

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

**Minutes of the 31<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Committee  
10am on Wednesday 2 February 2022  
Meeting held remotely via Zoom**

Present: Mark Allen (Chair), Patrick Brady, Frances Coleman, Andy Lamb, Tim Macquiban, Donny McCormick, Oli Ottaway, Tom Rowson, Michael Toon

In attendance: Nigel Dale

Secretary: Elaine Lentell

Apologies: Mike Hall, Mark Riley

**Minutes and Business Matters**

**HSWC31.1 Welcomes, introductions, apologies**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and no conflicts of interest were declared.

**HSWC31.2 Confirmation of the minutes of the last meeting  
(Paper HSWC31/1)**

**Approved:** The minutes of the 30<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Committee, held on Wednesday 6 October 2021.

**HSWC31.3 Matters arising from the minutes**

The Committee noted progress on matters arising as set out in Paper HSWC31/2 and the following actions were highlighted:

HSWC30.8 – it was agreed that an update on the issue of ensuring teaching rooms were cleaned before use would be circulated outside of the meeting.

HSWC30.15 – that the matters raised by the trade unions had been progressed following the last meeting and were addressed in the HR report (Paper HSWC31/5).

HSWC30.18 – that work was proceeding on emergency cover options and an update would be provided at the next meeting.

**Action: Director of Campus Operations, COO**

**HSWC31.4 Update on student deaths**

The Chief Operating Officer updated the Committee on the two

student deaths that had recently taken place on campus at Southlands College. It was confirmed that there was no indication of any links to suicide, COVID-19 or biohazards, and that the deaths did not appear to be linked.

The Student Death Procedure had been followed and a lessons learned exercise carried out following the first fatality, to reflect on the University's emergency response procedure. There is a further lessons learned meeting scheduled for 3 February. The University has also offered support to all students affected by the deaths.

The GMB representative requested that a review of security staff numbers and how well they are supported should be carried out or be part of the larger review on the student deaths. It was confirmed that security resource implications would be reviewed by the Head of Security and Logistics in light of the deaths, with input from the Health and Safety team.

The Committee thanked the Chief Operating Officer for leading the response on both occasions and all the Southlands colleagues and student support staff involved. It was noted that there was a book of condolence in the Southlands Chapel for staff and students to sign.

The following actions were agreed:

- Produce an interim report for the Southlands College Liaison Group on 9 March 2022.
- Provide data on student deaths for the last 5 years and bring an update on procedures, along with the revised process for informing next of kin, to the next meeting in May.

**Action: Chief Operating Officer, Secretary**

### **Items for Decision**

**HSWC31.5**    **Revised Animals on Campus Policy**  
(Paper HSWC31/3)

**Approved**    The revisions made to the Animals on Campus Policy concerning the procedure to follow in the event of a fire alarm.

It was advised that the policy would be reviewed by Student Support Services within the next year or two to take into account the legal definition of emotional support animals.

### **Items for Discussion**

**HSWC31.6 Update from the COVID-19 Health and Safety sub-committee**  
(Paper HSWC31/4)

The Committee noted the report on ongoing COVID-19 measures implemented by the University as detailed in the paper, presented by the Chief Operating Officer in the Director of Campus Operations' absence.

**HSWC31.7 Report from Human Resources**  
(Paper HSWC31/5)

The Committee noted the update on staff-related matters relating to health, safety and wellbeing and **endorsed** the recommendation to form a sub-committee, to review how the University supports staff who experience work-related stress as set out in the paper.

**HSWC31.8 Report from Student Report Services**  
(Paper HSWC31/6)

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

- That due to a significant increase in students seeking support, various ways of meeting demand and reducing the waiting list time were being explored.
- That given Student Welfare Officers (SWOs) were the first point of contact for a student, and the unprecedented increase in students using the service, the resource had been increased to 5 FTEs for the 2021/22 academic year. The Committee noted its thanks to the SWOs for the tremendous work they were doing.
- It was clarified that, including a QA student, there had been five student deaths in the 2021/22 academic year to date. The Committee agreed that the timeline of the deaths should be noted for the record, given the seriousness of the matter.

**Secretary's note:**

The timeline and details for the five deaths are as follows:

| Date occurred   | On/off campus                         | Cause of death |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| 31 January 22   | On campus: Southlands                 | Unknown        |
| 24 January 22   | On campus: Southlands                 | Unknown        |
| 17 January 22   | Off campus: Graduate                  | Suicide        |
| 29 September 21 | Off campus (QA student)               | Heart attack   |
| 23 September 21 | Off campus: had not commenced studies | Suicide        |

**Action: Secretary**

### **HSWC31.9 Period Report from the Head of Health & Safety** (Paper HSWC31/7)

The Head of Health and Safety tabled the Health and Safety Dashboard, which was presented with the period report to provide an overview of health and safety matters in the reporting period (1 September to 31 December 2021). The following points were highlighted:

- That there had been a total of 25 accidents during the reporting period, four of which were reportable to the Health and Safety Executive under RIDDOR.
- That the Health and Safety team were focusing on reducing slips, trips and falls, and to this end were promoting that any potential risk should be reported to the service desk.
- Two new procedures had been revised in relation to Driver Safety.
- That the annual USHA report had been submitted on 1 February 2022 and that the results would be shared with the Committee once they were received.
- That a new section on the H&S Dashboard on completion rates for the Student Fire, Health & Safety Induction online training module had been introduced.

### **HSWC31.10 Period Fire Safety Management Report** (Paper HSWC31/8)

The Fire, Health and Safety Adviser tabled the Fire Risk Management Dashboard, which was presented with the period fire report to provide a summary of fire management matters during the reporting period (1 September to 31 December 2021).

The following points were highlighted from the report:

- With reference to students smoking in accommodation, thanks were extended to George Turner, University Secretary, for clarifying the disciplinary procedure for when students interfere with the fire safety equipment or are found smoking indoors.
- That there had been a student kitchen bin fire as detailed in the report, which had resulted in attendance by the LFB and a subsequent formal inspection and issue of a Notification of Fire Safety Deficiencies for Southlands Accommodation. It was advised that the deadline to complete recommended actions had been extended to summer 2022 from 3 May.

The Committee noted that hybrid working for staff had been extended until Easter, and that given the positive feedback would probably be embedded longer-term. As a result, it was more difficult to ascertain when fire wardens were on campus. Ways of ensuring adequate fire warden coverage would therefore be considered further and an update provided in the next report.

**Action: Fire, Health & Safety Adviser**

## **HSWC31.11 Health & Safety Matters - Union Representatives**

The UCU trade union raised the following issues:

1. The Stress and Welfare Audit:

The Committee noted the request for the trade unions to have sight of the results of the welfare questionnaire.

2. COVID-19 and hybrid working:

It was questioned whether all staff had been given the opportunity to work under the hybrid pilot. In response, it was advised that any decision was service-led, the responsibility of the individual's line-manager to decide, and depended on the requirements of the role.

3. Fire safety at Whitelands College

A number of issues were raised regarding fire safety breaches in Parkstead House, such as:

- flammable materials being stored under stairwells.
- fire exits being blocked or propped open with fire extinguishers.
- offices being used inappropriately for storage.

It was confirmed that a fire risk assessment had been carried out in November 2021 and the Dean of the School of Psychology was addressing the issues raised in the assessment with the academics involved, such as removing kettles from offices etc. It was agreed that the matter would be followed up outside of the meeting with the UCU representative and the Fire, Health & Safety Adviser.

4. Parkstead House roof:

The Committee noted that the Director of Campus Operations and the Technical Compliance Manager would provide a progress report on the leaky roof at the next meeting.

The issue of drug dealing on campus was also raised and it was agreed that the matter would be considered further outside of the meeting by the Chair and the Chief Operating Officer.

**Actions: Fire, H&S Adviser, UCU Rep, Chair, COO**

**HSWC31.12 Report from the Life and Health Sciences Sub-Committee**  
(Paper HSWC31/9)

The Committee noted the report and minutes from the School of Life and Health Sciences Health and Safety sub-committee.

It was noted that the School of Life and Health Sciences had recently completed a successful Environment Agency (Radiation) Audit.

**HSWC31.13 Any Other Business**

- 13.1 The Committee agreed that, Government guidelines permitting, the next meeting should take place on campus.

**Date and time of the next Committee meeting**

Wednesday 11 May 2022, 10:00 – 12:00

*Minutes prepared by Elaine Lentell  
Committee Secretary, February 2022*