



## Health and Safety Committee

7 April 2020, 4.00pm

### Minutes

#### **Present Members:**

Dr Matthew Blain, Executive Director of Human Resources (vice Convenor)

Miss Hayley Boakes

Ms Sandra Bond

Ms Theo Bryer

Mrs Sonia Buckingham

Dr Rebecca Caygill

Dr Alun Coker

Ms Sheila Curtis

Ms Francesca Fryer, Director of UCL Estates

Mr Kelvin Gwilliam

Dr Rachel Hadi-Talab

Mr Keith Harvey

Mr Max Hill, Director of Workplace Health

Miss Tansy Jones

Mr Brian Kavanagh

Mr David Ladd

Dr Matt Lougher

Mrs Hayley Ramsay, Deputy Head of Safety,

Mrs Eira Rawlings

Mr Paul Stirk, Head of Safety

#### **Attendees:**

Ms Shirley Fantie

Mr Richard Jackson

Mr Andy Minnis

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Ms Karen Smith

**Apologies:**

Mr Colin Byelong

Miss Aatikah Malik

Ms Carol Paige

Ms Fiona Ryland

**Part I: Preliminary Business**

**22 Membership**

22.1 Miss Hayley Boakes had replaced Mr Brian Campbell as Representative for Division of Biosciences.

**23 Minutes**

23.1 The Health and Safety Committee (HSC) approved the minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2020.

**24 Matters Arising (Paper 3-05)**

24.1 Arising from minute 3.2, meet with the Estates Space Analysis and Strategy team to give a full briefing on what was required of the updated eating spaces report, to include the planned changes to the catering strategy. The Students' Union would also be involved.

24.2 An update would be requested for the next meeting.

24.3 Arising from minute 16.2, provide an update on the purchase of a suite of interactive online training courses including one demonstrating good practice in workstation set up.

24.4 The testing of iHASCO packages had been delayed due to the new learning management system introduction but was now complete. A business case was to be submitted for financial approval at the end of April.

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- 24.5 Arising from minute 16.6, joint union and management working group on stress.
- 24.6 A plan of action had been created and was to be sent out to focus groups in May. The plan would be brought to the July meeting for approval.
- 24.7 Arising from minute 16.11, pursue with UCL Estates how maximum occupancy levels of teaching spaces could be made available to academic staff in advance of their lecture/seminar dates.
- 24.8 UCL Estates will be adding maximum occupancy levels next to the fire notices in rooms – however roll out had been delayed by Covid-19 and would resume as soon as possible.
- 24.9 Arising from minute 16.19, an update on the case / impact study on the impact of overcrowding at the IOE at the next meeting.
- 24.10 A series of initiatives had been instigated in cooperation with the local management, addressing security, fire evacuation and occupancy of centrally and locally bookable rooms, and were progressing well.
- 24.11 Arising from minute 17.2, that an operating model for Safety Services be provided at the next meeting in a more detailed report, to show clearly the requirement for additional resource along with appropriate benchmarking and comparison.
- 24.12 The paper was being completed and would be provided for review as soon as it was finalised.
- 24.13 Arising from minute 17.3, Review the staffing structure of Workplace Health against the recommended Higher Education Occupational Practitioner (HEOPS) minimum.

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- 24.14 Analysis of the HEOPS benchmark shows that staffing levels are within 1FTE of best practice. However the number of students using the service may now fall in the short term (immediately post Covid-19), so staffing levels are likely to come into tolerance. If volumes remain at previous levels or increase this will be reviewed.
- 24.15 It was agreed to review Workplace Health staffing levels in conjunction with local performance for a paper for the HSC meeting in April 2021.
- 24.16 Arising from minute 19.2, a report be provided by UCL Estates on the response to the eight asbestos-related incidents reported in the previous quarter.
- 24.17 A table setting out how the incidents had been dealt with would be made available. It was reported that the majority of incidents had in fact been closed, but investigations were in process or had been undertaken but not yet logged on riskNET.
- 24.18 Arising from minute 21.1, Investigation to be undertaken into a potential failing in the PEEP process reported by the trade unions.
- 24.19 The trade unions would provide feedback on a potential failing in the PEEP process so that this may be appropriately investigated by Safety Services.

## **Part II: Strategic Items for Discussion**

### **25 Covid 19: UCL status update**

- 25.1 The Executive Director of Human Resources described the work and responsibilities of the temporary leadership structure that had been created to address the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on UCL.

**26 Covid 19: Remote, not distant at UCL & bereavement guidance**

26.1 The Director of Workplace Health summarised the 'Remote, not distant at UCL' online resource which contains tools and information to support staff and those around them to learn how to adapt to working at home.

**27 Covid 19: Home working and DSE equipment**

27.1 Concerns were raised regarding the sudden move to home working for UCL staff. It was requested that a mechanism be put in place to oblige line managers to ensure that their staff had a workstation assessment and were provided with some form of equipment to alleviate any identified issues. The DSE guidance was felt to be buried within the UCL remote working guidance.

27.2 It was stated that the Health and Safety Executive had directed that employees working at home during the Covid-19 outbreak did not need specialist equipment or workstations due to this being a temporary arrangement. Checklists and guidance had been provided online to assist UCL staff required to work at home for this period to achieve comfort. User acceptance testing would be undertaken on the 'Remote, not distant at UCL' website to reduce scrolling and make it easier to find DSE information, and the trade unions were invited to participate in that.

27.3 It was agreed that there should be a clear message that leaders should talk to their teams about home working, that staff should be doing risk and workstation assessments, and that links to facilitate these be made more accessible. However it would need to be made clear that mitigation measures - for example the mass ordering and shipping of equipment - were necessarily constrained by the prevailing conditions under the Covid-19 outbreak.

[Post-meeting note: These issues were addressed in "Remote, not Distant at UCL: Staying safe while working remotely" in the 'Daily coronavirus (Covid-19) update' to staff and students on 15 April].

## **28 Covid 19: Risk assessments for essential workers**

- 28.1 A committee member recommended that guidance be provided for managers in nominating essential staff and key workers and that a staff risk stratification be introduced to identify those at high risk. Concern was also raised about the availability of parking spaces for key workers travelling without using public transport, whether on-site accommodation was available and the first aid and fire evacuation arrangements in place.
- 28.2 It was stated that a number of the issues were already in hand, with a further reduction in the number of open buildings. Tight controls were in place to protect key workers who needed to be available on site, and rotas are in place to reduce individual workloads. Use of the limited parking spaces available was subject to a book-in-advance system but bike-hire costs were reimbursed. Provision of accommodation was limited, with ongoing discussion in this area focusing on NHS workers. Security Services remain on campus and access visits to workplaces were arranged through an approval process.
- 28.3 It was reported that key workers had been identified through a rigorous validation process.

## **29 Compliance Working Group update, including new standard and guidance (Paper 3-06)**

- 29.1 The Head of Safety introduced the paper, summarising the work of the Compliance Working Group since the last committee meeting, and also the newly developed standard on 'In service inspection and testing of electrical equipment' and accompanying guidance.
- 29.2 It was agreed that visual checks being carried out on any electrical items or equipment being used for work purposes was included in the Daily coronavirus (Covid-19) update on 15 April]. And would be an acceptable mechanism for checking portable appliances within the home.

## **30 Updates on stress & Mental Health and Wellbeing strategy**

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30.1 It was reported that further discussion was needed on who to include in the framework of Wellbeing Champions as part of the Mental Health and Wellbeing strategy. A new tender for the Employee Assistance Programme was with Procurement Services for review. The main focus in recent weeks had been on remote working.

**31 Quarterly performance report (Paper 3-07)**

31.1 Mr Andy Minnis reported the highlights and areas for improvement for the last quarter.

**32 Any other business**

32.1 It was suggested that HSC meetings could be held more frequently during the Covid-19 pandemic.

[Post-meeting note: fortnightly meetings have been arranged throughout May and June].

The meeting finished at 5.35pm

Jon Blackman

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