

SAFETY MATTERS

JUNE 2016

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the June edition of our new Safety Matters newsletters. The last few months have been quite busy, with progress being made on the appointment of new H&S Coordinators in higher risk Schools (for more details please see article below), developing new training programmes and courses for Technical Services and the resumption of the H&S audit programme.

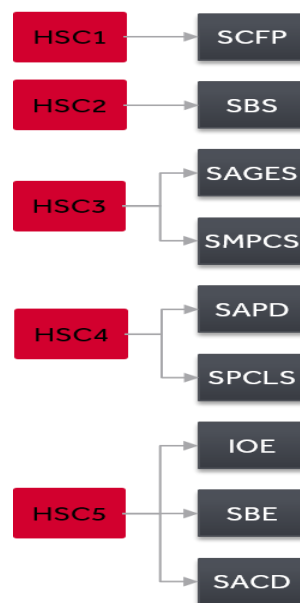
The next few months are promising to be equally busy, with a large programme of training for H&S Coordinators and Technical Staff over the summer.

There will also be changes in H&S Services with a new Assistant Fire Safety Officer being recruited and our team administrator Jude moving on and joining Technical Services as one of the new H&S Coordinators.

UPDATE ON H&S SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

H&S support arrangements are being strengthened for higher-risk Schools, with a new team of five full-time Health & Safety Coordinators. They will provide direct support to Heads of Schools but will be line managed by the Director of Technical

Services. Four of the five H&S Coordinators have been appointed and one post is currently being recruited externally. The Schools covered by each H&S Coordinator are:



H&S support for other areas, including lower risk Schools and the Services, will remain on a part-time basis and Heads of Schools/Function are being asked to confirm appointees. Additional training will be made available for new H&S Coordinators over the next few months. Role descriptions and training requirements can be found in [Safety Note 1](#).

H&S Services will continue their University-wide role of policy development, expert advice, mentoring, training, independent audit and co-ordination of incident investigations.

FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURES

As a general rule the University has relied on the goodwill of colleagues to volunteer for roles such as Fire Evacuation Officer, Fire Warden and Evacuation Chair operator. There is a risk that, as the effects of restructuring take effect over the next few months as staff leave or move, that some of our building fire evacuation plans will be disrupted or weakened.

There will be a continuing need to have in place 'managed fire evacuation plans' in order to ensure the safety of everyone in a building during a fire emergency. For viable plans the University will continue to need people to take up the various roles involved.

Traditionally the roles have been undertaken by technical and administrative staff. We would like to encourage all staff, including academic and research staff, and PhD students to volunteer to be part of your building's fire evacuation plan.

For those of you who already volunteer, for example acting as a fire warden, then please be prepared to continue in this role following any restructuring and consider enhancing your skills

Safety Matters

by attending a fire extinguisher or evacuation chair course.

If you can be part of your building fire evacuation plan then we will support you with a short training course to make sure you know what to do during a fire emergency. Please see <https://www.reading.ac.uk/inter nal/health-and-safety/hs-training/hs-training-coursedetails.aspx> for our suite of courses:

More training dates will be added to the website in the next couple of months.

Thank you for your support.

Peter Lawther *Fire Safety Advisor*

RECENT ACCIDENT & INCIDENTS

In the last quarter we had 94 incidents reported, including:

- 9 slips, trips and falls
- 8 cuts caused by contact with sharps
- 5 people being "hit by moving objects"
- 4 incidents involving exposure to "hazardous agents"
- 2 fires
- 18 sport related injuries
- 12 non-work related illnesses
- 36 other types of incidents and near misses.

As you can see there were a number of slips, trips and falls, although this was down on the previous quarter, and a number of incidents of people being

struck by (or nearly struck by) falling objects, including in one case a ceiling tile.

If you do see ceiling tiles loose or hanging down, please report to E&F on x7000 so that they can come and fix it.

Also, whilst every effort is made to ensure that floors are cleaned during times of low building occupancy, and leaks and spills are dealt with as soon as possible, please be mindful of wet floor signs and barriers.

We had one small laboratory fire in the last few months, involving a small spillage of ethanol near a Bunsen burner. Laboratory users are reminded to explore other options for aseptic techniques rather than using ethanol to sterilize loops and spreaders prior to flaming.

In March we also had two incidents involving the spillage of, and subsequent exposure to hazardous chemicals. No one was seriously injured in these incidents, although the Food & Nutrition building was evacuated as a precaution whilst a specialist spillage company made the area safe.



Again laboratory users are reminded of the need to carry out a full risk assessment for the chemicals they are working with and have well-thought out plans

to deal with foreseeable emergencies such as a spillage.

CYCLING SAFELY

We have also had a couple of accidents involving cyclists in recent months.

A pedestrian ended up in hospital after being knocked over by a cyclist near the Whiteknights Library.

On another occasion a cyclist skidded and came off his bike when taking a corner too fast, near car park 2. He suffered a few scrapes and bruises, but fortunately nothing too serious.



Our campus footpaths are shared between pedestrians and cyclists, and in accordance with the [Campus Code of Behaviour](#) cyclists must give pedestrians priority on footpaths.

If you do cycle on campus, please be prepared to slow down, stop or dismount, especially in busy or restricted areas or where there are sharp bends on the path - you never know what or who might be coming the other way. Please also adjust your speed to the road and weather conditions.

There is more guidance to keep everyone safe in our [Campus Code of Behaviour](#).

FOCUS ON: EVENTS

We would love for every event at the University to be as successful and safe as possible. To help identify and resolve issues there is an Events approval process. Most events are required to submit a [notification](#) and [risk assessment](#) form **at least 28 days prior to the event**; this will allow all the relevant parties within Estates & Facilities to review and approve the event.

Examples of events that need approval include any of the following:

- Where there is alcohol or food provided, including BBQs (if not provided by Catering/licence premises)
- Marquees etc. which require staking to the ground
- Playing live or recorded music
- Attended by more than 50 people

A full list is available in [Safety Code of Practice-33 Event Management](#) and if you are planning on having a BBQ on campus please see Safety Note 40 on [BBQ food hygiene and safety](#).

It is highly recommended that people organising events attend specific training -if you are interested in booking please contact events@reading.ac.uk call 0118 378 4313 (internal 4313) to arrange it.

*Evi Konstantinidou Assistant
H&S Advisor*

SUN EXPOSURE

We are keeping our fingers crossed for a glorious summer. For those members of staff and students who are lucky enough to work outdoors this does come with a health warning, as too much sunlight is harmful to your skin.

What can you do to protect yourself?

- Keep your top on.
- Wear a hat with a brim or a flap that covers the ears and the back of the neck.
- Stay in the shade whenever possible, during your breaks and especially at lunch time.
- Use a high factor sunscreen of at least SPF15 on any exposed skin.
- Drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration.
- Check your skin regularly for any unusual moles or spots. See a doctor promptly if you find anything that is changing in shape, size or colour, itching or bleeding.

More information is available on the HSE website (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/skin/sunprotect.htm>)

BUILDING WORKS OVER THE SUMMER

The summer will be a very busy time for construction works on all our campuses, including:

- building new office and teaching spaces on the old MERL site on Chancellors way which will involve large vehicle deliveries and some

short disruptions to the exit on Chancellors Way

- start of the URS refurbishment project which will significantly impact pedestrian routes around the URS building
- a major phase of the Library refurbishment which will impact the inside and outside of the building whilst the Library will continue to be open
- new accommodation at Thames Court on Greenlands, the building work will impact on parking arrangements
- some enabling works for the new Life Biosciences building affecting the region by Maths/JJT/Systems Engineering buildings
- re-configuration and refurbishment of the HUMMSS and JJT building foyers.

All these works along with the normal maintenance works will have a big impact on our campuses and it is expected that during this period there will be increased traffic and noise. Some areas may be barriered off and diversions in place. Whilst every effort is being undertaken to minimise the impact, it is inevitable that there will be some disruption – more information will be made available via the University website.

*Larry Woodley Estates &
construction H&S Advisor*

FORTHCOMING TRAINING

Please take a look at the training opportunities currently available over the next few months, additional training courses will be added over the summer.

[Fire Precautions and Fire Fighting Training for Nominated Personnel](#) – 15th June (spaces available)

[First Aid at Work – Refresher](#) 13-14th June (spaces available)

[Defibrillator training \(for first aider\)](#) – 30th June (spaces available)

[Managing Health and Safety in Research](#) – 13th July and 7th September (spaces available)

[Managing H&S](#) – 6th June (spaces available)

If you would like to attend any of the above courses please use [Employee self service](#) booking system and search for the course using the Learning Activity Search button in the Learning area. If you have any problems with this booking method, or if you are a postgraduate student, please contact us to book a place by emailing safety@reading.ac.uk.

In addition to the standard training programme a number of new and extra courses have been developed for Technical

Staff which will begin over the summer.

Courses available include:

- How to carry out an area risk assessment
- Local exhaust ventilation awareness
- Respiratory Protective Equipment awareness
- Safe working at height and ladder inspection
- Principles of Safety Management

The full training programme, dates of courses and bookings are available via the Technical Services Cluster Managers.

RISK ASSESSMENT SURGERIES

These sessions are open to anyone who is involved in preparing risk assessments- including Events, Fieldwork or COSHH. Appointments are available with members of the Health & Safety Services team to review your assessment, give advice on structure and content and guide you towards opportunities for improvement.

The next appointments are available between 2 and 5pm on 28th June and 30th August 2016. Please see <https://www.reading.ac.uk/inter>

[nal/health-and-safety/hs-training/HSSRiskAssessmentSurgery.aspx](#) for more details and how to book.

UPDATED GUIDANCE

[Code of Practice 52 Driving for Work](#) including minor updates to classification of drivers, licencing and training requirements

[Code of Practice 13 Display Screen Equipment](#) - minor updates and clarifications to on-line assessment, refresher periods, workstation dimensions and eye sight tests. Additional information on tablets and hot-desking.

[Safety Note 54 Children on University Premises](#) minor clarification on the need for children to be supervised and not cause disruption.

[Safety Note 71 Transportation, Storage and use of Petroleum](#). – New.

CONTACT THE TEAM

For help and advice from H&S Services please contact safety@reading.ac.uk or telephone 0118 378 8888