

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

**Minutes of the 38th Meeting of the Committee
10am on Wednesday 7 February 2024
Meeting held in Room GH010, Grove House, Froebel College**

Present: Mark Allen (Chair), Sue Carter, Frances Coleman, Richard Gerard-Sharp, Andy Lamb, Tom Rowson, Gauti Sigthorsson, Michael Toon

In attendance: Sally Akehurst*, Dean of the School of Life & Health Sciences
Nigel Dale, Fire, Health and Safety Adviser

Secretary: Elaine Lentell

Apologies: Sharon Azams, Patrick Brady

Minutes and Business Matters

HSWC38.1 Welcomes, introductions, apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular Sue Carter, Head of Disability and Dyslexia Services, to her first meeting as Student Support Services Representative.

No conflicts of interest were declared.

**HSWC38.2 Confirmation of the minute of the last meeting
(Paper HSWC38/1)**

Approved: The minutes of the 37th meeting of the Committee, held on 18 October 2023.

HSWC38.3 Matters arising from the minutes

The Committee noted progress on matters arising as set out in Paper HSWC38/2.

HSWC37.9 – the Chief Operating Officer had requested that the compliance report's format be revised and was awaiting an updated report from the external consultants. The Director of Estates and University Secretary were also in the process of reviewing how the data was collected. An update on progress would be provided at the next meeting in May 2024.

Items for Decision

**HSWC38.4 Revisions to the Fire Safety Policy
(Paper HSWC38/3)**

*Joined the meeting for Item HSWC38.11 only.

Endorsed: The revised Fire Safety Policy for recommending to Council for approval.

Items for Discussion

HSWC38.5 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:

Repairs (UCU and GMB): it was suggested that a RAG system could be implemented to assess the urgency of a repair and whether it had been completed fully. Management noted that the service desk was working at full capacity and acknowledged that providing updates on a repair's progress would be helpful. To address this and other issues the Director of Estates was reviewing the service desk function with the Head of Business Support.

E-Bikes/Scooter batteries: the GMB representative referred to the tone of the communication on battery storage that had been disseminated via the staff portal. The Committee discussed the level of e-bike/scooter usage on campus and agreed the following actions:

- Explore alternative safe storage options and the possibility of using the existing bike storage facility near Lee House.
- Review the comms approach to highlighting safety issues around bike batteries.
- Consider making the guidance on battery storage part of induction and add it to the 'managers' safety essentials'.
- Draft FAQs and share with the GMB H&S rep for feedback.
- Discuss the matter further outside of the Committee.

Staff sickness: The UCU H&S representative raised the issue of staff being unable to attend departmental meetings on-campus when working from home due to health reasons. It was agreed that the Exec. Director of HR would liaise with the UCU rep on the matter outside of the meeting.

The GMB H&S representative thanked Management for the security restructure and the way the negotiations had been conducted. Management in turn extended thanks to the GMB, and the GMB rep in particular, for their collaborative and constructive input in the process.

Actions: Director of Estates, Associate Director of H&S, Fire, Health & Safety Adviser, Exec. Director of HR

HSWC38.6 Report from Human Resources (Paper HSWC38/4)

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

- That there had been considerable progress made on the Stress Review, which had been initiated in 2022. The 'Management of Work-Related Stress & Mental Wellness - Standard Operating Procedure' had been launched in November 2023 and its implementation had been publicised via a number of channels as detailed in the report.
- That following the partial revisions to the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy agreed by the Committee in October 2023, more extensive revisions would be made and a first draft of the policy would be brought to the next meeting in May for review.
- The Committee noted a report from the University's health partner, Cordell Health, which was provided for information.

Thanks were extended to the Associate Director of Health and Safety and the Deputy Director of Human Resources for their input on the draft policy.

Action: Exec. Director of HR

HSWC38.7 Report from Student Support Services (Verbal update)

The Committee received a verbal update from the Head of Disability and Dyslexia Services, including:

- That to date the Risk Management Review Group (RMRG) had managed 33 complex/high-risk cases in 2023/24, with 14 current cases and 19 closed cases since the start of September 2023. Seven students were currently being supported through the central fitness to practise (FTP) process, and others were undergoing FTP discussions within teaching, nursing and psychology.
- That 159 students had completed a counselling self-referral form in the Winter 2023 term. In 2023, 105 students were referred to the Mental Health team and, of those, 70 had engaged with Mental Health Advisers and 66% of students referred indicated risk of harm to self/others. Emotional Wellbeing & Mental Health continues to be by far the greatest reason for students seeking support from Student Wellbeing Officers (SWOs)
- That achievement data released in November for 2022-23 indicated that 77% of undergraduates with a declared disability achieved a first or 2:1 degree. This was 5 percentage points above the attainment for students without a

declared disability (72%). However, there was concern that overall disclosure rates were decreasing due to the expanded International student intake. There would therefore be a focus on engaging with International students to encourage disclosure so they can access support they may be entitled to.

- From 1 March 2024 the University would not have an independent Access centre, which would have an impact on future funding.

The Director of Estates noted his thanks to the Head of Disability & Dyslexia Services for her support with a particular student and the positive outcome achieved.

HSWC38.8 Report from Estates

1. Fire Compliance Programme update

The Committee received Paper HSWC38/5, which set out the proposal to request early funding release approval from Capital Investment Group (CIG), to provide monies to cover the planned Year 1 programme for a range of fire prevention and detection-related works as detailed in the paper.

2. Report on RAAC Survey and Position update

The Committee received the report (Paper HSWC38/6) and noted that no trace of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) had been found following an extensive inspection.

HSWC38.9 Period Health and Safety Report (Paper HSWC38/7)

The Committee received a report from the Associate Director of Health and Safety, and noted the following points in particular:

- A total of 16 Awaken reports were received during the period from 1 September to 31 December 2023, including seven accidents and nine near misses. Two were reportable to the Health and Safety Executive in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 ([RIDDOR](#)).
- There were 60 first-aid reports onsite in total, a slight decrease compared to the same reporting period last year. The Committee noted Appendix B, which detailed type of first aids, causes and outcomes.
- That the 85% KPI training target had been met and good progress had been made on adding all face to face training to specific learning plans on the MHR Platform.

HSWC38.10 Fire Safety Management Report

(Paper HSWC38/8)

The Committee received a report from the Fire, Health and Safety Adviser, and the following points were highlighted:

- That there had been three minor kitchen fires, one minor external bin fire (caused by a cigarette), and one fire near miss from a faulty IT cable on campus during the reporting period.
- That reported incidents of fire detector tampering and smoking inside buildings by students has increased by 14% in this period, 50 compared with 44 during the same period in 2023. Addressing these incidents was now a priority.
- Work on implementing the regular inspection of all fire escape routes on campus, required to comply with fire safety regulations, had progressed and Security would commence the checks presently.
- Thanks were extended to the Director of Estates and Head of Projects for all their work on fire compliance at the University. The Director of Estates in turn noted his thanks to the Fire, Health & Safety Adviser for his support on the Bede House risk assessment.

HSWC38.11 Report from the Life and Health Sciences Sub-Committee
(Paper HSWC38/9)¹

The Committee noted the report from the Dean of the School of Life and Health Sciences, who also provided a verbal update. The main points are noted below:

- That since September the Dean had been Chair of the sub-committee and was assured by the practices in place. The School's academics were working closely with the technical team in high-risk areas.
- That as the School evolved the health and safety remit for the technical team had become more complex. For example, the growth in Healthcare Education requires skilled Clinical Simulation Technicians to enable the provision of practice-based simulation learning and to support professional programmes meeting the regulatory requirements of the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC).
- That the management of laboratory and waste security was under review, as a number of licences required the Parkstead Building to be secured, and security of the building and access to laboratories necessitated enhanced attention and monitoring for the reasons outlined in the report.

¹ Item presented after HSWC38/8. Sally Akehurst joined the meeting.

The Committee agreed that it would be helpful for the Dean to do a walk-around Whitelands campus with the Director of Estates and COO to review health and safety onsite.²

Action: Dean of LHS, Director of Estates, COO

*Minutes prepared by Elaine Lentell
Secretary to HSWC, February 2024*

² Sally Akehurst and Tom Rowson left the meeting.

Actions – University of Roehampton Health and Safety Committee (7 February 2024)

Minute	Item	Action	Owner	Due
HSWC38.5	Health and Safety Matters	Explore alternative safe storage options for E-bikes/scooters and the possibility of using the existing bike storage facility near Lee House	Director of Estates	May 2024
		Review the comms approach to highlighting safety issues around bike batteries	Fire, Health & Safety Adviser	May 2024
		Consider making the guidance on battery storage part of induction and add it to the 'managers' safety essentials'	Associate Director of Health and Safety	May 2024
		Draft FAQs and share with the GMB H&S representative for feedback	Fire, Health & Safety Adviser	May 2024
		Discuss the matter further outside of the Committee	Exec. Director of HR, Health & Safety Team	May 2024
		liaise with the UCU rep on staff attendance at department meetings when working remotely	Exec. Director of HR	May 2024
HSWC38.6	Report from Human Resources	Bring a first draft of the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy to the meeting in May for the Committee's review	Exec. Director of HR	May 2024
HSWC38.11	Report from the LHS sub-Committee	Liaise on arranging a walk-around Whitelands campus to review health and safety onsite	Dean of LHS, Chief Operating Officer, Director of Estates	May 2024