

# HARPER ADAMS UNIVERSITY

## Health and Safety Committee

Minutes of the Meeting of the Health and Safety Committee held on 27 October 2016

Present: Dr Catherine Baxter (Chair) Mrs Beverley Partridge  
Mr Luis de Aguiar Mrs Lisa Plant  
Dr Ianto Guy Dr Victoria Talbot  
Dr Lynn McIntyre Mr Matthew Thorpe  
Professor Peter Mills Dr Trisha Toop  
Mrs Emma Osborne Mr Sam Wane

Apologies: Ms Carrie de Silva Mrs Michelle Pryce  
Dr Ivan Grove Miss Louise Rogers  
Dr Paul Hand Ms Grace Smith  
Dr Moira Harris Mr Clive Wells  
Mrs Lavinia Moroz-Hale Mr David White  
Mr David Nuttall

### 16/01 Minutes

Approved: the minutes of the meeting held on 25 May 2016 were agreed as a correct record, subject to amending the number of trials at minute 15/33 to from '100' to '1000'.

### 16/02 Matters Arising

Received: a report on matters arising from the last meeting.

- Noted:
- i) that a note had been added to the weekly newsletter reminding all supervisors that Customs and Excise regulations and procedures were in place governing the importation of foodstuffs, plants, fruits, vegetables, bulbs, seeds and similar items and that these regulations and procedures must be adhered to at all times;
  - ii) that the issue of using mobile phones in areas such as laboratories, kitchens, the laundry and workshops had been addressed with the Mobile Phone Use policy now having been updated. No mobile phones were allowed in a number of these areas as listed above due to contamination risks and, if permitted, would be by the express permission of the departmental managers typically for one-off occasions.

### 16/03 Risk Management

Received: a report from the University Secretary on risk areas monitored by the Committee.

- Noted:
- i) that for the benefit of new members, the University's Risk Analysis and Action Plan held a comprehensive set of risks, which were updated and received each year and more often, if required;
  - ii) that risk management was a standing item on the Health and Safety Committee agenda for all meetings;
  - iii) that the risk management report remained unchanged from the previous meeting and had been submitted to members for information.

**Report by the Health and Safety Officer**

Received: a report from the Health and Safety Officer, Mrs Emma Osborne, including accidents and near misses.

Accidents

- Noted:
- i) that accident reporting had increased slightly over the summer period; most incidents had occurred in the catering/domestic services departments, due to the nature of their work;
  - ii) that the Health and Safety Officer was continuing to conduct regular health and safety sessions with staff;
  - iii) that a RIDDOR reportable incident had occurred since the report had been produced. The injured person had now returned to work after the incident on a part-time basis. Completion of a detailed questionnaire had been requested by the Health and Safety Executive and the Health and Safety Officer was currently working with colleagues on the document;

Risk Assessments

- Noted:
- iv) that risk assessment advice and guidance continued to be a large part of the workload of the Health and Safety office;
  - v) that considerable training had been carried with PhD students on risk, COSHH and risk assessments, as part of their induction;
  - vi) that the SHE software would continue to be used for risk assessments until an alternative health and safety software package was procured;

Policies

- Noted:
- vii) that a number of policies had been amended, including DSE assessment, mobile phone use, risk assessment and the home working assessment checklist;
  - viii) that, regarding the home working assessment checklist, it was considered that it might be useful to clarify to staff that completion of the checklist would be necessary only when a contractual change to a person's employment was taking place and would not, therefore, be necessary for incidences of occasional non-contractual home working;
  - ix) that the updated policies would be circulated to staff in due course.

Vehicle Checks

- Noted:
- x) that monthly vehicle check sheets from departments were being regularly received;

Health and Safety Forum

- Noted:
- xi) that the forum met every six weeks with members able to usefully cascade health and safety information down to other members of staff;
  - xii) that a new 'permit to dig' procedure was in place with the Estates Department;

- xiii) that, currently, there were a number of major construction projects on campus and staff had been made aware of potential hazards and footpath/vehicular rights of ways via email and the weekly newsletter;
- xiv) that, following discussion on a number of issues regarding construction work and vehicular access, it was agreed that the Health and Safety Officer would circulate a further note highlighting hazards around this area;
- xv) that the University had managed to secure a visit from the Highways Agency later that morning to discuss traffic congestion issues around the University crossroads and the also the poor condition of the footpath alongside the cricket pitch side of Caynton Road;

#### Inspection Audits

- Noted: xvi) that the inspection audit schedule was on track and several audits would now be subjected to a more rigorous auditing using the new HASMAP structure;

#### Training

- Noted: xvii) that first aiders were continuing to undergo routine training to update their certificates. A number of staff had also participated in a number of DSE assessments;
- xviii) that the Health and Safety Officer indicated that she would be happy to attend departmental meetings to help inform staff about DSE assessments in group settings as this was considered to be more time efficient in terms of delivery than the one-to-one sessions;

#### IOSH

- Noted: xix) that Harper Adams had enlisted the help of HeATED to advertise the IOSH courses to other institutions. The Harper Adams 4-day IOSH was competitively priced at £250 per delegate. It was pleasing to also note that several bookings had been secured from external delegates and that there had also been requests to deliver this particular training at other institutions;

#### Allianz - Health and Safety Check

- Noted: xx) that the University's insurers, Allianz, had carried out a 'health check' of Harper Adams's accident and incident reporting system which had been considered to be 'good'. Allianz had suggested that the University should produce an accident reporting procedure to enhance its system and this was currently being compiled; **EO**

#### UCEA Health Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2016-20

- Noted: xxi) that this document had now been released to all HEIs. The Plan captured health, safety and wellbeing priorities at a sector level that the UCEA Health and Safety Committee had identified for the period up to 2020;
- xxii) that the document was intended to be used by HEIs when setting their health and safety strategies and which could also affect strategies in HR and Student Support;
- xxiii) that the three key areas of the strategy were culture, competence and collaboration. The document outlined areas of interest to UCEA where it might may work to address certain issues;

- xxiv) that following a recent enquiry from the Universities and Colleges Union this item would be discussed at a forthcoming Joint Consultative Negotiating Committee meeting.

16/05 **Report by the Radiological Safety Officer**

Received: a report from the Radiological Safety Officer, Dr Ivan Grove covering the period 18 May-30 September 2016

- Noted:
- i) that there were no incidences of 'excess' radiation exposure, radiation leaks or breaches of security during this period;
  - ii) that the neutron source from within the probe was removed from campus on 9 September 2016;
  - iii) that appropriate members of the local fire services had been informed by letter that the University did not now hold a neutron source on campus. The Environment Agency had also been informed and the final paperwork to surrender the licence was underway and would be completed in October 2016;
  - iv) that weekly checks had been carried out using the Geiger counter (GC) for gamma radiation levels around the neutron probe store, directly above the probe storage cage (probe in situ) and at the outside of the protective case around the probe (probe out of storage box). All readings were acceptable and posed no hazard beyond background radiation levels. There was no security or other incidents to report;
  - v) that the disposal company had been checked for contamination during the removal process and no contamination had been recorded;
  - vi) that the dosimetry service would not be continued as it would not be needed for the GCs;
  - vii) that on-going monitoring of the nuclear sources within the GCs would continue and Dr Grove would remain as the Radiological Safety Officer until further notice to continue to monitor the GCs, take leak test swabs as required, and work with any staff for the procurement of equipment containing radioactive sources.

16/06 **Report by the Biological Safety Officer**

Received: a report from the Biological Safety Officer, Dr Lynn McIntyre covering the period May to October 2016.

- Noted:
- i) that there were no activities to report under Genetically Modified Organisms;
  - ii) that activities under Princess Margaret Laboratories (PML) Cat 2 Laboratory included an ongoing project for BBSRC/Innovate UK-funded *Campylobacter* e-nose project;
  - iii) Dr Tim Gibson, who was a visiting scientist, had spent two days in June at the University working with Dr McIntyre and colleagues on the BBSRC/Innovate UK e-nose project. The work was conducted as per a previous risk assessment prepared by the Biological Safety Officer for an earlier visit;
  - iv) that activities in D1 Laboratory included various ongoing research projects provided in detail on the agenda paper;

- v) that there were no activities to report on plant pathogens held under licence;
- vi) that Dr McIntyre had recently attended an Research Ethics meeting with staff from the Animals Department and the Chairman of the Research Ethics Committee, Dr Frank Vriesekoop, to discuss biological risks related to HRP activities. The discussions had revealed that Animals HRP students were submitting risk assessments as part of their academic work. However, these risk assessments were not reviewed or deposited in any centralised location such as SHE. An inconsistency between an ethics application and the HRP work being proposed was also discussed in relation to animal by-products;
- vii) that it was considered that it would be useful for Peter Mills to arrange for Frank Vriesekoop to attend academic department meetings to discuss the issues above in more detail and the Health and Safety Officer would work with colleagues to try to understand what advice/training would be required; **PRM**
- viii) that arrangements for student use of mobile phones (for photography and other purposes) in microbiology laboratories are under discussion (BSO and Laboratories Manager). **VT**

16/07

**Report by the Soil Importation Licence Manager**

Received: a report from the Soil Importation Licence Manager, Dr Victoria Talbot.

- Noted:
- i) that there had been no further importations or destruction of soil since the last report;
  - ii) that of the 4.6 kg soil originally imported from Zambia for a research project, 2.6 kg of soil still remained and had been stored in the designated fridge;
  - iii) that the Laboratories had been notified earlier in the year that a new MPhil student would commence his studies in May. He would be based in Zambia and come to the University on an annual basis bringing more soils with him, although nothing further had been heard about this matter;
  - iv) that regarding licensing, the annual materials report had been sent to APHA as requested, in July 2016.

16/08

**Report by the HSE Laser Safety Officer**

Received: a report from the Laser Safety, Mr Sam Wane

- Noted:
- i) that a safety protection cabinet had been developed for field trials and this had the approval of an external Laser Officer with the necessary interlocks;
  - ii) that the laser had been used in successful field trials;
  - iii) that there had been no incidents of burns, laser radiation, fumigation or combustion reported.

16/09

**Any Other Business**

Noted: that concern had been expressed about the work of a contractor on site undertaking major excavations. It appeared that excavation works were being conducted inappropriately ie next to fire doors. The Chairman confirmed that these concerns had been noted and addressed by the

Estates Department. Stringent checks would continue to be made on the contractor by the appropriate project manager.

16/10 **Date of next Meeting**

Noted: that the next meeting would take place on 2 March 2017

16/11 **Any other Business**

Noted: that there had been a number of road traffic incidents at the cross roads between Caynton Road and the B5062 in recent weeks, while some had been minor, some had been more serious and caused damage, including to a staff member's car which was hit by a student's car. It was acknowledged that the University had arranged to meet with Highways the following day to express concern about the crossroads, that such concerns had been expressed in the past, and that the current road works had also been difficult in terms of affecting traffic flow. It was also noted that Student Services brief students on a regular basis about driving safely, including on campus and on public highways. The Chair would feedback at the next meeting.