



Health and Safety Committee

Covid-19 Meeting

23 November 2020, 11.30am

Minutes

Present Members:

Ms Fiona Ryland, (Convenor)

Dr Matthew Blain, Executive Director of Human Resources

Miss Hayley Boakes

Ms Sandra Bond

Dr Theo Bryer

Ms Sonia Buckingham

Mr Colin Byelong

Dr Alun Coker

Miss Yasmeen Daoud

Dr Rachel Hadi-Talab

Mr Keith Harvey

Ms Tansy Jones

Mr Brian Kavanagh

Mr David Ladd

Dr Matt Lougher

Mrs Eira Rawlings

Mr Paul Stirk, Head of Safety

Ms Joanne Tapper

Attendees:

Mr Ian Dancy

Mr Duncan Palmer

Prof Irene Petersen

Ms Karen Smith

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Apologies:

Mr Max Hill, Director of Workplace Health

Ms Carol Paige

Mrs Hayley Ramsay, Deputy Head of Safety

Part I: Preliminary Business

25 Minutes

25.1 The Health and Safety Committee (HSC) approved the minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2020 with an amendment at 20.1 to 'all potential contacts (where a contact is defined as someone who has been in the same room or teaching space as a positive case).'

26 Matters Arising (Paper 4-17)

26.1 Arising from minute 114.2, report to the Committee findings regarding adherence to cleaning service level agreements from Covid-19 Assurance audits. The assurance inspections update report would be brought to the next meeting as more detailed analysis was required.

26.2 In response to the two matters arising from minute 20.1 and that from minute 23.3, all regarding requests to the Public Health Advisory Panel (PHAP) to inform potential contacts (as above) and for asymptomatic testing, the requests would be added to the formal agenda at the next available weekly meeting of PHAP and the relevant minute would be shared at the subsequent HSC. The Trade Unions requested that the full minutes of the PHAP meetings be available to the HSC.

26.3 Arising from minute 21.4, obtain an overview of the number of students who are still attending face to face teaching. It was reported that about 1500 students were now on campus every week but face to face teaching was more difficult to estimate.

Part II: Strategic Items for Discussion

27 Covid-19 update

27.1 The Convenor reported that rapid (lateral flow) testing for students would be taking place on campus from 30 November in line with government guidelines.

Students are invited to take two lateral flow tests, three days apart, then have a confirmatory PCR test if they test positive with the lateral flow device.

28 Improving riskNET incident sign-off rates (Paper 4-18)

28.1 The Head of Safety presented a report showing that no faculty had met the target for sign off of the initial incident report in riskNET in the last 2 years.

The paper explored potential reasons for this and suggested ideas for improving compliance.

28.2 It was noted that with some incidents, those involving an injury for example, meeting the 10-day incident review target was more complicated. With a high degree of compliance for sign-off it would be possible to utilise the high risk categorisation of an incident as a mechanism for signposting those that could be shared with the Trade Unions. The local health and safety committees would play a key role in this.

28.3 The proposals for improving compliance were approved.

29 Update on joint Trade Unions and management working group on stress (Paper 4-19)

29.1 The Head of Workplace Wellbeing presented an interim paper which provided a summary of the feedback of the Stress Management Focus Groups. The Trade Unions would be invited to discuss the focus group findings in detail and recommendations would be made for discussion at the next HSC meeting.

30 Update on DSE compliance (Paper 4-20)

30.1 The Head of Safety presented an update on the compliance status for workstation assessments issued to staff and post-graduate students.

30.2 There had been a small improvement but compliance remained below 30%. Work was underway to modify the Human Resources data import to remove honorary staff who had left UCL, which would give a more accurate picture of the number of people requiring workstation assessments.

30.3 The report would be presented to the Professional Services Leadership Team (PSLT).

31 Items for discussion from the Trade Unions (Paper 4-21)

- 31.1 The Trade Unions stressed the importance of making students aware that a negative result from a rapid test was not a 'freedom pass' and recommended testing for potential contacts of those who test positive in the rapid tests.
- 31.2 By response it was reported that the communications accompanying the test programme would highlight the observance of social distancing and provide guidance on self-isolating. The communications would also emphasise the importance of taking the test.
- 31.3 Particular concern was raised regarding tests being available for student teachers, especially those moving between secondary school and the university, until the end of school term. It was planned that tests would be offered up until 18 December and this would be confirmed once approval was given.
- [Post meeting note: UCL Estates informed the convenor that the facility would be open until the 14th December and it was now hoped it would be extended until the 15th].
- 31.4 The Trade Unions also raised the matter of open windows being used as the sole source of ventilation for rooms in cold weather and reiterated their request for room occupancy to be limited to 15.
- 31.5 Ventilation was subject to review by Estates; a difficult balance needed to be struck between safety and comfort. The subject would be included in communications to staff. Room occupancy levels would also continue to be kept under review.
- 31.6 Concern was raised over students ignoring social distancing and safety measures when gathering outside of supervised interactions. It was recommended that clear guidance be given and this would be included in future communications.
- 31.7 A request was made for the sharing of information on where on campus the number of cases is rising, including case numbers per building. It was agreed that further information would be brought to the next meeting.

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32 End of term/new term plans (Paper 4-22)

32.1 The Director, Sustainability, presented the paper that was endorsed by the Education and Operations Delivery Group (EODG) on 18 November. The paper detailed the planning work for the end of term and the winter break, in particular how UCL should support students to return home safely at the end of term 1; ensure that adequate services were in place for those students who remain in London over the winter break; and enable students to return for term 2.

33 Any other business

33.1 The Committee thanked Mr Brian Kavanagh for his contributions over the years and wished him well for his retirement.

The meeting finished at 1.00 pm

Jon Blackman

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