



Work Health and Safety Committee

Friday 3 March 2023, 10.05am

Minutes

Present Members:

Mr Andy Smith, Convenor

Miss Hayley Boakes

Ms Sandra Bond

Dr Theo Bryer

Mrs Sonia Buckingham

Dr Alun Coker

Mr Adrien Cooper, Chair, Infrastructure Safety Sub-Committee

Miss Donna Dalrymple, Chief People Officer

Mr Ian Dancy, Deputy Convenor

Mrs Joanne English

Mr Simon Galloway

Dr Rachel Hadi-Talab

Mr Keith Harvey

Mr Damian Johnson

Mrs Portia Lamb, Head of Safety Governance and Risk

Ms Denise Long, Director of Student Support and Wellbeing

Professor Ivan Parkin, Chair, Chemical Safety Sub-Committee

Dr Kerstin Sander, Chair, Radiation Safety Sub-Committee

Dr Patrick Ward, (Interim) Executive Director of Health and Safety

Dr Robert Wilson

Attendees:

Mr Mark Greaves

Ms Becca Neaves-Cummings

Mr Danny Patel

Mrs Danielle Swanson

Mr Mitesh Vagadia

Apologies:

Mr Deniz Akinci

Mr Max Hill, Director of Workplace Health

Mr Henry Killworth

Mr David Ladd

Mr Muhammad Mehmood

Ms Deb Nichols

Ms Tracy Pearmain

Mrs Eira Rawlings

Part I: Preliminary Business

29 Membership

29.1 Dr Kerstin Sander had replaced Professor Erik Arstad as the Chair, Radiation Safety Sub-Committee (RSSC); Ms Deb Nichols had joined the Work Health and Safety Committee (WHSC) as appointed member for the Students' Union.

30 Minutes

30.1 The WHSC approved the minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2023.

30.2 It was agreed that minute 20.1 would be expanded to include Mr Damian Johnson's comment that there was still work ongoing by Estates Division to finalise the outstanding action regarding the escalation process for emergency alarms.

31 Matters Arising (Paper 4-19)

31.1 Regarding minute 20.1: the Chair, Infrastructure Safety Sub-Committee (ISSC) to bring an improvement plan for response times to power outage alarm activations in laboratories. The Chair, ISSC stated that the matter had already been dealt with (at minute 30.2).

31.2 Regarding minute 20.2: the Chair, ISSC to incorporate instructions for lecturers in local fire safety information in large teaching spaces ahead of the

next academic year. The Chair, ISSC anticipated that by the start of the next academic year there would be remodelled fire safety videos available on lecterns in every teaching space. The Convenor added that the timetable scheduling initiative would also include fire evacuation.

- 31.3 Regarding minute 20.4: the Deputy Convenor to locate a suitable room for rest and eating/drinking facilities for staff at the Institute of Education and agree a short-term plan of action. The Deputy Convenor reported that a space had been found and adaptation work would be undertaken as a priority. This had been announced at a staff event at the Institute.
- 31.4 Regarding minute 22.2: the Chair, Chemical Safety Sub-Committee (CSSC) to raise with HR that departments' ex-staff members remaining in the HR data negatively affected the compliance statistics for mandatory training. Also students were categorised as non-compliant on becoming part-time staff but were unable to enrol for the training as staff. The Chief People Officer agreed to investigate further and report back to the next meeting.
- 31.5 Regarding minute 23.2: the Chair, CSSC to consult with the CSSC to refine the proposal that the wearing of PPE in laboratories be made mandatory. The (Interim) Executive Director of Health and Safety to be invited to the next meeting. The invitation had been issued; the meeting would be held on 6 March and an update provided at the next WHSC meeting.

Part II: Strategic Items for Discussion

32 Suicide prevention strategy and action plan (Paper 4-20)

- 32.1 A strategy and action plan to try to minimise deaths by suicide and attempted suicides within the UCL community was presented.
- 32.2 The Trade Unions commented that student advisers and tutors should be trained in mental health first aider skills. They would be the most likely to have dealings with a suicidal student awaiting further support.
- 32.3 The Deputy Convenor was willing to liaise with the (Interim) Executive Director of Health and Safety to see what practical assistance could be provided by Estates Division on campus to support the strategy.
- 32.4 It was agreed that the proposed strategy and action plan could be discussed at faculty health and safety meetings before approval by UMC.
- 32.5 The WHSC approved the strategy and action plan.

33 Updates on review of FEM arrangements and illegal EV (electric vehicle) equipment policy

- 33.1 The Chair, ISSC reported that papers were being prepared for Estates Management Committee on both subjects, which would be tabled at future WHSC meetings.

34 UMC Health and Safety report (Paper 4-21)

- 34.1 The health and safety monthly data and activities report for January 2023 was made the last agenda item of the meeting. There was no time to discuss the report, so the Convenor requested that any comments be emailed to the Head of Safety Governance and Risk or the Director of Workplace Health.

35 Review of WHSC

- 35.1 The (Interim) Executive Director of Health and Safety proposed two models: quarterly WHSC meetings with intermediate operations committee meetings with a smaller membership, or six WHSC meetings per year.
- 35.2 The Trade Unions requested that the role of departmental health and safety committees be reviewed as part of the proposals. At present the committees had little power to effect change and issues had to be brought to the WHSC.
- 35.3 Concern was expressed that under the two-tier model operational matters could be side-lined. It was felt that faculty representation on the WHSC provided the Committee with insight from the 'real world' of departments. The Convenor requested that the (Interim) Executive Director of Health and Safety take this into account when developing the plan.
- 35.4 The WHSC approved the option of quarterly WHSC meetings with intermediate operations committee meetings.

36 Health and safety objectives (Paper 4-22)

- 36.1 The (Interim) Executive Director of Health and Safety presented a paper outlining a proposal to roll over the 2021/2022 safety objectives, with an updated T100 objective. Target 100 (T100) is a self-assessment and planning tool for improving departmental Health and Safety Management Systems.
- 36.2 The WHSC approved the proposal and the updated T100 objective.

37 Items for discussion from the Trade Unions

- 37.1 The Trade Unions requested that for future red weather warnings for heat, there be strict limits on the time a person spends outdoors without a break; provision of cool rooms for breaks; relaxation of any dress codes; and provision of cold drinks/snacks. It was agreed these would be provided.
- 37.2 It was also requested that people with underlying health conditions that put them at increased risk during hot weather should not be required to attend campus, but be given special paid leave; and that people required to travel during the hottest times of the day be allowed to take a taxi and claim expenses. In response it was stated that staff members would be encouraged to discuss such concerns with their line manager.
- 37.3 The Trade Unions asked for clarification on the ownership and accountability of incidents reported on riskNET where a secondary department (such as Estates Division) conducts further investigation after the initial assessment is signed off. It was asked that a clearly defined process be produced so that departments knew how such investigations were managed, who was responsible for completion and how riskNET is used to communicate the process. The Convenor asked that the (Interim) Executive Director of Health and Safety investigate the matter, involving the Trade Unions in the review.
- 37.4 The Trade Unions asked for a 'room moves' policy to mitigate the stress associated with office relocations, after health and safety issues were raised following office moves at the Institute of Education. The Deputy Convenor responded that successful moves depended upon a good relationship between the project leader and the local team and agreed to produce a set of guiding principles.
- 37.5 The Trade Unions had concerns about the processes in place for disciplinary and bullying and harassment procedures. The Chief People Officer agreed to discuss a review of the procedures in a separate meeting with the Trade Unions.

Part III: Other Business for Approval or Information

38 Any other business

- 38.1 None.

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The meeting finished at 11.45am.

Jonathan Blackman