

Health and Safety Policy

2020-21



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Committee Approval

Committee	Committee Action	Date
Health and Safety Committee	Recommended for approval	25 August 2020
SMLT	Approved	10 September 2020
	Date in Force	28 September 2020

This Health and Safety Policy will be reviewed annually by our Health and Safety Committee unless there is cause for an earlier review (e.g. the introduction of new legislation). Any amendments require the approval of the Senior Management and Leadership Team.

1. Introduction

We regard the health and safety of our staff, students and visitors to be of the highest priority. The provision of a healthy and safe environment is considered to be the shared responsibility of all our staff and students, and accordingly, emphasis is placed on the communication and enforcement of health and safety rules and regulations.

This Health and Safety Policy is designed to act as a quick reference guide or introduction to our Health and Safety Management System and our Fire Safety Management System. Both documents are available from HR Online and constitute two of the core company documents that all staff are required to read. New staff are made aware of this requirement at Induction.

For students we have an additional Health and Safety Student Guide which is explained verbally to all students at Induction.

Our Health and Safety Officer (Head of Estates and Facilities - Rabii Mounsif) is responsible for ensuring that both staff and students are correctly informed on health and safety matters.

2. Responsibilities

We are committed to ensuring the health and safety of our employees, students, contractors and visitors. Our Board of Directors recognises and accepts its responsibility for ensuring compliance with our Health and Safety Policy, and all relevant health and safety legislative and regulatory provisions including the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

Ultimate responsibility for ensuring compliance with our health and safety and fire safety policies and all relevant health and safety legislative and regulatory provisions rests with our Board of Directors. However, the Board of Directors has delegated such responsibility to our Senior Management and Leadership Team who are responsible for approving all relevant internal policies.

Our Senior Management and Leadership Team (SMLT) and Board of Directors are committed to achieving the following objectives:

- Providing control of the health and safety risks that arise within our environment.
- Preventing accidents and causes of ill-health from occurring within our environment.
- Identifying legal requirements as a minimum acceptable level of health and safety performance.
- Providing suitable arrangements for communicating with staff and students on matters affecting their health and safety.
- Providing information, instruction and training on health and safety matters to staff and students.
- Keeping accurate records by recording events in the accident/incident logs.
- Promoting general awareness of health and safety.
- Maintaining safe and healthy working conditions.
- Reviewing our policy and procedures on a regular basis to ensure compliance with all appropriate legislation and best practice standards.

To support the Senior Management and Leadership Team (and ultimately the Board of Directors) to achieve their health and safety commitments, a Health and Safety Committee has been established. The committee is chaired by the Head of Estates and Facilities (who acts as our Health and Safety

Officer) and comprises members from our various departments. The committee's Terms of Reference can be found in our Health and Safety Management System.

On a day-to-day operational level, Heads of Divisions/Departments and the Guild Manager are responsible for ensuring all relevant health and safety policies and procedures are adhered to, and any concerns, hazards, accidents etc are reported in order to ensure the health and safety of our staff and students is protected.

3. General Fire Protection

Smoke detectors, fire alarms and fire extinguishers are installed throughout our site and all other third-party sites that we use to deliver our activities.

Regular fire drills (a minimum of one fire drill a year), are conducted on site by the Fire Manager and trained Fire Marshals.

All fire systems and infrastructure are maintained and serviced biannually by qualified competent engineers.

The Fire Safety Logbook includes records of fire safety equipment, testing and fire drills. The log is maintained by the Fire Manager and is regularly audited during Fire Risk Assessments.

4. Suspected fires and fire procedures

Any individual discovering smoke or a strong smell of burning, should immediately raise the alarm by operating the nearest fire alarm call point, as per the Fire Action Plan for that site (Bloomsbury Institute or third-party site). Fire Action Plans can be found next to all Fire Call points.

Any individual discovering a fire should immediately shout 'Fire' and then activate the nearest fire alarm.

Upon hearing the alarm, staff, students, visitors and contractors are required to evacuate the building immediately in a calm and orderly manner, making their way directly to the designated emergency assembly point (Montague Place, opposite from Malet Street). In no circumstances should the lifts be used once the alarm is raised and during evacuation and until the building is deemed safe to enter and use. In no circumstances should the evacuation be hindered by the collection of personal items. The evacuation will be monitored by the designated Fire Marshal or the class lecturer. They are responsible for ensuring that the areas under their jurisdiction are evacuated quickly, calmly and completely. As each room is successfully evacuated, the Fire Marshal or the class lecturer should close the door and windows on exiting the venue themselves. No person may re-enter the site until clearance has been given by the Fire Marshal or a member of the Estates and Facilities team or security staff.

Staff and students must be aware of the evacuation procedure, and it is strongly recommended that they familiarise themselves with the location of emergency equipment (such as fire extinguishers) and fire escapes, using the Fire Action Plan at that site. During an emergency, staff and students should be prepared to assist any visitor who may be unaware of the evacuation procedure.

Overall, fire hazards should be avoided by following basic instructions and precautions, such as adhering to guidance on the proper use of electrical equipment. This includes turning off power points and unplugging appliances after use. Any personal electrical equipment can only be used in our premises, if it has been PAT tested internally. Furthermore, staff and students may not bring highly flammable, toxic, explosive or otherwise hazardous materials to the premises.

Fire exits must never be blocked, and any obstruction should be reported to reception, a member of the Estates and Facilities team or the designated Fire Marshal immediately.

Firefighting should always be a secondary consideration to evacuation. Any used fire equipment must be reported to the Fire Manager, a member of the Estates and Facilities team or reception so that it can be replaced or recharged.

5. General emergency procedure

It may be necessary to evacuate the site in the event of a non-fire-related emergency. In such a case, the signal to evacuate will be either the activation of the fire alarm or an order from the Fire Marshal, the class lecturer or a member of the Estates and Facilities team.

In such a case, staff and students should follow the same evacuation procedure as explained above. Detailed emergency procedures are available in the Health and Safety Student Guide.

6. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP)

In case a staff member or student cannot get themselves out of a building unaided, a PEEP will be created with the help of the Disability and Wellbeing Coordinator and the Fire Manager to come to the best possible escape plan in an emergency. The plan will then be shared with all Fire Marshals to inform them in the case of an emergency.

Any PEEP holder must check in and out of Reception upon entering to allow for correct procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency evacuation. Upon hearing the evacuation alarm, the receptionist will inform the Fire Marshals as to the arrangements needed for a safe evacuation of the PEEP holder.

7. Major incidents and civil contingency events

In case of major incidents or civil contingency events that would disrupt our regular activity (e.g. virus outbreaks, terrorist attacks), the Estates and Facilities team will take necessary steps to secure the building and draft a risk assessment for the site in line with governmental advice.

The risk assessment will then be circulated to the Health and Safety Committee and SMLT for approval.

8. Accident prevention and incident reporting

All staff and students have a duty to avoid the occurrence of accidents by behaving in a sensible and safe manner.

This includes the need to adhere to all legal requirements and safeguarding measures that govern the use of furniture, equipment and facilities.

Inappropriate, reckless and/or careless behaviour that may cause injury or damage must be avoided at all times, and staff and students should carefully consider their actions before carrying them out.

Specifically:

- Special care should be taken when lifting objects, and it is advised that nothing should be lifted without prior understanding of the weight involved.
- Standing on furniture is strongly discouraged, as is swinging on or tilting chairs while seated.
- No running is allowed within our site.
- Electrical equipment should not be tampered with. This includes opening PCs and pulling on power cables.

Any accidents that occur must be reported to the Health and Safety Officer at the earliest safe opportunity. If the Health and Safety Officer is unavailable, then the Head of Department, manager or a member of the Estates and Facilities team should be informed of the incident. This initial verbal report of the accident will later be confirmed with a written report, which will be written and maintained by the Health and Safety Officer. This written report will guide the Health and Safety Officer in establishing

the cause of any accident and pinpointing any necessary precautions to prevent the recurrence of such incident.

For transparency and practical purposes, an [Incident Information form](#) is also available on our website for staff to complete after an incident has taken place.

We are protected by automatically renewed Employers' Liability Insurance.

Designated staff members have been trained to administer first aid and the full list is available next to each first-aid box. An accessible and fully equipped first aid box is available on each floor. All staff and students should ensure they are aware of the location of the first aid boxes. These will be maintained and replenished by the First Aid Manager (Aneta Dec-Ali). Anyone who takes any item from the first aid box should report that to the First Aid Manager to ensure stock levels are full.

Smoking, vaping and the consumption/use of drugs or other banned substances is prohibited in all venues (Bloomsbury Institute and third-party sites), as is the unauthorised consumption of alcohol.

9. Monitoring facilities for safety and fitness for use

The Health and Safety Officer is principally responsible for ensuring that the site is safe to use and remains fit for use. The Health and Safety Officer and Estates and Facilities staff will undertake appropriate regular site tours, conduct risk assessments and report any findings and any recommendations to the Health and Safety Committee.

The Health and Safety Officer or a representative shall undertake tours of third-party sites with the appointed Health and Safety Officer or representative from the third party.

The health and safety of all our staff, students and visitors is of paramount importance. As such, we strictly adhere to the standards set out in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, so as to ensure the health and safety of all those entering our premises.

10. Remote working

With the introduction of the possibility of working from home one day a week, it is important to ensure optimal work conditions. Incorrect use of display screen equipment (DSE) or poorly designed workstations or work environments can lead to pain in necks, shoulders, backs, arms, wrists and hands as well as fatigue and eye strain.

Occasional remote workers should follow the advice available on the [Tips for Home and Remote Working](#) document available on the Health and Safety Public SharePoint Library.

Where employees have a more permanent arrangement to work from home or remotely, a DSE risk assessment should be carried out, suitable small equipment should be provided, and control measures put in place. Employees should contact a member of the Estates and Facilities team if they need further details about the DSE risk assessment.

11. Compliance

Employees have a duty to take care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions at work. Employees must, therefore, co-operate with employers and co-workers to help everyone meet their legal obligations.

As a minimum, all staff members must:

- Take reasonable care of their own and other's health and safety
- Co-operate with management on health and safety, and not interfere, or misuse, any facilities, services or equipment provided for their use

- Carry out activities in line with training, instructions and all health and safety policies and procedures
- Inform Estates and Facilities of any serious risks or incidents

Failure to comply with our health and safety policies and procedures, may lead to disciplinary action against the employee in question.

12. Related regulations, policies and procedures

All regulations, policies and procedures below are available on our website, HR Online or the relevant third party's website:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Certificate of Employers' Liability Insurance
- Health and Safety Student Guide
- Health and Safety Management System
- Fire Safety Management System
- Working Outside of Normal Operating Hours and Lone Working Guide
- Security and Intruder Alarm Procedures
- Staff Disciplinary and Performance Procedures
- Birkbeck Health and Safety Information

13. Review of the Health and Safety Policy

This Health and Safety Policy will be reviewed annually by the Health and Safety Committee unless there is cause for an earlier review (e.g. the introduction of new legislation). Any amendments introduced by the Health and Safety Committee require the approval of the Senior Management and Leadership Team.