

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

**Minutes of the 36th Meeting of the Committee
2pm on Tuesday 13 June 2023
Meeting held in the Ruskin Room, Parkstead House, Whitelands College**

Present: Mark Allen (Chair), Patrick Brady, Frances Coleman, James Chater, Andy Lamb, Donny McCormick, Tom Rowson

In attendance: Nigel Dale, Fire, Health and Safety Adviser
Melanie Duhig, Governance Coordinator
Richard Gerard-Sharp, Deputy Director of Estates

Secretary: Elaine Lentell

Apologies: Sharon Azams, Mike Hall, Gauti Sigthorsson

Minutes and Business Matters

HSWC36.1 Welcomes, introductions, apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular James Chater, GMB Union Representative attending in place of Mike Toon, and Melanie Duhig, Governance Coordinator, who was attending her first meeting.

No conflicts of interest were declared.

**HSWC36.2 Confirmation of the minutes of the last meeting
(Paper HSWC36/1)**

Approved: The minutes of the 35th meeting of the Committee, held on 2 March 2023.

HSWC36.3 Matters arising from the minutes

The Committee noted progress on matters arising as set out in Paper HSWC36/2 and the following updates were provided:

HSWC35.5 – that a revised student pregnancy risk assessment template had been shared with School/Faculty Deans and had received positive feedback. The template will go to Senate for approval as part of the Student Pregnancy Policy but can also be published and utilised separately.

HSWC35.5 – that pest control on campus was moving from a reactive response to planned control. The Deputy Director of Estates was in the process of seeking approval for additional funding.

Items for Decision

HSWC36.4 Revisions to the Fire Safety Policy
(Paper HSWC36/3)

Approved The revised Fire Safety Policy with revisions as detailed in the paper.

Items for Discussion

HSWC36.5 Health and Safety Matters

The Committee noted the issues raised by the UCU and GMB, including the following:

- Whitelands College Parking: concern was expressed by the UCU H&S representative in respect of staff parking to the rear of the college where unauthorised access by members of the public could be alarming for staff, especially when working late. It was agreed that the fencing would be assessed in the relevant area to see if it could be upgraded, and College Security would be reviewed.
- Fire door in Parkstead House: attention was drawn by the UCU representative to a fire door in the listed part of the building near to the Prayer Room and GO10 which was covered by a secured shutter. It was confirmed that the shutters were to remain open at all times and that this would be reiterated to staff.
- Storage of items in ground floor stairwells in Parkstead House: the UCU representative drew attention to the issue as it could restrict access to fire exits.
- Pedestrian gate to Whitelands College: concern was also expressed over the habitual use of the open car gates by pedestrians to access Whitelands College, rather than the security card enabled pedestrian gate, which could pose a risk to safety.
- Temporary **easing** of access to Library: the GMB Union representative raised the issue of the proposed widening of access to the library at the beginning of the 2023 academic year, potentially resulting in increased stress for library and cleaning staff. It was explained that this was currently only a proposal and that any concerns would be considered in the risk assessment.

Actions: Deputy Director of Estates, Fire, Health and Safety Adviser

HSWC36.6 Report from Human Resources (Paper HSWC36/4)

The Committee received a report from the Executive Director of Human Resources and the following points were highlighted:

- The Committee considered the draft Work-related Wellbeing and Stress Policy and It was agreed that the Executive Director of Human Resources and Patrick Brady (UCU Health & Safety representative) would meet following the meeting and aim to reach agreement on the wording of the policy by 7 July 2023. If agreement is reached, the policy will be approved by Chair's action with the intention that it is rolled out at the beginning of the 2023 academic year.
- The University had participated in Stress Awareness Month for the first time and it was deemed to be very successful. It was anticipated that participation will continue. Thanks were given to the Associate Director of Health and Safety for her involvement.
- That the new E-learning platform was launched in February 2023. It was noted that some staff had experienced technical issues when completing their training, but that these had now been addressed. It was suggested that it would be helpful to report any other glitches to HR to help further improve the system.

Action: Exec. Director of HR/Union reps

HSWC36.7 Report from Student Support Services (Paper HSWC36/5)

The Committee received the report from the Interim Director of Student Support Services and noted the following points in particular:

- That the Head of Wellbeing role is currently vacant and interviews are expected to take place on 16 June 2023. Thanks were given to the COO and RSU President for their input in the recruitment process.
- That the Risk Management Review Group was managing 12 student high risk/complexity cases on a weekly basis.
- That Student Support Services were reviewing a number of policies over the summer for consideration by Senate/UEB prior to the start of the 2023-24 academic year.
- The Sexual Violence Policy has been independently audited and received a high level of assurance. It was reported that

the Office for Students were making proposals in relation to regulating sexual misconduct and harassment in higher education and that this needed to be monitored.

The Committee noted that data on the number of people accessing Student Support Services would be circulated once it was available, before the next meeting in October.

Action: Interim Director of Support Services

HSWC36.8 Period Health and Safety Report
(Paper HSWC36/6)

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

- A total of 14 Awaken reports were received during the period from 1 January to 31 March 2023, including six accidents and eight near misses, one of which (relating to the Elm Grove fire) was reportable to the Health and Safety Executive under RIDDOR. Eleven incidents involved staff, two involved students and two visitors.
- In future, the sections relating to Major Capital Works and Capital and Minor Works Projects will not be included in the Period Report but will move to a new dashboard being developed by the Deputy Director of Estates.
- A new training programme on Working at Heights is planned for the coming months.
- The Committee discussed how DSE works where there is hotdesking. It was explained that these concerns are addressed by individuals being properly trained and therefore aware of how equipment and furniture can be adjusted.
- Events safety had been identified as an area requiring focus. It was agreed that a checklist would be drawn up and added to the event risk assessment template on the H&S portal, and brought to the next Committee Meeting.
- The full USHA Accident Statistics Report was issued in March 2023 and is available via the Health and Safety Office. USHA allows access to comparative information from 68 similar organisations.

Action: Associate Director of Health and Safety

HSWC36.9 Fire Safety Management Period Report (Paper HSWC36/7)

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

- As of May 2023, 255 staff were assigned to Fire Warden Training of which 95 have completed, but only 48 have confirmed with the Health and Safety Office and requested hi-vis vests. The Fire, Health and Safety Adviser agreed to raise this issue with the relevant line managers.
- Waste and Hazardous Substance Store adjacent to Parkstead House: this area remains unsecured with the gates left open despite it being consistently raised as an issue. In addition to the health, safety and arson risks, licences for some of the laboratories' activities require secure waste and hazardous substances storage facilities. The situation is complicated by Wandsworth Council needing to access the area. It was agreed that this would be looked into further.
- 33 Fire Risk Assessments have been completed in the last year, which is a significant increase on previous years. This has resulted in over 500 open actions, a third of which relate to defects in fire stopping and a significant proportion of the University's 6,500 fire doors. Expert advice is being taken as to which of these doors can be temporarily repaired pending replacement. This work can only take place when buildings are unoccupied and accordingly much of the project will take place over the Summer.
- The Committee noted that a great deal of work had been undertaken to support students affected by the Elm Grove fire. The LFB report is now available and all the recommendations have been accepted and are being progressed. Although the fire safety systems performed well in relation to the Elm Grove fire, it is hoped that the work being done in relation to LFB's recommendations, together with any lessons learned from a simulated emergency exercise scheduled to take place over the Summer, will result in the University being even better prepared.

Action Deputy Director of Estates

HSWC36.10 Report from the Life and Health Sciences Sub-Committee (Paper HSWC36/8)

The Committee noted the report and minutes from the School of Life and Health Sciences Health and Safety Sub-Committee. The Associate Director of Health & Safety requested that a representative from the Life and Health Sciences Sub-Committee should attend this Committee once a year and provide a report.

Action: Secretary

HSWC36.11 Any Other Business

There was no other business.

*Minutes prepared by Melanie Duhig
Governance and Legal Office
June 2023*

Actions – University of Roehampton Health and Safety Committee (13 June 2023)

Minute	Item	Action	Owner	Due
HSW36.5	Health and Safety Matters	Assess fencing in the Whitelands car park to determine if it can be upgraded and review College security Reiterate to staff that the shutters on the fire door in Parkstead House should remain open at all times	Deputy Director of Estates Fire, Health and Safety Adviser	October 2023 UPDATE: The Head of Security was informed by the Fire Safety Adviser on 14 June that these exits must never be shuttered. The Head confirmed the Security Team will be informed not to close the shutters, but that this may compromise the security of the building. The Fire Safety Adviser recommended that alternative security measures are found that comply with fire safety requirements.
HSW36.6	Report from Human Resources	Agree wording of the draft Wellbeing and Stress Policy	Executive Director of Human Resources and UCU H&S rep	7 July 2023
HSW36.7	Report from Student Support Services	Circulate the number of people accessing Student Support Services this year once data available	Interim Director of Support Services	October 2023

HSW36.8	Period Health and Safety Report	Draft event safety checklist and bring to the next meeting	Associate Director of Health and Safety	October 2023
HSW36.9	Fire Safety Management Period Report	Consider how Waste and Hazardous Substance Store adjacent to Parkstead House can be secured	Deputy Director of Estates	October 2023
HSW36.10	Report from Health and Life Sciences Sub-Committee	Representative from Life and Health Sciences Sub-Committee to be invited to attend Health, Safety and Welfare Committee once a year	Secretary	October 2023