

# HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

## Statement of Roles and Responsibilities for Health and Safety

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 places a legal duty on both employers and employees to look after themselves and others. This responsibility applies to all University activities irrespective of where they take place for example on campus, on placements or field trips overseas. The University believes in the underlying principle that those who create risks, should be responsible for managing them.

The University of Worcester Higher Education Corporation, trading as the University of Worcester will retain corporate responsibility for any health and safety at work related formal action; for example, service of health and safety improvement or prohibition notices and/or prosecution. It is important to also acknowledge that under certain circumstances, employees of the University may also be held individually responsible should criminal proceedings be commenced by health and safety regulators e.g. HSE. This document sets out the key roles and responsibilities of all staff involved in supporting the University Safety Management System.

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## University Board of Governors

The University Board of Governors will:

- have ultimate responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of anyone who could be affected by the activities of the University. This applies to activities both on and off University occupied premises
- have overall responsibility for ensuring the university has in place an effective Health and Safety Policy document which is reviewed as appropriate
- ensure that the necessary resources are made available within the university to ensure the effective implementation of the Health and Safety Policy
- receive reports from the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee and where necessary, from the Vice Chancellor's Advisory Group
- be notified of any significant incidents resulting in serious injury, significant risk to property or individuals, and any action taken by enforcing authorities
- demonstrate ownership of the University Health and Safety Policy and to communicate its values across the University
- will be given assurance of the effectiveness of the policy through the internal audit

## The Vice Chancellor

The University Board of Governors delegates the day-to-day responsibility for ensuring compliance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and all relevant legislation to the Vice Chancellor. The Vice Chancellor is accountable to the Board of Governors for the implementation of the Health and Safety Policy and in particular, the Vice Chancellor will:

- ensure that the University has a Health and Safety Policy which is effectively communicated, followed, monitored and reviewed
- ensure that suitable and sufficient arrangements are in place for the effective planning, organization, control, measurement and review of all health and safety measures
- ensure that adequate resources, management arrangements and safe systems of work are in place to ensure effective implementation of the Health and Safety Policy
- appoint one or more competent persons to assist the University to comply with all relevant legislation and standards
- provide clear and visible leadership on health, safety and welfare
- review health and safety arrangements and performance at least yearly or following any significant event

In the absence of the Vice Chancellor, the Deputy Vice Chancellor will have delegated authority in these matters.

## The Pro Vice Chancellor

The Pro Vice Chancellor will be the senior VCAG sponsor for this policy and will support the Vice Chancellor with the responsibilities delegated from the Board of Governors. The Chair of the Safety, Health and Wellbeing Committee and the Head of Safety Services will ensure the Pro Vice Chancellor is kept updated on all significant issues. The Pro Vice Chancellor will be responsible for agreeing the scope of the internal audits.

## Members of the Vice Chancellor's Advisory Group and Members of the Leadership Group

Accountable and responsible for implementing the University Health and Safety Policy in their areas of responsibility and in particular to:

- provide clear and visible leadership on health, safety and welfare
- ensure health, safety and welfare is given the necessary consideration in all aspects of their 'departments' activities, use of facilities and provision and use of equipment
- ensure a 'safety coordinator' is appointed and that adequate resources are made available to enable them to offer advice and support to the department and to adequately perform their role
- set out the safety management structure in their area to support the implementation of the University Health and Safety Policy
- ensure the necessary health and safety information, instruction, training and supervision is provided to staff and where appropriate students, within their area of responsibility
- ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are in place and effective control measures are followed and reviewed
- produce an annual return for monitoring health and safety
- formally address any significant breaches of this Policy and associated Codes of Practice and procedures
- ensure compliance with the University incident and near miss notification policy
- ensure mechanisms are in place for effective individual or collective consultation and cooperation with staff, students and trades union appointed health and safety representatives, including a local Health and Safety Committee or similar forum
- appointing adequate Fire Wardens and ensuring adequate levels of first aid cover is maintained
- ensure a copy of the Health and Safety Policy is brought to the attention of all staff
- ensure that a health and safety inspection of all areas of the Institute/Service Dept is carried out at least annually

## Heads of Department (including academic, administrative and technical areas)

Heads of Department have responsibility for health and safety management within their local areas. They also have a specific responsibility for ensuring the health and safety of themselves and those that they either manage or supervise. In practical terms, their authority and actions can be delegated, but not their responsibilities. Authority and actions can only be delegated to those persons with the necessary skills, knowledge and experience.

Heads of Department have responsibility for:

- implementing the University's Health and Safety Policy within their areas of responsibility
- ensuring the necessary health and safety documentation in relation to the department's activities is in place and subject to regular review as necessary
- ensuring the necessary risk assessments are carried out for activities and areas under the department's control, and the implementation of the risk prevention or protection measures identified by these assessments
- ensuring all incidents and near misses are recorded and reported as necessary
- ensuring all investigations concerning their area of responsibility are conducted within a reasonable time and any remedial measures identified by any investigation are implemented
- investigating any significant breaches of the Health and Safety Policy and associated Codes of Practice and guidance and ensuring any recommendations are implemented
- ensuring that staff receive adequate training in matters concerning health and safety
- ensuring arrangements are in place to effectively communicate any health and safety concerns and performance issues to their immediate line manager.

## Academic Staff

Academic staff, (permanent, part-time and visiting), have a specific responsibility for ensuring the health and safety of themselves and the students who work and study under their direction and supervision. This includes:

- complying with the University's Health and Safety Policy, Codes of Practice, guidance and procedures
- ensuring that the risks to health and safety arising from activities undertaken and equipment, materials, facilities etc. used by students, have been assessed, approved and all necessary control measures implemented
- ensuring that students within their remit receive induction, training, resource (including time), advice and support to enable them to work safely both on and off campus
- ensuring that all activities, particularly those occurring outside the classroom, off campus and overseas are properly planned and managed to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all those attending

## Employees Duties and Student Responsibilities

Besides the specific duties set out above, ALL employees must be aware of their own duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. Although not employees, students also play their part in ensuring the health, safety and welfare for all persons affected by the University of Worcester's activities. In particular, all employees and students shall:

- take reasonable care for their health and safety and that of other persons who may be affected by their actions or omissions whilst at work
- cooperate with the university on matters of health and safety to assist the University in fulfilling its statutory and common law duties of care
- never intentionally misuse or recklessly interfere with anything provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare
- ensure they report any situation they believe to be a significant risk through the appropriate mechanisms
- ensure they undertake activities and use equipment and facilities in accordance with any health and safety information, instruction or training that has been provided

## Head of Safety Services

The Head of Safety is responsible for advising on safety matters to the University at all levels and reports to the Director of Estates and Facilities. The Head of Safety:

- will provide advice and support to University staff to help ensure compliance with the Health and Safety Policy, Codes of Practice, procedures, guidance and legislation
- has the right to attend any meetings held on health and safety matters
- can draw on the advice of any of the specialist staff in appropriate areas within the University and obtain such advice as may be necessary from consultant bodies outside the University
- within the parameters of the University and University's activities, will assume the powers set out in the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 Section 20 as they would apply to an Inspector authorized under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 Section 19
- may issue either an improvement or prohibition notice as if served in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 Section 21 and 22
- will act as Chair for the Safety Advisors Group and
- will be the clerk to the University Safety, Health and Wellbeing Committee
- will act as the University representative during any investigations into safety matters under investigation by external agencies
- will draft an annual report with the Chair of the Safety, Health and Wellbeing Committee for VCAG

## Safety Advisors

Safety Advisors are nominated by their Heads of Institute/Service and perform a voluntary role within each work area. They are provided with nationally recognized training to assist them in their role working on behalf of the Heads of Institute/Services. Primarily, their work will involve:

- conducting process audits and workplace inspections
- providing support to colleagues on matters concerning workplace safety
- attending the Safety Advisors Working Group and providing a quarterly update on workplace safety related matters
- sharing knowledge and best practice with colleagues
- working closely with the Head of Safety Services on University wide safety related initiatives
- monitor workplace safety issues and raise any concerns to duty holders, responsible people and managers

## Trade Union Safety Representatives

Trade Unions and their Safety Representatives play a significant role in helping to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees, students and visitors to the University and act independently from the University management. In addition, they have a number of statutory functions and can:

- investigate complaints, accidents, near misses and dangerous occurrences
- represent employees during statutory inspections and consultation
- inspect the workplace

The University will continue to work with Trade Unions to help achieve compliance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and implementation of the Health and Safety Policy.

## Safety, Health and Wellbeing Committee

The University Safety, Health and Wellbeing Committee is an advisory and consultative body which reports to the Vice Chancellors Advisory Group in all matters of health, safety, welfare and wellbeing.

## Contractors

Contractors play a significant role in the daily activities of the University.

Contractors will have a primary legal duty to ensure the health and safety of themselves, their employees and persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions. The University has a duty to ensure that contractors are not exposed to a risk to their health and safety and this will be achieved by working collaboratively, exchange of information and use of safety management tools e.g. permits to work etc.

Contractors shall retain primary responsibility for themselves, their employees and others whilst on site and be subject to University of Worcester policies and procedures.