

**UNIVERSITY OF ROEHAMPTON
HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the 39th Meeting of the Committee
9am on Wednesday 1 May 2024
Meeting held in Room PH136, Parkstead House, Whitelands College**

Present: Mark Allen (Chair), Aleata Alstad-Calkins, Sharon Azams¹, Richard Bradshaw, Patrick Brady, Frances Coleman, Richard Gerard-Sharp, Andy Lamb, Tom Rowson, Gauti Sigthorsson², Michael Toon

In attendance: Nigel Dale, Fire, Health and Safety Adviser

Notes: Melanie Duhig

Apologies: Sue Carter, Elaine Lentell

Minutes and Business Matters

HSWC39.1 Welcomes, introductions, apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular Richard Bradshaw who was joining the Committee for the first time as an independent member and Aleata Alstad-Calkins, Director of Student Support and Success, who was attending in the absence of Sue Carter.

No conflicts of interest were declared.

**HSWC39.2 Confirmation of the minute of the last meeting
(Paper HSWC39/1)**

Approved: The minutes of the 38th meeting of the Committee, held on 7 February 2024.

HSWC39.3 Matters arising from the minutes

The Committee noted progress on matters arising as set out in Paper HSWC39/2, in particular:

- That the Fire, Health and Safety Adviser and GMB representative had met to progress the Code of Practice and FAQs concerning e-bikes and scooters. The material was approved and would be made available on the intranet in due course.
- That although the number of staff currently using e-bikes and scooters was low and arrangements were being made to allow parking of these vehicles in cycle stores, it was acknowledged

¹ Present from Item 8

² Present from Item 3

that the use of such vehicles by both students and staff was likely to increase and therefore the issue needed to be kept under review.

- That a H&S tour of the Whitelands campus by the Dean of LHS, COO and Director of Estates had taken place on 30 April 2024 and actions arising from that tour were being progressed.

Items for Decision

HSWC39.4 Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy (Paper HSWC39/3)

Endorsed: The revised Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy for recommending to Finance & Resources Committee for approval.

HSWC39.5 Revisions to the Asbestos Policy and Legionellosis Policy (Paper HSWC39/4)

Endorsed: The revised Asbestos Policy and Legionellosis Policy for recommending to Finance & Resources Committee for approval.

Items for Discussion

HSWC39.6 Health and Safety Matters

The Committee noted the issues raised by the UCU and GMB Health and Safety representatives for discussion at the meeting. The following points were highlighted:

- That there were concerns over the potential impact on staff if there was a move to 30 credit modules, including the process of gaining accreditation of those modules from external bodies.
- That there were concerns about the condition of parts of the estate, in particular the roofs at Whitelands. Management informed the representatives that the Whitelands Trustees had agreed in principle to provide £2.5m funding to repair the roofs and that the provisional date for starting the work was late August/early September 2024. It was emphasised that efforts would be made to minimise the disruption caused by the works.
- That the strict application of some policies could potentially have unintended consequences. The UCU representative had one example of this which would be discussed outside of the meeting.

Actions: Exec. Director of HR, Director of Estates

HSWC39.7 Report from Human Resources

(Paper HSWC39/5)

The Committee received the report and the following points were noted in particular:

- That a number of initiatives had been adopted in connection with Stress Awareness Month in April, including reminding senior colleagues of the Standard Operating Procedure for Work Related Stress.
- That the services provided by the University's EAP partner were reviewed for both cost and personal/quality service.
- That some optional e-learning courses were now available, in addition to the mandatory courses.

HSWC39.8 Report from Student Support Services
(Paper HSWC39/6)

The Committee received a report from the Director of Student Support and Success, which included the following points:

- That there was a plan to revise to the form of report to make it more relevant to the Committee.
- That the case of the *University of Bristol v Dr Robert Abrahart* provided guidance in relation to the evidential requirements in determining disability and the duty to make reasonable adjustments. The impact on this decision on existing procedures and processes would be evaluated.
- That the Bystander Team had responded to 25 incidents that took place at events. It was also noted that the OfS was consulting on a proposed new condition of registration that would require universities to have effective policies and procedures in place to respond to incidents of harassment and sexual misconduct affecting students.
- That the Report and Support tool was in some instances not being used correctly and that this needed to be addressed. For example, some students were using the tool for academic appeals.

HSWC39.9 External Compliance Audit
(Paper HSWC39/7)

The Committee received a report from the Director of Estates, which included the following points:

- That following the Elm Grove Fire in February 2023, Uniac had been commissioned to assess whether the Estates and Campus Services compliance regime met statutory requirements.
- That the external compliance report highlighted three areas of data capture and reporting for improvement (namely the Legal Compliance Register, Asset Register and Operational

Compliance Monitoring and Reporting) and steps were being taken to improve these areas.

- That the changes, including the use of the Invida system, would allow the Estates team to move from the current principally reactive approach to maintenance to a planned preventative maintenance programme.

HSWC39.10 Period Health and Safety Report (Paper HSWC39/8)

The Committee received a report from the Associate Director of Health and Safety for the period 1 January to 31 March 2024, and noted the following points in particular:

- That there were 9 Awaken reports during the reporting period, of which 1 was reportable to the Health and Safety Executive under RIDDOR.
- That there had been eight accidents and one near-miss.
- That there were 58 first-aid reports onsite in total, which was a slight decrease compared to the same reporting period last year.
- That the 85% KPI training target had been met for 5 of the 6 mandatory H&S modules and that Fire Safety training is currently at 80.8% which is excellent given that the training must be repeated annually.

HSWC39.11 Fire Safety Management Report (Paper HSWC39/9)

The Committee received a report from the Fire, Health and Safety Adviser for the period 1 January to 31 March 2024, and the following points were highlighted:

- That there had been three fire incidents on campus during the reporting period, all of which were electrical and one of which was a serious fire in the Newman basement laundry, most likely caused by a blocked filter. A separate report was provided in respect of the Newman basement laundry fire.
- That the building floor plans which would be used by firefighters required updating. Progress on this issue was identified as a priority.
- That reported incidents of fire detector tampering and smoking inside buildings by students had decreased a little in this period compared with the same period last year. However, the overall trend for smoking and vaping inside buildings was upwards.

Action: Fire, Health & Safety Adviser

HSWC39.12 Fire Investigation Summary Report: Newman Laundry Fire
(Paper HSWC39/9)

The Committee received a report from the Fire, Health and Safety Adviser relating to the Newman Laundry Fire and the following point was highlighted:

- That the areas for follow-up included understanding who was responsible for the cleaning of filters in the clothes dryer under the machine lease arrangements, whether smoke detectors as well as heat detectors should be included in the area, and ensuring that escape routes were cleared of trip hazards.

Items for Information

HSWC39.13 Minutes from the Life and Health Sciences Sub-Committee
(Paper HSWC39/10)

The Committee received the minutes from the Life and Health Sciences Sub-Committee.

Date of next meeting: 23 October 2024

*Minutes prepared by Melanie Duhig
Governance Coordinator, May 2024*