

**ASTON UNIVERSITY**

**HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the Meeting Held on Thursday, 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2009  
at 10am in the Main Building G8**

**Present**

Mr R H Middleton (Chair)	Mrs L Jackson
Miss D S Cowan	Ms D Lacey
Rev C Dowd	Mr K Munday
Dr G A Drahan	Dr M Y L Nye
Mr G A Evans	Mrs K Parsons
Ms J Filby	Mrs K Pedwell
Mr J Finucane	Mrs M Robins
Dr M Green	Dr N R Smith
Mr I Harrison	Mrs K Taylor
Mr K Hughes	Mr A P Vickers

**In attendance**

Mr J Batt  
Mr D Pennells - Operon FM  
Mr V Townsend

**Apologies**

Mr G East	Ms K Newman-Brown
Dr A Hartley	Mr G Moulder
Mr A P Hawkesworth	Mr M Tonks
Ms R Hunt	Mrs E Wells
Mr A Lowe	Mr D White
Mr S Ludlow	Ms R Yasin

**MEMBERSHIP**

09/132 Mrs Kate Parsons (representative for Human Resources) and Mrs Katie Pedwell (Aston University Day Hospital representative) were welcomed to meetings of the Committee.

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 29<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2009**

09/133 Noted: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2009 be accepted as a correct record.

**MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

Reports from Schools and Departments (09/118)

09/134 Noted: That guidance on PAT testing would be available on the new online maintenance system from 7<sup>th</sup> December 2009.

Resolved: That the Plan-on roll out programme would be sent to the HSC.  
**[Action: Vaughan Townsend, Estates]**

Fire Safety Training (09/121)

09/135 Noted: That two further fire safety awareness sessions for staff who were yet to attend for the training had been arranged for 20th January 2010.

Fire Safety - Heating Issues (09/122)

09/136 Noted: The Chair reported that the Executive were unanimous in their deliberations that fan heaters have no place in the University. Therefore, all fan heaters should be returned to Estates and Facilities or taken back home, if privately owned, and that staff should refer any subsequent heating issues they have to the Estates team.

Resolved: That Committee members convey the message above to their Schools and Departments.  
**[Action:HSC members]**

Accident and Incident Reports - Work to the Fabric of the Building (09/124)

09/137 Noted: That a letter written by the Chair had been sent to all staff reiterating the University's stance that work to the fabric of the building should not be undertaken without the prior approval of Estates and Facilities.

Unauthorised Access (09/130)

09/138 Noted: 

1. That the issue of unauthorised access in controlled areas was discussed at the most recent ISA safety meeting.
2. That all controlled areas will be identified, and ISA staff will be informed of the areas that must not be accessed without authorisation.
3. That this message will be built into ISA documentation.
4. That there were wider implications to this incident which needed consideration; the Chair reported that the Fire Service was also concerned about encountering unknown hazardous areas in the University.

Resolved: That Estates and Facilities, in consultation with the Safety Office, compile a clear and simple register of hazardous areas and the mechanisms for accessing them, based on 'local' information to be provided by Committee members in respect of their Schools and Departments.  
**[Action: Head of Security, Safety Office]**



individuals at risk would be contacted by their own General Practitioners.

4. The Chair clarified that the University wanted to ensure that the business of the University is unaffected by high levels of absence due to seasonal flu, and that it would be available to those 'critical service' staff who would like it.
5. That, pursuant to '4' above, a list of staff critical to the business of the University had been compiled by the HSS, in order that seasonal flu vaccinations could be offered through the Health Centre.

Resolved: To ensure, through the HSS, that relevant staff were contacted about the opportunity to receive seasonal flu vaccinations.  
**[Action: Chair, Deputy Secretary]**

## **FIRE SAFETY & FIRE SAFETY TRAINING**

09/142 Noted: 1. That a fire report prepared by the University Fire Safety Adviser (UFSA) had been previously circulated to members of the Committee.

### Fire Awareness Training

2. The Chair requested Committee members to take back to their respective safety groups the message that the fire safety awareness training is mandatory, and that letters would be going out to staff, in advance of that arranged for 20<sup>th</sup> January 2010, who had not yet attended a session.
3. In response to a question concerning the need for casual staff to attend the fire awareness training, it was stated that attendance by non-employees is voluntary. However, where such individuals have responsibility for students, it was incumbent upon them to be aware of fire evacuation.

### Fire Warden Training

4. That, based upon the effectiveness of the trials in CEAC, the Fire Warden scheme would be rolled out, in the next instance, to Aston University Day Hospital and Vision Sciences.

### Fire Risk Assessments

5. The Fire Brigade consider universities, by their nature, to be hazardous, and therefore need to be prepared in the event of an incident. With this in mind, Fire Brigade Information Packs will need to be prepared by the UFSA.
6. That the UFSA will need some assistance from Schools and Departments in gathering this information, through Committee members in their local health and safety groups.

### Vision Panels

7. That a 4<sup>th</sup> floor room with a vision panel was recently broken into, where expensive equipment was being stored. It was felt that special dispensation should be given in areas which house valuable equipment and are vulnerable to these attacks.

- Resolved:
1. That, pursuant to '7' above, a meeting be arranged with ISA, with a view to agreeing a way forward in respect of vision panels.  
**[Action: ISA, HHS, UFSA]**
  2. To thank the UFSA for the clear and useful report, and for HSC members to take back to their Schools and Departments the Chair's commendation for their co-operation.

## **FUTURE OF THE CLIMBING WALL**

09/143 Received: An oral report from Michele Robins, Sport and Recreation.

- Noted:
1. That a meeting to discuss the future of the wall had been held with the Assistant Safety Adviser (ASA), the Risk and Insurance Officer (RIO), Michele Robins and Mike Kirkman.  
  
During the discussions it was agreed that new forms would have to be drafted for signing in users of the wall and disclaimers.
  2. That from the insurer's point of view, the wall could be re-opened subject to an expenditure of £6000 on a new safety surface to bring the facility up to current standards.
  3. That this cost was considered to be disproportionate compared to the size of the facility and number of those that use the wall. Also, that the money could be better spent on improving other areas within the Centre.

Resolved: That the operation of the climbing wall be closed.  
**[Action: Chair, Head of Sport and Recreation]**

## **ACCIDENT AND INCIDENT REPORTS**

- 09/144 Noted:
1. The Chair commended the Safety Team on producing a thorough report on accidents and incidents and the implications for the University.
  2. An accident involving a projector screen that had been that had fallen from its fittings, narrowly avoiding a lecturer. The screen had been commissioned by a department who made their own arrangements for its fixture. It was emphasised that, while Schools and Departments may commission work, the actual installation must be handled by Estates and Facilities.
  3. The Chair reiterated that Schools and Departments have no sub-contracted rights to undertake works to the building.
- Resolved:
1. That Media and Learning Technologies (MLT) are to hand over responsibility of any other installation work to Estates and Facilities.

2. That Estates and Facilities to survey all projector screen fixings for stability.

**[Action: Maintenance Officer, Estates]**

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING**

- 09/145      Noted:
1. The HHS thanked the members of the Committee who had contributed to the policy document. Schools and Departments should now implement plans to identify the training needs of staff at various levels, and arrange training through the channels available.
  2. The Chair commented that one of the issues raised from the Shustoke investigation was the extent of health and safety training and knowledge of staff – that gaps were exposed. In particular, managers would be held accountable for ensuring that steps have been taken to ensure that they, and any staff for which they are responsible, have sufficient knowledge and training.

## **UNIVERSITY HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

- 09/146      Noted:
1. The Executive had received the revised Policy, and was informed that it would be forwarded to the Council for ratification on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2009.
  2. That each School and Department should prepare their own local health and safety policy and annual plans with some guidance and assistance from the Safety Office.
  3. That the Health and Safety Review Group would continue in existence, with a view to reviewing 'local' policies and plans and providing reports to the Committee.
  4. That the University Health and Safety Policy is a dynamic document which would be reviewed annually, by the Committee, and, ultimately, by the Council.

Resolved:                      That a template for a safety policy and annual plan would be provided to Schools and Departments.

**[Action: HHS]**

## **RADIOLOGICAL SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE**

- 09/147      Received:
1. A progress report from the SRO.
- Noted:
2. That draft guidance on the fume cupboards would be produced in readiness for the HSC meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2010.
  3. That there was no further update to report at present on the site inspection of open source areas.

4. The question was raised on whether Aston University Day Hospital (AUDH) was compliant with the legislation governing MRI work, in the absence of a formally-appointed Magnetic Resonance Safety Officer (MRSO).
5. That the SRO had informed users of the open source materials that would need to be disposed of for the 2008/09 period, and that they would be contacted again, early in 2010, with a timetable for disposal.
6. That the 2009/10 review would commence soon, and that colleagues would be told which materials fall into the category of being more than 2 years old in preparedness for disposal.

Resolved: That the necessary arrangements be now completed with a view to having a new formally-appointed MRSO.  
**[Action: Deputy Secretary, SRO]**

[Secretary's Note: Professor Stefano Seri was confirmed in this role later on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2009.]

## EXTERNAL HEALTH AND SAFETY LEGISLATION

09/148 Noted: That, although no significant external legislation was brought to the attention of the Committee, the HHS encouraged members to use the online Occupational Health and Safety Information Service (<http://www.uk.ihc.com/>) to which the University subscribes.

## REPORTS FROM SCHOOLS AND DEPARTMENTS

09/149 Received: Minutes of local Health and Safety Committee/Group Meetings from the following Schools/Departments:-  
  
Aston Business School  
Library and Information Service  
Sport & Recreation

- Noted:
1. The Director of LIS reported on the problem of converging streams of students from LIS and the Main Building due to the hoardings near the LIS building, which restrict the route for students moving away from the building.
  2. That, notoriously, students did not like meeting at the designated assembly point, raising issues of ground control.
  3. That the newly designed ID cards would be rolled out in mid-Summer 2010, incorporating site and proximity controls.

Resolved: To consider any changes to the evacuation procedures in the short term, relating both to the Library and the wider University, while the hoardings are in place.  
**[Action: UFSA, Director of LIS, Head of Security, and Vaughan Townsend, Estates]**



**ACTION SUMMARY**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Minute</b>	<b>Resolutions</b>	<b>Actions</b>
Guidance on PAT Testing	09/134	That the Plan-on roll out programme be sent to HSC members.	Vaughan Townsend, Estates
Removal of Fan Heaters	09/136	That this stipulation be communicated within Schools and Departments.	HSC members
Unauthorised Access	09/138	That the Estates team compile a register of hazardous areas in the University and the mechanisms for accessing them.	Head of Security Safety Office
Risk Assessment Software	09/139	To receive a progress report at the next meeting of the Committee.	Mike Green, LHS Steve Ludlow, SEAS SRO
Health and Safety Audit	09/140	That a note of the remaining areas to be audited in 2010 be brought to the next meeting of the Committee.	Chair of the HSAG, HHS
Emergency Management/ Pandemic Planning	09/141	To ensure, through the Head of Student Services, that relevant staff are contacted with regard to seasonal flu vaccinations.	Chair of the HSC Deputy Secretary
Vision Panels	09/142	To agree a way forward concerning vision panels where valuable equipment is stored.	ISA, HHS, UFSA
Future of the Climbing Wall	09/143	That the operation of the climbing wall be closed down.	Chair of the HSC Head of Sport and Recreation
Accident and Incident Reports	09/144	Media Learning Technologies (MLT) to handover responsibility of any installation work to Estates and Facilities.  Estates and Facilities to survey all projector screen fixings for stability.	Estates to liaise with MLT
University Health and Safety Policy	09/146	That a template for a policy and plan be provided to Schools and Departments.	HHS
RSSC	09/147	That formalities be completed in connection with the appointment of a new MRSO.	Deputy Secretary, SRO

Reports from Schools and Departments	09/149	To consider any changes to the evacuation procedures in the short term while the hoardings are in place.	UFSA, Director of LIS, HHS, Vaughan Townsend, Estates
Any Other Business	09/150	To prepare a short briefing on induction and training for contractors.	Estates and Facilities