

**Health and Safety Committee**

Covid-19 Meeting

11 August 2020, 4.00pm

Minutes

**Present Members:**

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

Miss Hayley Boakes

Ms Sandra Bond

Ms Sonia Buckingham

Mr Colin Byelong

Dr Rebecca Caygill

Dr Alun Coker

Dr Rachel Hadi-Talab

Mr Max Hill, Director of Workplace Health

Ms Tansy Jones

Mr Brian Kavanagh

Dr Matt Lougher

Ms Hayley Ramsay, Deputy Head of Safety

Mrs Eira Rawlings

Mr Paul Stirk, Head of Safety

Ms Joanne Tapper

**Attendees:**

Dr Jeremy Barraud

Mr Richard Jackson

Mr Duncan Palmer

Prof Irene Petersen

**Apologies:**

Ms Theo Bryer

Miss Yasmeen Daoud

Mr Keith Harvey

Mr David Ladd

Ms Carol Paige

Ms Fiona Ryland, Chief Operating Officer

## **Part I: Preliminary Business**

### **85 Minutes**

- 85.1 The Health and Safety Committee (HSC) approved as amended the minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2020.

### **86 Matters Arising (Paper 11-36)**

- 86.1 Arising from minute 77.4, the table setting out how eight asbestos-related incidents reported in quarter 1 (2019-20) had been closed out, had been forwarded to the Secretary. The Secretary would circulate the report to committee members.
- 86.2 Arising from minute 77.8, the draft guidance on Personal Protective Equipment had been prepared by the working group and the final version would be presented at the next meeting.
- 86.3 Arising from minute 81.2, provide an update on the provision of PPE for all staff with a high interaction profile including investigation of the shared "Op's" room used by security staff. Feedback from Axis and Sodexo on additional space to enable front line staff to relax was awaited. There had been 3,000 face screens produced by The Bartlett and these would also be trialled by academic staff using them in teaching spaces. These face screens were in addition to the 5,000 face masks procured centrally and would be made available for all front line staff (cleaners, receptionists and security). There had also been 100,000 face coverings already procured from China. UCU requested that consideration be given for the provision of FFP2 or FFP3 masks to front line staff who are at greater risk. Safety Services would review whether these masks would be appropriate.
- 86.4 Arising from minute 81.3, the feasibility of weekly antigen testing would be discussed at the next meeting.
- 86.5 Arising from minute 84.1, the request for a management representative from the Institute of Education would be discussed at the next meeting.

- 86.6 Arising from minute 84.2, it would be arranged for the advice regarding age in the guidance from the Chief of Staff and in the Workplace Health individual risk assessment to agree.

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

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

- 87.1 UCL Estates reported that they were on target to open all 139 buildings by 1 September 2020. NHS Trust partners needed to provide confirmation from their landlords of compliance. 360 teaching spaces had been made Covid-19 secure at UCL.
- 87.2 The Convenor reported that undergraduate intake was looking positive for the 2020/21 period. The challenge is to ensure sufficient teaching space in the event of a 'spike' or second wave of Covid-19.

### **88 Fieldwork at non-UCL settings (Paper 11-37)**

- 88.1 Dr Jeremy Barraud presented a paper by the Fieldwork Framework Group on the resumption of fieldwork at non-UCL settings for researchers and doctoral students.
- 88.2 It was requested that a summary be included at the start of the document alerting people to the need to continually assess risks, as well as examples so that people can see how to apply the risk assessments. It was felt that phrases such as 'working safely' were misleading given the absence of a vaccine, and phrases such as 'minimising risk' should be considered instead. It was recommended that a mechanism to review risks on a weekly or bi-weekly basis also be incorporated.

### **89 Return to work risk assessment (Paper 11-38)**

- 89.1 The Head of Safety presented the updated return to work risk assessment.
- 89.2 It was requested that transmission by aerosols be included and that the existing control measures relating to public transport should emphasise the higher risk posed by using public transport versus walking, cycling or car journeys as well as the length of time spent using public transport. It was agreed that the examples of shared PPE such as safety glasses would be

removed from the section relating to cleaning of shared PPE. Updates to the return to work risk assessment would be highlighted on the document for the convenience of Committee members when presented at future meetings.

It was noted that if UCL is not providing disinfectants centrally, a list of disinfectants which are active against Covid-19 should be included.

- 89.3 The PPE working group would include the sharing of PPE in the paper to be produced for the next committee meeting (as at 86.2).

**90 Items for discussion from the Trade Unions (Paper 11-39)**

- 90.1 It was stated that messaging needs to be consistent with the return to work risk assessment throughout all communications channels.
- 90.2 The individual risk assessment tool should include reference to multiple health factors, exposure to public transport and the balance of risk for people coming into the campus for a couple of days only per week. UCU will present a paper at the next meeting for discussion.
- 90.3 UCL recommends that front line staff wear a face covering and a visor. The challenge is that people are reluctant to wear either or both. Unison volunteered to meet with people to explain the benefits of wearing face coverings and visors.
- 90.4 A support and policy framework for people who are experiencing long term illness having contracted Covid-19 would be made available. Once the framework is produced it will be published on the HR website.
- 90.5 Sodexo will carry out an 'enhanced' cleaning routine of teaching spaces at the beginning of each day. Staff are not being asked to clean teaching spaces but rather users of the space (academic or student) are being asked to wipe down surface areas they have touched using the alcohol cleaning wipes placed at the entrance to the space when entering and leaving. UCL Estates would work with Communications and Marketing to create appropriate messaging to this effect.

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**91 Any other business**

- 91.1 As many areas are already at the 1 in 4 occupancy level with staff, it was requested that numbers be reassessed and guidance issued when post-graduate students return.
- 91.2 Cases of Covid-19 may increase in the UCL community during the autumn term. Departments will need guidance about how UCL will manage a second wave or outbreak. It was agreed that this would be an agenda item at the next meeting.

The meeting finished at 5.00pm

Tracy Samson

August 2020