summary

The University Health and Safety Policy (USHP/0/10) emphasises the importance of leadership in Health and Safety and this guidance is intended to assist those in leadership positions including members of University Executive Board, College Boards, Senior Officers and those who directly manage and supervise colleagues and students.

This guidance draws heavily on guidance published by the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) and the Universities Safety and Health Association (USHA) entitled; "Leading Health and Safety". It is available on the UCEA website [http://www.ucea.ac.uk/en/Publications/Health_and_Safety.cfm].

The essential principles of successful health and safety leadership

Strong and active leadership from the top:

- visible, active commitment from the governing body;
- establishing effective 'downward' communication systems and management structures;
- integration of good health and safety management with business decisions.

Worker involvement:

- engaging the workforce in the promotion and achievement of safe and healthy conditions;
- effective 'upward' communication;
- providing appropriate quality information and training.

Assessment and review:

- identifying and managing health and safety risks;
- accessing (and following) competent advice;
- monitoring, reporting and reviewing performance.

The Foreword to the University Health and Safety Policy emphasises sensible and proportionate precautions.

The University as an employer, educator and research institution is committed to ensuring that the many and varied activities that we engage in are carried out responsibly with an understanding of the risks involved and with sensible and appropriate precautions put in place to match those risks. The aim is for continuing improvement in the way that Health and Safety risks are managed and that they become part of the way of doing business at the University.

GUIDANCE

Strong and Active Leadership

This guidance focuses on the essential principles identified above rather than detailed procedures and processes in managing health and safety risks throughout the University.

There is an emphasis in the University Health and Safety Policy on leadership. Leadership in health and safety is no different from leadership in other areas and maps onto the University's developing capability frameworks for managers.

For health and safety policy to be meaningful it has to be demonstrated by those with responsibilities that they are committed to it. This starts at the top with the Vice-Chancellor and UEB. Many of the individual UEB members will have specific responsibility for a College or Corporate Services but they also share a role in leadership for the whole institution.

The guidance below is made up of prompts to assist individuals identify how to do this.

- How do you demonstrate commitment to health and safety?
- What do you do to review your health and safety arrangements?
- How are you ensuring all staff – including your Board or senior management team – are sufficiently trained and competent to discharge their health and safety responsibilities?
- How confident are you that your workforce, particularly safety representatives, are consulted properly on health and safety matters, and that their concerns are reaching the appropriate level including, as necessary, the Board?
- What systems are in place to ensure your risks are assessed, and that sensible control measures are established and maintained?
- How well do you know what is happening in the areas for which you are responsible in your College, Corporate Service, School, Department, team including any contractors engaged by you? What audits or inspections are undertaken to inform you?
- Where changes in working arrangements have significant implications for health and safety, how are these brought to the attention of the Board?
- How confident are you that attitudes within your part of the organisation do not condone poor practices or produce tolerance to it?

Head of College/Corporate Services

The University Health and Safety Policy (ref. UHSP/0/10) states that: *“The Heads of Colleges and Heads of Corporate Services are responsible to the University for ensuring that risks to health and safety of staff, students, customers, clients and visitors, are properly identified and controlled in conformity with University policy. This responsibility extends to staff and student activities away from University premises including student placements. The Heads of Colleges and Heads of Corporate Services are also responsible for fostering an environment in which health, safety and related issues are seen as essential and integral parts of the College’s and Corporate Services’ activities.”*

In addition to the health and safety leadership criteria above:

- What have you done to ensure your College/Corporate Services, at all levels including the Board, receives competent health and safety advice?
- What information does the Board receive regularly about health and safety, e.g. performance data and reports on injuries and work-related ill health?
- What actions or targets have you set to improve health and safety?
- Is there a commitment to, including adequate resourcing of, health and safety in College/Corporate Services activities and plans

Examples of key areas of leadership for Heads include: ensuring rigour in the annual health and safety planning and review process, having an effective College HS Committee, supporting and working with the College HS Co-ordinator (e.g. occasionally going on inspection or monitoring visits with them), ensuring that resourcing for health and safety is considered and provided (e.g. in grant applications or major projects), ensuring that health and safety is considered at Board level and ensuring that the appointed TU Reps are enabled to carry out their statutory functions.

Head of School and Other Senior Managers

The University Health and Safety Policy (ref. UHSP/0/10) states that: *“Heads of School are accountable to their Head of College and responsible for the implementation of and compliance with College Policy in their School.*

Senior managers in the Administration are accountable to their Senior Officers and responsible for implementation of and compliance with Policy in their area of control.”

Examples of key areas of leadership include: demonstrating active participation in health and safety and particularly supporting supervisors; ensuring implementation of College/Corporate Services arrangements; receiving reports from supervisors and reporting up to College/Corporate Services Committees, raising health and safety in appropriate School/Corporate Service fora and identifying resource needs.

The role of Head of School/Corporate Service should be defined in the College/Corporate Services arrangements.

Supervisors

The University Health and Safety Policy states that: *“Persons in supervisory positions, including any such persons not actually employed by the University, have special responsibilities with regard to health and safety when in charge of students, research workers, employees or visitors, either individually or in groups. Such persons must ensure that adequate safe working arrangements are based on suitable and sufficient risk assessments. Supervisors should have copies of relevant risk assessments. In cases of uncertainty, expert advice should be sought in the first instance through the College/Corporate Service Health and Safety Co-ordinator or the University Health and Safety Unit.”*

Not only does ‘supervisor’ include principal investigators and managers but anyone who is in charge of students, researchers, other employees, volunteers and visitors.

Examples of key areas of leadership include: reporting health and safety concerns, incidents or accidents; ensuring risk assessments are completed, implemented and procedures are followed; identifying health and safety resource needs at an early stage in plans for new work; demonstrating good practice in their own work and proactively engaging with those they supervise to ensure good practice; ensuring that equipment under their control has any necessary statutory testing carried out. Supervisors should be aware of their own level of knowledge and competence and seek specialist advice, if necessary.

College/Corporate Service Arrangements

The University Health and Safety Policy (ref. UHSP/0/09) states that: *“In discharging their duties, each Head of College must appoint a College Board member to be responsible for health and safety, a College Health and Safety Committee and a College Health and Safety Co-ordinator. Where appropriate, further Health and Safety co-ordinators and specialist health and safety personnel, e.g. Radiation Protection Supervisor, Biological Safety Officer, Fire Wardens and First Aiders etc. will also need to be appointed. In delegating some of the day-to-day tasks to such people the Head of College must ensure that they have appropriate experience, special knowledge (of the equipment, process, materials or activity), appropriate training and adequate resources (especially time and money) to carry out their tasks. The duties of such persons should be agreed by the College Board in a written statement of duties and responsibilities*
AND

“Heads of Corporate Services must appoint one or more Health and Safety Co-ordinators and, where appropriate, specialist health and safety personnel including Fire Wardens and First Aiders”.

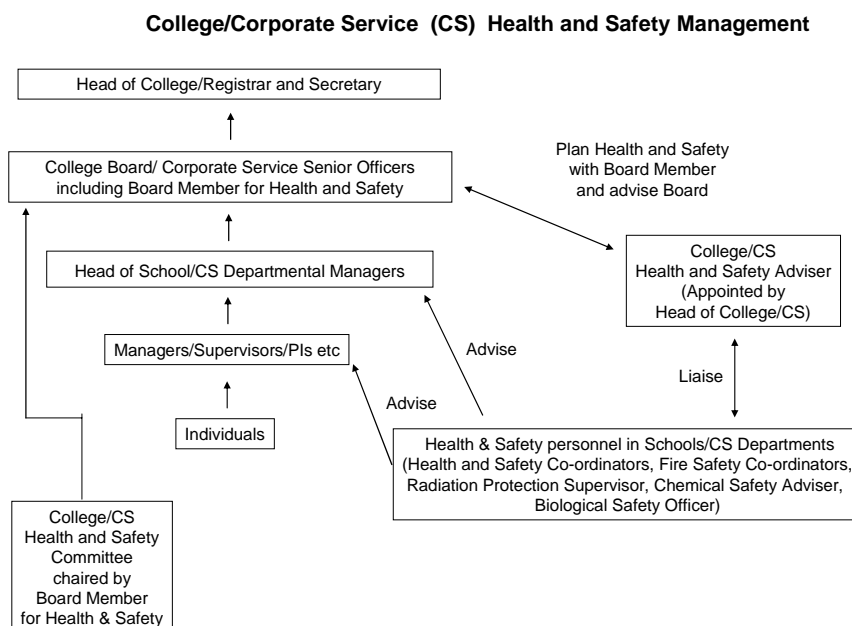
Colleges/Corporate Services are not required to produce their own Health and Safety Policy but are required to publish details of the organisation and arrangements for the implementation of the University Health and Safety Policy in their activities, which should include:

- College/Corporate Service Health and Safety Committee function and membership;
- Names of College/Corporate Service health and safety personnel such as Health and Safety Coordinators, Radiation Protection Supervisors, Fire Wardens, First-Aiders and any other persons with specific health and safety responsibilities together with details of how they may be contacted;
- Arrangements for raising health and safety matters and for consultation and co-operation with appointed Trade Union Safety Representatives;
- Procedures for reporting and investigating injuries, ill-health and dangerous incidents;
- Procedures for action in the event of emergencies, in particular fire.
- Induction arrangements for new staff and students

- Arrangements for implementing University on specific risks.

Detailed local rules and procedures will be necessary to identify and control specific risks either as identified in University policies or as a result of risk assessment.

The chart below indicates the College/Corporate Services health and safety management arrangements.



College Health and Safety Committee

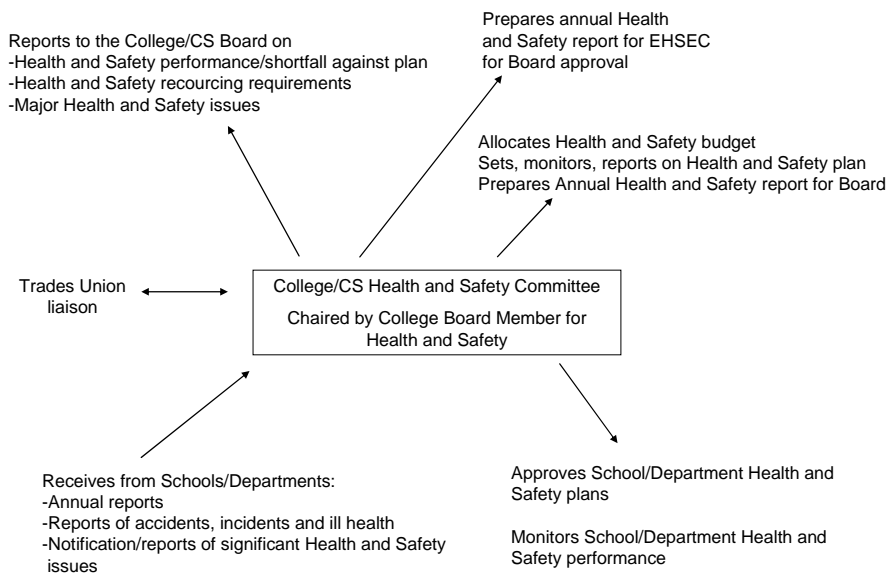
The University Health and Safety Policy (ref. UHSP/0/10) states that: *"In discharging their duties, each Head of College must appointa College Health and Safety Committee....."*

Model Terms of Reference

- To ensure that there are adequate procedures in place across the College to allow the Head of College, Heads of Schools, supervisors and individuals to be able to discharge their responsibilities, as set out in the University's Health and Safety Policy;
- To co-ordinate the production of an annual Health and Safety plan for the College, for submission to EHSEC;
- To co-ordinate the production of an annual Health and Safety report on the implementation of the plan and monitoring of compliance, for submission to EHSEC;
- To take appropriate action where standards of compliance with the plan are not being met;
- To monitor levels of risk across the College, ensuring that appropriate action is taken to eliminate or control risks identified;
- To receive reports from within the College or Corporate Services , identifying issues to be addressed at College level;
- To provide support and guidance to School Health and Safety representatives;
- To consider, provide guidance on and formulate a College-wide response to legislation and University policy around health and safety;
- To promote best practice across the College;
- To approve major expenditure from the College's health and safety budget;
- To report to and advise the College Board on health and safety issues.

The chart below shows the composition and function of the College/Corporate Services Health and Safety Committee.

College/Corporate Service Health and Safety Committee



Worker Involvement

The University recognises the importance of involving people who face the risk in the management of health and safety.

There are special statutory requirements for consultation with recognised Trade Unions. A Safety Reps Charter [http://www.hsu.bham.ac.uk/univ/pdfs/safety_reps_charter_2006.pdf] has been drawn up with the recognised trade Unions at the University which details arrangements to involve TU representatives. The Charter states: *“The University in addition to the statutory minimum requirement to form JSAC has agreed that Trade Unions may appoint Health and Safety Representatives in each Budget Centre.”* The principle is that arrangements should be made to allow appointed Trade Union Safety Representatives to carry out their statutory functions. The Charter lists their functions, including: *“To attend College or Corporate Services health and safety committee meetings”*. Appointed Trade Union Safety Representatives have the right to attend Health and Safety Committees or Groups at which Health and Safety matters are raised. The specific levels of involvement of Trade Union Safety Representatives is best arrived at by discussion at College and Corporate Services level and as a minimum there should be TU reps on the College and Corporate Service H&S Committees.

In addition to formal representatives, individuals who carry out the work will have experience and understanding of the risks involved and it is important that their views and experience are taken into account when assessing risks and drawing up procedures to manage those risks.

Assessment and Review

Risk Assessment

The purpose of risk assessments is to allow for a systematic identification of significant risks so that they can be prevented or reduced and controlled to an appropriate standard. The process also assists in identifying priorities making it possible to target resources at the most serious risks and so match the level of risk to the level of precautions. Staff should not waste effort on trivial risks but equally should be aware of the significant ones.

There is University guidance on the principles and practice of risk assessment and further policies and guidance that cover specific risk types and detail how these risks should be assessed and controlled. These are available on the University Health and Safety web pages [<https://www.intranet.bham.ac.uk/university/hsu/safety/policy.shtml>] and in hardcopy from the Health and Safety Unit.

Annual Plan and Monitoring

The University Health and Safety Policy (ref. UHSP/0/10) states: "Heads of Colleges and Heads of Corporate Services must ensure that:

- an annual health and safety plan is submitted to EHSEC. The plan should identify key objectives which are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and have clear deadlines for completion;
- an annual health and safety report on the implementation of the plan and monitoring of compliance is submitted to EHSEC;
- suitable monitoring arrangements are introduced to ensure University Policy and College/Corporate Service rules are being adhered to."

Priorities within Colleges or Corporate Services will differ markedly depending on activity, premises, location and the category of persons using the College or Corporate Services and will also vary from year to year. The University requires Colleges and Corporate Services to have annual plans in relation to Health and Safety (page 4, UHSP/0/10).

Local Plans

Local health and safety plans should be prepared and updated in advance of each academic year. The Plan should:

- set objectives;
- identify priorities;
- set timescales;
- identify who is to carry out the necessary actions.

Targets set should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and given timescales.

The purpose of the Plan is to ensure that priority areas are identified and addressed and to act as a vehicle for continuous improvement in standards. The Plan and reports on its implementation also act as a record of the actions taken and provides evidence of compliance with the law.

Standards

It is important to have standards against which Colleges and Corporate Services can measure their performance. In many cases the University sets standards in the form of Health and Safety Policy or Guidance. These are available on the Health and Safety Unit web pages <http://www.hsu.bham.ac.uk> and in hardcopy from the Health and Safety Unit.

In some cases where policy does not exist because of the specialist nature of the risk or for other reasons Colleges/Corporate Services will have to identify and follow other recognised standards (e.g. European or British Standards). There are a variety of sources of this information with varying levels of authority. The Health and Safety Unit will provide assistance and advice in determining appropriate standards in these circumstances.

Monitoring

Local health and safety monitoring is intended to show whether and how effectively policy has been implemented and to ensure that appropriate remedial action is taken before things go wrong. If things do go wrong, the outcome of accident investigation should pinpoint deficiencies and the need for remedial action, including organisational and policy changes.

The provision of feedback information on health and safety performance is essential for a Head of College or Corporate Services to successfully manage health and safety. Monitoring the achievement of plans and compliance with policy and standards will provide this information. Heads of College or Corporate Services should ensure that regular scheduled self-inspections are arranged, as part of the normal process of local management.

The frequency of inspections should be based on an assessment of the risks in each College/Corporate Services and a programme of inspections developed. Frequency can be varied based on experience. Varying the time and day of the week on which the inspection is carried out can help to take account of changes in activities.

Routine Checks and Testing

Monitoring by self-inspection is not a substitute for the many and various routine checks that College/Corporate Services should carry out as part of normal procedures. These can range from informal scrutiny of laboratory working methods by supervisors to regular inspection and testing of electrical installations and equipment and the statutory requirement for thorough examination and test of the following:

- local exhaust ventilation
- pressure systems
- lifting equipment;
- certain power presses;
- radiation monitors;
- personal protective equipment, where appropriate.

Accessing Competent Advice

University Health and Safety Personnel

Professional advisers in the Health and Safety Unit (including Fire Safety) and the Occupational Health Unit are available as a source of competent advice to support local arrangements and the University.

Other professional advisers may also be of assistance, e.g. in relation to disability of staff and students and disposal or recycling of waste.

Local Health and Safety Personnel

The University Health and Safety Policy (ref. UHSP/0/10) states *"Where appropriate, further health and safety co-ordinators and specialist health and safety personnel, e.g. Radiation Protection Supervisor, Biological Safety Officer, Fire Wardens and First Aiders etc. will also need to be appointed"*.

And

"Heads of Corporate Services must appoint one or more Health and Safety Co-ordinators and, where appropriate, specialist health and safety personnel including Fire Wardens and First Aiders."

Health and Safety Co-ordinators are key individuals in the management of health and safety. They have to co-ordinate health and safety on behalf of the Head of College or Corporate Services.

The individual should have the experience, commitment and authority to be able to carry out their function. Adequate resources, mainly time, should be provided to allow the Health and Safety Co-ordinator to function effectively. Heads of College or Corporate Services should also provide support to their Health and Safety Co-ordinators to ensure that they are seen to be acting on their behalf.

The Health and Safety Unit runs courses for Health and Safety Co-ordinators.

Suggested items which might be included in a list of duties are given below.

Other Safety Personnel

In some cases there is a statutory requirement or it is University Policy for Heads of College or Corporate Services to appoint someone with a specific responsibility:

- Radiation Protection Supervisor where radiation levels exceed particular values or where radioactive materials are handled;
- Laser Safety Officer where lasers are used;
- Biological Safety Officer where biological agents are handled;
- Chemical Safety Adviser where hazardous substances are used;
- Hazardous Waste Co-ordinator where hazardous waste is generated.

In some cases it will be unreasonable to expect an individual, such as the Health and Safety Co-ordinator, to have all the skills and experience necessary to deal with all aspects of a College or Corporate Services' activities. This is likely to be the case in a large Science, Engineering School or the Medical School and larger administrative departments. In addition to the functions listed above it may be appropriate to further allocate responsibility to cover other specified risks. Where there are several members of staff with such responsibilities it is essential that the College or Corporate Services Health and Safety Co-ordinator co-ordinates their functions.

Health and Safety Co-ordinators

Role of a Health and Safety Co-ordinator

It is important to ensure that the co-ordinator has a job description defining their duties. The list below gives examples of typical duties that a co-ordinator would be expected to fulfil. The Co-ordinator should have the authority to act on behalf of the Head of College/Corporate Service on safety matters, especially in extremis. They are also a primary link to the Health and Safety and Occupational health Units and would be expected to refer to them for advice or for information.

To advise the Head of College/Corporate Service on all matters relating to safety of personnel and equipment in the College/Corporate Service, in particular:

- on encouraging a safety-conscious attitude in the College/Corporate Service and that all persons know the procedure for raising matters concerning safety;
- on developing appropriate local rules and ensuring that they are displayed and/or distributed;
- on the awareness of members of the College/Corporate Service of the need to report accidents and hazardous occurrences and that the reporting procedure is well known, and ensuring that copies of accident reports are sent to the Health and Safety Unit;
- on ensuring that investigations are carried out on reported accidents and hazardous occurrences and that appropriate remedial action is taken;
- on College/Corporate Service fire and emergency arrangements and to ensure that these are adequately publicised and practised. The Health and Safety Co-ordinator should ensure that the duties of Fire Wardens are properly defined and co-ordinated.
- on the safe usage, transport, and storage of potentially hazardous materials and equipment, and to ensure appropriate records are kept;
- on the construction and use of new apparatus in the College/Corporate Service;
- on new processes and experimental techniques used in the College/Corporate Service;
- on safety arrangements in College/Corporate Service workshops;
- on any necessary special arrangements e.g., vaccinations and periodic medical examinations, and that appropriate records are kept;
- on regular inspection and testing of electrical equipment, including domestic and office items, is
- on disposal of hazardous waste material in accordance with University Policy;
- to draw attention to problems of general building safety e.g., floors, stairs, and lifts in the College/Corporate Service or in areas in common use e.g., corridors, and to liaise with the Office of Estate Management;
- on appropriate monitoring for harmful agents and monitoring that it is carried out;
- on ensuring that safety devices, equipment etc. are maintained in working order;
- on ensuring that members of the College/Corporate Service receive appropriate safety instruction and training;
- on ensuring that appropriate protective clothing and equipment is available and used when required;
- on ensuring that warning signs and notices are displayed as necessary.

(Note: if any particular areas such as radiation, lasers, biohazards are excluded this should be specifically mentioned)

Suggested Selection Criteria for a Health and Safety Co-ordinator

There is no simple rule for selection of Health and Safety Co-ordinators. The individual should have the experience, commitment and authority to be able to carry out the Health and Safety Co-ordinator function. Adequate resources, mainly time, should be provided to allow the Health and Safety Co-ordinator to function effectively. Heads of College/Corporate Services should also provide support to their Health and Safety Co-ordinators to ensure that they are seen to be acting on their behalf.

A list of some suggested criteria for selection of Health and Safety Co-ordinators is provided below. However, this is not exhaustive and Heads of College/Corporate Services are free to select the most appropriate person for their local needs. Suggested criteria include:

- experience of the main activities of the College/Corporate Service;
- seniority to be able to address all levels of staff;
- existing workload (although this can be adjusted to take account of the further responsibilities);
- career development (an opportunity to broaden the experience of a member of staff and involve them in College/Corporate Service administration);
- personality (the Health and Safety Co-ordinator has to be able to work with and motivate all staff/students etc.);
- competence - the Health and Safety Co-ordinator should be able to identify and understand risks and their control to comply with legislation and University policy.

The Health and Safety Unit run courses for Health and Safety Co-ordinators. Further external training is also available and the Health and Safety Unit can advise.