

ASTON UNIVERSITY

HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE (HSC)

Minutes of the meeting held on
Thursday, 18th March 2010 in the Council Room

Present	Mr G A Evans (Chair) Mr S Colden Miss D S Cowan Rev C Dowd Dr M Green Mr I Harrison Dr A Hartley Mr A Hawkesworth Ms R Hunt Mr K Hughes Mr I Khan Ms D Lacey	Mr A Lowe Mr S Ludlow Mr K Munday Mrs K Parsons Mrs M Robins Mr M Robinson Dr N R Smith Mrs K Taylor Mr M Tonks Ms S Webster Mrs E Wells Mr D White
Apologies	Mr A Charters Dr G A Drahn Ms J Filby Mr J Finucane Ms A M MacKinlay	Mr G Moulder Ms K Newman-Brown Mrs K Pedwell Mr A P Vickers
By Invitation	Mr D Pennells (Europa FM) Dr A Sutherland (in connection with item 10/44)	Ms C Powrie (in connection with Item 10/44)
In Attendance	Mr I Kang	

MEMBERSHIP

- 10/32 Noted: 1. The following new members were welcomed to meetings of the Committee:
- Iftikhar Khan, as the representative for ASAP (Aston Student Advice Point);
 - Mike Robinson, as a representative for the School of Life and Health Sciences, *vice* Joanne Gough.

2. Following the recent restructuring of senior management at Aston, Adèle MacKinlay, Director of Staff and Student Services and a member of the Executive Team, had been appointed Chair of the HSC. Unfortunately she had a prior commitment on this date which could not be rearranged, but would be chairing meetings of the Committee with effect from that scheduled for 13th May 2010.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 28th JANUARY 2010

- 10/33 Noted: 1. That the action-point arising from Minute 10/09 (5), concerned with the response to the audit of Residential Services, should be assigned to Claire Powrie, who would be giving a timed report on the issue.
2. to Claire Powrie, who would be giving a timed report on the issue.

Resolved: That apologies from Ian Harrison had been inadvertently omitted.

That, subject to the amendments noted above, the Minutes of the meeting held on 28th January 2010 be accepted as a correct record.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Guidance on PAT Testing (10/03)

- 10/34 Noted: Guidance on PAT testing had been completed, and posted on the Estates and Facilities website. The Guidance would also be distributed to members with the Minutes for this meeting.
- [Action: Safety Office]**

Removal of Fan Heaters (10/04)

- 10/35 Noted: The removal of fan heaters was ongoing, as agreed.

Reports from Schools and Departments (10/07)

- 10/36 Noted: New signage was being arranged for the buildings concerned, by way of indicating new evacuation points.

Health and Safety Audit Group Report (10/09)

- 10/37 Noted: 1. A template to assist development of a Health and Safety Management System had been distributed to Claire Powrie, John Walter and Iftikhar Khan.

2. Further guidance was required from the Human Resources Directorate on the possibilities for incorporating health and safety responsibilities in job descriptions, bearing in mind, *inter alia*:

- that the institutional Health and Safety Policy was included with the terms and conditions of employment for all University staff;
- that certain specific job descriptions, for areas such as Estates and Facilities and Catering, already included health and safety responsibilities; and
- that the new Training Policy provided for the inclusion of health and safety in Personal Development Reviews.

[Action: A. Hartley/K. Parsons]

Fire Wardens (10/13)

10/38 Noted: Aston Day Hospital had supplied names for the Fire Warden Scheme, while discussions were being progressed with LHS in order to identify individuals from across that School.

Other Fire Safety Issues (10/14)

10/39 Noted: The fire loading issue affecting the bin room in the CEAC building had seen insufficient improvement. A solution was to be found and reported to the next HSC meeting.

[Action: S. Ludlow, C. Allister, University Fire Safety Adviser (UFSA)]

Accident and Incident Reports (10/16)

10/40 Noted: There was no resolution between Birmingham City Council and the Police on whose responsibility it was to address the issue of traffic obstructions along Woodcock Street.

Resolved: That the matter be raised at the next City Council meeting
[Action: I. Harrison]

The Guild (10/27)

10/41 Noted: The Blue Room was now secure.

Aston Student Advice Point (10/29)

10/42 Noted: That the hot water dispenser in the ASAP kitchen had been relocated to a safe position.

3. Books in the Library suffering from 'red rot' had been isolated, and a decision was to be made whether to send the books back to the Birmingham Law Society, or to meet the necessary costs of rebinding them.
4. There was an ongoing issue in LIS regarding the Fire Warden Scheme's requirement for two staff members to clear each floor, as the Library did not have staff stationed on the third floor and would therefore have to go against the flow of traffic in an emergency to clear the top floors. This issue, in particular, accounted for only two members of staff having volunteered for the Scheme.
5. That one recommendation arising from the Residential Services audit, with respect to safety-related training for the Resident Tutors and the Duty Postgraduates, was expected to be completed by the end of the current academic year, following completion of a review of the roles concerned.
6. That actions from the Residential Services audit previously assigned to Operon FM were now being completed by Europa, the company with which the University had a temporary facilities management contract following Operon's entry into administration on 29th January 2010.
7. The Committee's acceptance of the Residential Services report, subject to the item outstanding under '5' above.
8. There were some recommendations from the EAS audit still awaiting completion, viz:
 - There was currently an issue with various databases that logged training attendance; this was evident with the Fire Awareness Training that occurred in January 2010, as the ISA system that logged the swipe cards for staff in attendance was not compatible with the HR system. A University-wide solution needed to be found.
 - The survey regarding work-related stress should be distributed when staff had settled and become accustomed to the planned restructuring of the School's administrative services.
 - The Lone Working/Out of Hours Policy was currently on its third draft.

9. That, because of the ongoing restructuring of EAS, it was recommended that this item remain as a standing item on the HSC agenda and that the associated timescale should be extended to allow EAS to resolve the issue.
 10. That expressions of interest in joining the HSAG team were still invited.
- Resolved:
1. A written invitation should be sent to the JUCC for an additional Union representative to join the HSAG team.
[Action: G. Evans]
 2. Members interested in joining the HSAG team should inform Darnette Cowan of their interest before the next HSC meeting
[Action: HSC members]
 3. That the auditing of Campus events be now included in the auditing schedule.
[Action: HSAG]

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANNING AND PANDEMIC PLAN

- 10/45 Noted:
1. There were no accounts of swine flu affecting students during the January examinations period.
 2. It was agreed that the Swine Flu Action Group be discharged for the time being, but that it be ready to reconvene as and when the need might arise.
- Resolved:
1. That an outline-version of the Pandemic Emergency Plan adopted by the University be prepared, and supplied to Conference Aston for external use.
[Action: A. Hawkesworth, K. Taylor, C. Powrie]
 2. That a further draft of a provisional action-plan tabled at the meeting in respect of Emergency Management Planning be provided to the HSC on 13th May.
[Action: G. Evans, A. Hawkesworth]

FIRE SAFETY

Fire Drill Reports

- 10/46 Noted:
- That some reports showed that the evacuation times were too long in the Residence buildings. This was because of a few individuals not taking the drills seriously, and the general design of the buildings which consisted of single staircases.
- Resolved:
- The timing of the evacuations for LIS during the evenings needed improvement and that a solution should be found.
[Action: UFSA, N Smith]

Fire Awareness Training

10/47 Received: An oral progress report from the University's Fire Safety Adviser.

- Noted:
1. That, 91.7% of core staff had now completed the fire awareness training, leaving approximately 130 staff still to attend. Only a few of the latter were believed to be 'persistent offenders'.
 2. The next fire awareness staff training sessions would be scheduled for September 2010.

Resolved:

1. The lists of core staff who had persistently not attended the fire awareness training to be distributed to the relevant Heads of Schools and Departments.

[Action: UFSA]

2. An appropriate date to hold the student fire awareness training to be found. It was evident that holding the training date during Freshers' Week produced inadequate attendance. It was recommended that the training day be held instead during the first week of teaching, in October.

[Action: UFSA, Schools]

Fire Safety Policy

10/48 Resolved:

1. A few wording changes were required to the Policy. Subject to these changes the Policy was regarded as ready for adoption.

[Action: UFSA]

2. The Policy, once finalised, be uploaded on to the Staff Intranet and published through 'Aston Aspects'.

[Action: UFSA, Safety Office, L. Russell - Communications]

ACCIDENT AND INCIDENT REPORTS

10/49 Noted:

1. All accidents involving visitors and contractors should be recorded, so that the Safety Office could monitor where accidents were occurring, identify trends and eliminate hazards.

2. Where accidents had occurred since the last HSC meeting due to inappropriately-located hoardings and screens, the obstacles concerned had now been removed.

3. Within Conference Aston, strengthening of the turning points in the partitioning had been undertaken by Estates and Facilities. Additionally, the company that installed the partitions had completed a full service of the partitions, although, following this, partitions still

dropped in some areas. These areas were not being used until the issue could be fully resolved. In the meantime, staff in Conference Aston had been retrained on a Safe System of Work with regard to the partitions, and an annual service of the partitions had been arranged.

4. That the HSE investigation into the incident at Shustoke Recreation Centre was still ongoing. The Committee received at its meeting written details of actions taken to date in response to the internal Major Incident Investigation Team (MIIT) recommendations, and it was further noted that progress on the implementation of the actions would continue to be a standing item on the HSC Agenda.

Resolved: 1. That all aspects of the MIIT recommendations must be completed by the given timescales.

[Action: Estates and Facilities, other relevant Departments]

2. The Safety Office would ensure that staff attending interviews with the HSE or other authoritative bodies were appropriately briefed on their rights and what to expect at such interviews.

[Action: Safety Office]

ANNUAL REPORT ON HEALTH AND SAFETY FOR 2009

10/50

Noted: 1. The Report was submitted to, and accepted by, the Council on 17th March 2010,

2. The sharp increase in accidents for 2009 was due to an improved accident reporting system and an enhancement of general staff awareness concerning the need to report accidents.

3. Keith Munday, in his capacity as the Council's representative on the HSC, commended the open nature of the Committee and its proactive approach.

Resolved: 1. It was agreed at the Council meeting that the statistics should, in future years, also include cases of bullying and harassment.

[Action: Safety Office, HR]

2. There was a concern over the amount of time it took for appropriate actions to occur after an accident has taken place. The times fluctuated depending on where the accidents occurred. A half-day training session on accident investigation would be arranged through the University's insurers for members of the Committee to help improve awareness and timing of actions to be taken. A formal invitation would be made available for distribution to members by the Risk and Insurance Officer.

[Action: A. Hawkesworth, Safety Office]

Resolved: That the University should look into the possibility of a smoking shelter which serves both the new Residences and the new LIS building. The issue would be raised with the Executive.

[Action: G. Evans]

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

10/54 Noted: That the next meeting would be held on Thursday, May 13th 2010 in room G8 at the later start-time of 11.30am.

ACTION SUMMARY

Topic	Minute	Resolutions	Actions
Guidance on PAT Testing (10/03)	10/34	Issue of guidance with the HSC Minutes	Safety Office
Health and Safety Audit Group Report (10/09)	10/37	Possibilities for incorporating health and safety responsibilities in job descriptions	A. Hartley, K. Parsons
Other Fire Safety Issues (10/14)	10/39	The fire loading issue affecting the bin room in the CEAC building	S. Ludlow, C. Allister, UFSA
Accident and Incident Reports (10/16)	10/40	Parking issue on Woodcock Street to be raised at the next City Council meeting	I. Harrison
Health and Safety Audit Group Report	10/44	A formal letter be sent to JUCC for an additional Union representative to join the Audit Group	G. Evans
		Members interested in joining the Audit Group should contact Darnette Cowan	HSC Members
		Campus Events to be included into the auditing schedule	HSAG
Emergency Management Planning and Pandemic Plan	10/45	An outline of the pandemic plan to be drafted for external use	A. Hawkesworth, K. Taylor, C. Powrie
		A further draft of the EMP action-plan is to be provided	G. Evans, A. Hawkesworth
Fire Drill Reports	10/46	There needs to be improvements to the timing of the LIS evacuation in the evenings	UFSA, N. Smith
Fire Awareness Training	10/47	Names of core staff who have persistently not attended the fire awareness training to be distributed to their Heads of Schools/Departments	UFSA, Safety Office
		Staff fire awareness training sessions to be arranged for September	UFSA
		A date for student fire awareness training is to be arranged into the first week of teaching in October	UFSA, Schools
Fire Safety Policy	10/48	The Policy requires wording changes, before it can be adopted	UFSA
		The Policy to be uploaded onto the Staff Intranet and bulletined under 'Aston Aspects'	UFSA, Safety Office, L. Russell (Comm.)
Accident and Incident Reports	10/49	Recommendations from the MIIT report are to be completed in the given timescale	Estates and Facilities, other relevant Departments
		Staff attending interviews with the HSE or other authoritative bodies to be appropriately briefed on their rights and what to expect at such interviews.	Safety Office
Annual Report on Health and Safety for 2009	10/50	Cases of bullying and harassment to be included in future Annual Reports	Safety Office, HR
		An invitation for staff interested in attending the Accident Investigation training to be distributed	A. Hawkesworth, Safety Office
		The Annual Report for 2009 to be published on the Staff Intranet	Safety Office
Reports from Schools and Departments	10/53	The issue regarding smoking shelters is to be raised with the Executive	G. Evans