University of St Andrews

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

Introduction

Central to the mission of the University of St Andrews is its dedication to excellence in teaching and research. Supporting that academic mission is a commitment to ensure that all staff, students and members of the public affected by University services can pursue their activities in a manner and environment that supports high standards of health, safety and welfare.

To meet this commitment the University recognises not only the importance of providing effective leadership of health and safety, but also the necessity of engaging the workforce and its students in the promotion and achievement of safe and healthy conditions for living and working. The aim is to embrace sensible health and safety practices as a means to achieving maximum benefits from the work experience and the student experience at the University of St Andrews.

In this spirit the following Policy is commended to all members of the University community.

Mr Mervyn Jones  
Convener, Health & Safety Assurance Group

Professor Louise Richardson  
Principal & Vice-Chancellor

24 February 2014
I. Policy Commitments

1. The University regards the health and safety of staff, students and visitors as an essential part of pursuing its mission of excellence in research and education. Accordingly, it is committed both to enabling staff and students to pursue their legitimate activities and to ensuring that these activities are conducted safely by targeting resources proportionate to the risks.

2. The University Court and senior management are committed to the effective delivery of measures to ensure the health and safety of staff, students and visitors. They will empower staff and students to assume responsibility for their own health and safety, and that of others, and to report concerns. They will work with appropriate staff and student representatives, and they will ensure staff and students are provided with access to competent advice, information, instruction, training and supervision as required.

3. The University will maintain effective measures to assess and manage health and safety risks to staff, students, collaborators, stakeholders and any other members of the public who might be affected by its activities. This will be achieved in consultation, or where appropriate negotiation, with staff and student representative associations.

4. The University will ensure the provision of clear management systems, defining roles and responsibilities, for health and safety risks. The University's senior management will ensure that they have access to competent health and safety advice and that processes are in place to escalate to the appropriate level relevant information regarding institutional health and safety performance and any significant health and safety risks, issues and failures.

5. The University will consult staff and students about their risks at work and about the design and implementation of preventive and protective measures, and, when necessary, about amending current practices.

6. The University will maintain effective measures for planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of health and safety matters with a view to continuous improvement.

II. Arrangements

A. Roles and Responsibilities

1. The University Court. The University Court, working through its Audit & Risk Committee, has the lead role in considering and approving strategies for health and safety in the University that are put forward by senior management, including the Health & Safety Policy, and it is responsible for ensuring that health and safety arrangements are adequately resourced. The University Court will monitor the communication and implementation of health and safety duties and benefits throughout the organisation and will be committed to considering the health and safety implications of other strategic University initiatives (such as major development projects). Members of Court will be provided at induction with the current advice on health & safety for governing bodies of higher education institutions and will have access to specific health and safety advice as required either from expertise within or outwith the University.

2. Health & Safety Assurance Group. The University Court is committed to the integration of health and safety into its main governance structures, particularly in the form of a Health & Safety Assurance Group. Its remit is provided in Appendix 1. This Assurance Group reports to the Court’s Audit & Risk Committee, which places health and safety risks firmly within its broader systems of risk monitoring and control. Senior management will be accountable to the
4. **Assurance Group**, and system for ensuring, so of the and of Senior the Safety Policy, including setting any specific objectives and advice Environmental Health & Safety Assurance Group, who is an independent (non-executive) member of Court, is the champion of health and safety issues on Court.

3. **Principal & Vice-Chancellor.** The Principal & Vice-Chancellor is accountable to the University Court for systems and practices that ensure health and safety risks are managed responsibly and proportionately throughout the University.

4. **Senior Management (Members of the Principal's Office).** Under the authority of the Principal, the University's senior management provides individual and collective leadership and is responsible for the delivery throughout the University's Schools and Units of an effective system for ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of staff, students and members of the public. They in turn employ the line management structure of the University to ensure health, safety and welfare concerns are appropriately managed in all Schools and Units.

5. **Senior Management Champion.** One member of the senior management team (currently the Quaestor & Factor), who reports directly to the Principal & Vice-Chancellor, is designated as champion for health and safety matters. S/he is a member of the Court's Health & Safety Assurance Group, and a member of the University's Risk Management Group. With the advice of the Principal's Office, s/he will oversee the development and implementation of the Health & Safety Policy, including setting any specific objectives or targets aligned to this Policy.

6. **Chief Legal Officer**
The line manager of the Director of Environmental, Health and Safety Services, s/he acts as a conduit for presenting new and amended policies (via the Quaestor & Factor) to the Principal's Office. Also acts as first point of escalation for emergencies and major incidents (health & safety-related only).

7. **Role of Environmental Health & Safety Services**
Environmental Health & Safety Services coordinates the administration and implementation of the University's Health & Safety Policy and related policies. It provides competent and objective advice to the University, its management, staff and students in the disciplines of health and safety, occupational health, institutional risk management, contingency planning, radiation protection, fire safety and health & safety training. Procedures for implementing new and changed legal requirements are developed by this Unit. In addition it is custodian of the University health and safety management system and its documentation; it develops general and specific health and safety standards, processes and techniques for approval and adoption by the University and monitors the effectiveness of their implementation; it disseminates information on statutory requirements and sector or institutional guidance; it promotes effective consultation on health and safety matters and investigates incidents or risks of concern; and it escalates significant issues to the Chief Legal Officer.

8. **School and Unit Management.** Heads of Schools and Units have responsibility for the delivery, communication, management and monitoring of health and safety issues within their Schools or Units, assisted as required by Environmental Health & Safety Services. Heads of Schools and Units will establish local health & safety policies and objectives, aligned to the University's strategic objectives for health & safety and proportionate to the risks involved, by adopting institutional processes and requirements relevant to their areas of accountability. On operational health and safety matters affecting a School or Unit, the Head of School or Unit will take the lead in consulting, involving, and communicating with potentially affected staff and students. To support these activities Schools and Units will appoint one or more Health & Safety Coordinators, and will have either a School/Unit Health & Safety Committee or another
9. **Other Managers and Supervisors**
At any level in the University, staff who have responsibility for managing or supervising other employees, contractors or visitors are responsible for the health and safety of those under their care or control. They have the duty to embed a continuously improving health and safety culture that ensures standards are met and empowers individuals to take responsibility for health and safety issues as part of their day-to-day activities. They also have the duty to ensure that any matters of concern about health and safety are appropriately escalated to more senior managers.

10. **Those with Responsibility for Students**
Similarly, at any level in the University, staff who have for whatever duration oversight of students or responsibility for their welfare are responsible for the health and safety of those under their care or control. They have a duty to ensure that standards of health and safety are met, that students have been adequately informed and trained in relation to activities that pose potential risks, and that students are made aware of how to raise health and safety concerns in an effective way.

10. **Responsibilities of Employees and Students.** All individuals in the University community have a responsibility for their own health and safety, and for complying with local health & safety policies and procedures. Whilst at work it is the statutory duty of every employee, irrespective of his/her job title or role, and it is the responsibility of every student to:
   - take reasonable care for the health and safety of himself/herself and for others who may be affected by his/her behaviours, acts or omissions at work; and to
   - neither interfere with nor misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare; and to
   - co-operate with the University in complying with any requirements or duty imposed under any relevant legislation.

11. **Staff Representatives.** Representatives of the recognised trade unions (representing all University employees) comprise the consultative group that meets regularly with senior management. The purpose of this group is to discuss new health and safety policies, procedures, communications, advice and training; to raise health and safety concerns identified by employees; to review the effectiveness of current health and safety management measures through access to relevant documentation; and to escalate unresolved concerns to the Health & Safety Assurance Group. These representatives may also be involved in health and safety inspections and investigations. Meetings will take place on approximately a monthly basis. As provided in legislation, at the written request of two health and safety representatives, the consultation arrangements described above will be dissolved and the membership of the Health & Safety Assurance Group will be extended to comprise a formal Health & Safety Committee that will report to the University Court.

12. **Student Representatives.** Student sabbatical officers, as elected representatives of the students, have monthly meetings with the University senior management at which health and safety issues will be a discussion item. The sabbatical officers will represent all students to discuss new health and safety policies, procedures, communications, advice and training; to raise health and safety concerns identified by students; and to escalate unresolved concerns to the Health & Safety Assurance Group.
B. Health & Safety Management

13. **Empowerment of University Community.** Environmental Health & Safety Services will support managers, staff and students to attain competencies necessary to assume appropriate levels of responsibility for managing, working and studying safely. This support will include access to competent advice, information, instruction, training, monitoring and supervision as required. Where competent advice on a health & safety matter of significance is not available within the University, it will be obtained externally.

14. **Training.** The University is committed to ensuring that staff and students receive suitable and proportionate training in health and safety matters appropriate to their level of responsibility and to the hazards in their work areas. This is normally provided through Schools and Units and includes, as a minimum, induction and fire training. The specification for health and safety training for key staff will be determined and reviewed regularly on the advice of Environmental Health & Safety Services.

15. **Risk Assessments.** The University is committed to ensuring that there is an appropriate system for identifying, assessing and controlling all significant health and safety risks. Underpinning principles of the risk assessment system are that risks are identified and assessed initially by the person, Unit or School whose activity gives rise to the risk and in consultation with those who may be affected, and that suitable and proportionate control measures are implemented to eliminate or control the risks identified. Risk assessment processes will be independent of the broader institutional risk management mechanisms but aligned to them to ensure suitable recordkeeping and review, responsible and proportionate escalation, and sensible governance. Changes, such as the introduction of new procedures, work processes or products that may have significant consequences for health and safety will be subject to special impact assessments.

16. **Management of Specific Risks.** Three Health & Safety management groups have been established under the authority of the Principal's Office to oversee specific health and safety risks:

- **The Chemical & Biological Hazard Management Group.** This Group reports to the Principal’s Office, is convened by the University Biological Safety Adviser, and includes the University Chemical Safety Adviser. No decisions relating to biological or chemical safety can be taken without the presence of the relevant adviser. The Group is also so constituted as to satisfy the legal requirement for a University Genetic Modification Safety Committee. The Group oversees all policies and procedures relating to hazardous substances, biological agents and genetically modified organisms, ensuring compliance with statutory requirements concerning work with these substances.

- **The Radiation Hazard Management Group.** This Group reports to the Principal’s Office, is convened by the Director of Environmental, Health & Safety Services, and includes the University Radiation Protection Adviser. The Group oversees all policies and procedures relating to radiation, radioactive substances and the use of lasers, ensuring compliance with the statutory requirements concerning work with these substances and sources.

- **The Fieldwork, Placement and Travel Risk Management Group.** This Group consists of appropriate members of the Principal’s Office and includes the Director of Environmental, Health & Safety Services. The Group oversees all policies and procedures relating to fieldwork, placements and travel by University employees and students, and it directly considers cases escalated to it by Schools or Units under these procedures.
17. **Specific Health and Safety Arrangements.** The University’s Health & Safety website provides access to policies, systems, procedures and guidance made under the authority of this Policy. Unless otherwise stated all such documents are extensions of this Policy, and all requirements described in those documents should be regarded as requirements of this Policy. These will include new and changed legal requirements as well as other external developments. University plans and procedures in relation to emergency situations are detailed under separate procedures and guidance made under this Policy.

18. **Communication on Health and Safety Issues.** The University is committed to developing open lines of communication whereby any member of the University community can raise concerns without prejudice. The main lines of communication and responsibility for dealing with health and safety issues and concerns raised are outlined in Appendix 2.

**C. Monitoring, Reporting and Review**

19. **Reporting Incidents.** The University is committed to developing a culture whereby all accidents, incidents, concerns about health and safety, and cases of work-related ill health can be reported without prejudice by any member of the University community. Such reports will be formally logged, investigated as appropriate, followed up to learn lessons and effect improvements, and reported to relevant authorities in good time by a competent, authorised person where there is a statutory duty to do so. Arrangements will exist for escalation of such incidents to a level and with an urgency proportionate to any continuing risk to health and safety. Any health and safety failure which results in or may have caused death or life-threatening injury must be reported to the University Court’s Health & Safety Assurance Group as soon as possible. This includes any reports of major failures by contractors.

20. **Annual Health and Safety Reports.** Each School and Unit prepares an annual institutional return of health and safety information. This return includes performance against its health and safety plan for the previous year and a checklist on health and safety processes in the School or Unit. An inspection of the workplace is also required at least annually, with outcomes recorded in institutionally-defined format and action points for improvements.

21. **Detailed Health and Safety Audits.** A comprehensive schedule of health and safety tours of buildings (including fire inspections) and audits of institutional issues and health & safety standards in Units / Schools permits periodic assessment of the effectiveness of management structures and risk controls for health and safety. Detailed health and safety auditing mechanisms for detailed health and safety audits of Schools and Units will be used to map the health and safety performance against health and safety management standards. The schedule of audits is arranged by Environmental, Health & Safety Services and agreed by the Health & Safety Assurance Group, which also monitors the results of such audits. The audits are planned and carried out according to detailed procedures and protocols made under the authority of this Policy.

22. **Annual Health and Safety Report to the University Court.** After consultation with the University’s senior management, the Health & Safety Assurance Group will consider and formally issue an annual report on health and safety to the Audit & Risk Committee for review and onward reporting to the University Court. The Convener of the Health & Safety Assurance Group is also able to report observations and concerns at any time to the Audit & Risk Committee or to Court. In preparation for the annual report the University’s performance against appropriate sector benchmark data will be monitored by Environmental, Health & Safety Services and reported to senior management and to the Health & Safety Assurance
Additional monitoring will also include information about preventive measures (such as training), audits, incident data and data on workplace health where this is available.

23. **Workplace Tours for Court Assurance.** The Health & Safety Assurance Group will undertake workplace tours where warranted by the level of potential risk to supplement other forms of audit and monitoring.

24. **Annual Court Review.** The University Court's Audit & Risk Committee receives from the Health & Safety Assurance Group an annual Health and Safety Report (see paragraph 22 above). This provides not only a report, but also the occasion for a formal annual review of health and safety management. This review process should include examining whether the Health & Safety Policy reflects both the University's current priorities and current legislative or statutory requirements, whether risk management and other health and safety systems have been effectively reporting to the relevant Court and management bodies, and whether health and safety shortcomings are being adequately addressed.
**APPENDIX 1**

Remit and Membership of the Health & Safety Assurance Group of the University Court

1. The Health & Safety Assurance Group comprises:
   - A Convener who is a non-executive member of the University Court
   - The University's Chief Legal Officer

Advisers will be in attendance as required.

Minutes of meetings will be sent to the Quaestor & Factor (as Health & Safety Champion in the Principal's Office), who will confirm receipt.

2. The primary purpose of the Health & Safety Assurance Group is to ensure that appropriate and effective policies and practices are in place to promote and safeguard the health & safety of all members of the University community and visitors to the University, with due regard to the management of risk. It has the following remit:

   2.1 To advise Court through the Audit & Risk Committee on all matters concerning health & safety in the University and ensure appropriate attention is given to the University's legal obligations in relation to health & safety.

   2.2 To make recommendations to Court through the Audit & Risk Committee on such actions as are considered necessary to promote the health & safety of employees, students and others within the University.

   2.3 To review, at least annually, the Health & Safety Policy Statement of the University Court.

   2.4 To receive, comment upon and refer to the Audit & Risk Committee an annual report from the University's Director of Environmental, Health & Safety Services, concerning the management of all areas of Health & Safety at Work including: Occupational Health, Radiation Hazards, Biological and Chemical Hazards and Fire Safety.

   2.5 To satisfy itself that suitable and sufficient assessment is made of risks to health & safety and to advise the Audit & Risk Committee, at least annually, of the level of risk identified through the monitoring of health & safety provision.

   2.6 To agree the programmes for health & safety audits, to monitor their conduct and to satisfy itself that recommended actions are effectively and efficiently taken.

   2.7 To consider any health & safety matter referred to it by a School / Unit, Trade Union Representative or an individual.

   2.8 To consider, where necessary, reports from Inspectors of Enforcing Authorities under health & safety legislation, reports from the University's Insurers and Brokers and reports from Trade Union Safety Representatives.

   2.9 To consider and agree the setting and measuring of health & safety performance standards.

   2.10 To ensure that due regard is given to the health & safety of those with disabilities.

   2.11 To satisfy itself that a high standard of health & safety is attained throughout the University and that acceptable levels of performance are sustained.
University of St Andrews
Health & Safety Policy
Raising and Resolving Issues

Primary route for raising Health & Safety concerns via line management
- If issue difficult to resolve, involve EHSS for advice
- Raise issues at any time via staff and student representatives
- In the event that issues cannot be resolved, Consultative Groups can escalate to Health & Safety Assurance Group