



Health and Safety Committee

Covid-19 Meeting

26 January 2021, 3.00pm

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

Dr Rachel Hadi-Talab

Mr Keith Harvey

Mr Max Hill, Director of Workplace Health

Ms Tansy Jones

Mr David Ladd

Dr Matt Lougher

Mrs Hayley Ramsay, Deputy Head of Safety

Mrs Eira Rawlings

Ms Joanne Tapper

Dr Rob Wilson

Attendees:

Mr Ian Dancy

Dr Emma Giblin

Ms Susannah Haynes

Mr Richard Jackson

Mr Richard Lukos

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Mr Andy Minnis

Miss Fiona O'Farrell

Mr Duncan Palmer

Prof Irene Petersen

Ms Karen Smith

Apologies:

Miss Yasmeen Daoud

Mr Paul Stirk, Director of Safety Services

Part I: Preliminary Business

34 Minutes

34.1 The Health and Safety Committee (HSC) approved the minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2020. Minute 31.3 should have read 'Particular concern was raised regarding tests being available for student teachers, especially those moving between secondary school and the university.'

35 Matters Arising (Paper 5-23)

35.1 Those requiring response at this meeting were in the strategic items for discussion.

Part II: Strategic Items for Discussion

36 Trade Unions' requests to PHAP

36.1 It was reported that PHAP were asked to consider whether all staff and students who have shared a particular space with an individual who has tested positive should be notified, including teaching staff, to provide a duty of care. Previously Camden and Islington councils had advised to refrain from this, to avoid raising unnecessary panic. The PHAP agreed that appropriate duty of care is undertaken where there has been a report of a positive case or outbreak, as well as a summary of the lessons learned. They reported that there had also been no evidence of transmission from students to teaching staff so far and the risk was currently limited as teaching remained online. It was agreed at the PHAP meeting that a discussion should take place at the next Health and Safety Committee meeting with unions about arranging a

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forum to be able to share the actions being taken following a positive report and the lessons learned.

- 36.2 The Trade Unions disputed that there was no evidence of transmission of infection from students to teaching staff so far, and added that there had been transmission between security guards. They requested in the interests of transparency that people be alerted to positive cases in enclosed spaces at least.
- 36.3 [Post meeting note: the request to inform a wider group of contacts of a positive case reported to Connect to Protect - to include everyone sharing the same teaching room, lab space or office as the positive case regardless of whether they meet the 'contact' definition - would be taken to the PHAP.
- 36.4 The sharing of actions being taken following a positive report and the lessons learned would take place at the next HSC meeting].

37 Covid-19 cases on campus

- 37.1 Mr Richard Jackson provided an update on the Connect to Protect programme. The lessons learned so far would be brought to the next meeting as set out in minute 36.4.

38 Covid-19 assurance inspections update report (Paper 5-24)

- 38.1 Mr Richard Lukos presented an update on Covid-19 assurance inspections. The checklist areas with higher rates of non-compliance would be highlighted to Heads of Departments and Professional Services leads. Assurance inspections were continuing and locations with increased foot fall and areas which had previously had a marginal / low compliance score would be prioritised.

39 Items for discussion from the Trade Unions (Paper 5-25)

- 39.1 The Trade Unions requested that staff caring for extremely vulnerable people but who need to be on campus for their role should be furloughed as a matter of urgency, and that that the amount of staff (who can safely be on campus and safely travel to campus) should be used to determine which buildings can open, rather than the other way around.

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- 39.2 It was reported that the decision on staff caring for extremely vulnerable people being furloughed would shortly be made at a Senior Managers meeting. It was reported that about 60% of cleaning staff and 30% of security staff had been furloughed on full pay to reduce numbers on site significantly.
- 39.3 [Post meeting note: on 27th January a decision was made with immediate effect to ask staff (including cleaners, security and catering staff) who are living with clinically extremely vulnerable people to stay at home and not come in to campus . The staff would be asked to provide confirmation of this. If staff cannot do their job from home they will be placed on furlough with 100% of their salary paid].
- 39.4 The Trade Unions pushed for further building closures on campus, specifically the Bidborough House and Ramsay Hall study spaces and libraries which are not being used for study spaces.
- 39.5 It was agreed to consider closing Ramsay Hall and the Royal Free library due to the low occupancy figures. Levels of occupancy of study spaces continued to be monitored. It was commented that the university was trying to keep as many people off campus as possible, but had to balance that with the government instruction to keep libraries open, the teaching of our regulated subjects, and looking after students stuck in halls because they can't go home.
- 39.6 The Trade Unions reiterated their request for surgical masks to be provided for all security officers on site. These better quality face coverings would bring more reassurance to the wearer.
- 39.7 FFP2 masks are to be supplied to all security staff as face coverings but the supply situation was currently not fluid.
- 39.8 The Trade Unions requested that ventilation be prioritised at UCL with information signage in rooms relating the capacity limit, ventilation status and date these were last reviewed. They asked that the 25% room occupancy rule in the UCL generic risk assessment should be absolute rather than indicative.
- 39.9 It was agreed that Mr Ian Dancy would arrange for the Trade Unions to meet with Estates to discuss ventilation and room occupancy in week beginning 1 February.
- 39.10 A member of the committee had a LFT test on returning to UCL after isolating following a positive PCR test. She then found out that the government's

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advice is that anyone who has previously received a positive test result for COVID-19 should only be re-tested within a 90-day period if they develop any new symptoms of COVID-19. The Trade Unions disagreed with this advice and requested that UCL's guidance recommend that people be tested with a lateral flow test prior to return to work after isolation.

39.11 UCL's guidance would be checked regarding any information on people being tested with a lateral flow test prior to return to work after isolation and an update provided on the PHAP's view.

40 Update to UCL generic and fieldwork risk assessments (Papers 5-26/7/8)

40.1 Mr Andy Minnis presented the summary of changes made to the general risk assessment for those working on site; the generic fieldwork risk assessments; and the general risk assessment for in-person education activity, following the introduction of the latest lockdown.

40.2 It was agreed that the revisions would be checked against any feedback received. The Trade Unions in particular agreed to provide feedback on possible inconsistencies. An update on any further changes made would be given at the next meeting.

41 Review of CBT and Mindfulness Interventions (Paper 5-29)

41.1 Ms Karen Smith introduced and Ms Susannah Haynes presented a paper reviewing SilverCloud's CBT and Mindfulness Interventions at UCL, in response to a Trade Union representative's concerns about potential negative reactions that CBT and Mindfulness might cause.

41.2 Assurance was given that safety measures are built into the programme's approach. This review had helped serve as a means of checking these.

42 Any other business

42.1 The three quarterly reports due to be presented would be postponed to the next meeting due to time constraints.

The meeting finished at 4.25 pm

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Jon Blackman

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