

Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi

Health and Safety POLICY



HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY



KWAME NKURUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE
AND TECHNOLOGY, KUMASI-GHANA
**QUALITY ASSURANCE AND
PLANNING UNIT**

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FORWARD

The Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi has a mission to advance knowledge in science and technology through creating an environment for undertaking relevant research, quality teaching, entrepreneurship training and community engagement to improve the quality of life. In order to achieve this mission, there is the need to have Health and Safety Policy.

The rationale of this policy is to develop and maintain a system of effective health service delivery, ensure safety and welfare for staff and students.

The University is grateful to all those who ensured the initiation, development and approval of this Policy.

PROFESSOR K. OBIRI-DANSO

VICE-CHANCELLOR

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

As part of the strategic planning mandate of the Quality Assurance and Planning Unit (QAPU), university policies are initiated and proposed for approval by the Academic Board. The Unit therefore, initiated Health and Safety Policy which was approved by the Academic Board.

The QAPU is grateful to Dr. Yaw Bio's committee for the draft of this Policy. We are equally indebted to all staff who helped to edit and review it.

Lastly, we wish to appreciate the contribution of all staff of this University who contributed in several ways for the development and approval of this Policy.

PROF. CHRISTIAN AGYARE

HEAD, QAPU

AUGUST, 2018

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1. INTRODUCTION

The University recognizes and accepts responsibility for ensuring, so far as is reasonably possible, the health, safety and welfare of its staff and students and other persons who may be affected by our acts or omissions. The University will take steps to ensure compliance with the relevant statutory provisions and good practice requirements.

Our statement of general policy is to:

2. SCOPE OF POLICY

This is a University-wide policy and it applies to all staff, students, non-University employees located within the University premises including those engaged in service provision, contractors and visitors.

3. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate the University's commitment to comply with the general requirements of Section 118 of the Labour Act, 2003 Act 651 on Occupational health and Safety and other statutory instruments to manage workplace hazards and provide an approved systematic approach and guidance to enable staff to effectively manage risk.

4. POLICY OBJECTIVES

The University general policy objectives with regards to health and safety are as follows

- Develop and maintain a collective effort of control of health and safety to safeguard people from harm;
- Provide adequate financial and other resources including organizational arrangements to support the successful management of health and safety as an integral part of our business activity;
- Pursue health and safety objectives with sincerity;

- Provide all staff and students with suitable information, instruction, supervision and training that would ensure that their work and studies are carried out safely and competently;
- Ensure that every staff and student is aware that they must co-operate with us and support the successful implementation of health and safety arrangements;
- Ensure places of work and study are safe without risks to health, with adequate arrangements and means of access and exit;
- Provide sufficient occupational health arrangements including workplace well-being;
- Actively encourage consultation with staff and students on matters affecting their health and safety so they are involved with the planning, measuring and reviewing of performance;
- Ensure adequate co-operation, communication and co-ordination with other employers, and their employees, where they share a workplace or services;
- Provide adequate preventative and protective systems for hazard identification, risk assessment and risk control;
- Prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health where possible and have sufficient reactive systems to address areas of concern;
- Provide and maintain plant, equipment and machinery that will ensure safe handling and storage of hazardous substances;
- Ensure that procedures to deal with serious and imminent danger are sufficient, robust, and are appropriately monitored and reviewed; and
- Monitor, audit and regularly review this policy and measure safety performance to enable continual improvement.

5. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 The University Council

The Council has ultimate responsibility and ‘ownership’ of the health and safety policy. It has oversight responsibility for its implementation within the University by ensuring effective management of good health and safety practices.

The Council shall carry out its responsibility by:

- 1) Demonstrating strong and active leadership by ensuring that there is visible and active commitment through regular review of the health and safety policy;
- 2) Setting the direction for effective health and safety management as an integral part of the academic and administrative decisions;
- 3) Ensuring there is a nominated Executive Director to champion the University’s health and safety responsibilities;
- 4) Ensuring there are effective ‘downward’ and ‘upward’ communication channels embedded within the management structures;
- 5) Council members take the lead in ensuring the communication of health and safety duties and benefits throughout the University;
- 6) Ensuring adequate finances, personnel, equipment, materials and other resources are made available so that the requirements of this policy, legislation and good health and safety practice can be fulfilled;
- 7) Expecting all staff and students to play a part in the responsibility for meeting the requirements of health and safety legislation and maintaining ongoing accountability through management roles and responsibilities.

5.2 Vice Chancellor

The Vice-Chancellor has the responsibility for developing, implementing and improving the University's health and safety management system. He has the duty of taking all practicable measures to create a safe and healthy work environment.

These include the following:

- 1) Providing leadership and direction in matters of health and safety and ensuring there is continuous improvement in the health and safety performance of the University;
- 2) Ensuring suitable control of health and safety management which is integrated into general academic and administrative activities;
- 3) Establishing and achieving overall health and safety goals and objectives as part of the strategic plans of the University and its constituent parts; and
- 4) Developing a clear chain of responsibility for health and safety matters through normal line management channels.

5.3 Provosts, Directors and Deans

As front line managers they are expected to implement the University policies related to Health and Safety. They will achieve this by:

- 1) Ensuring effective consultation with staff and students in order to gain their commitment to achieving excellent health and safety/service delivery standards;
- 2) Ensuring that health and safety is given the appropriate priority while carrying out their regular duties;
- 3) Ensuring necessary information, instruction, training and supervision is provided to all Staff and students to enable them undertake their tasks without risk to their own or other person's health and safety;

- 4) Ensuring that suitable First Aid and welfare arrangements are provided for all staff and students;
- 5) Ensuring that accident/incident reporting procedures are established and complied with in line with local and University policy;
- 6) Ensuring that all departments/units/sections have suitable and sufficient risk assessments and safe systems of work in place for the protection of staff, students, service users, and others that can be affected by our activities;
- 7) Ensuring that staff and students (and contractors in appropriate circumstances) are informed of any hazards to health and safety which are known to be associated with the work they perform and the steps to be taken to control any such hazard;
- 8) Ensuring that staff and students are conversant with the University's health and safety policy and associated policies and procedures and that they understand the importance of complying with the requirements;
- 9) Ensuring that staff and students are aware of emergency and evacuation procedures;
- 10) Monitoring staff and students and appointed contractors to ensure that they undertake their duties/responsibilities in a safe manner in line with University policies;
- 11) Ensuring regular inspections and audits of the University's premises under their responsibility, including operational areas and equipment to ensure a safe teaching and learning environment;
- 12) Liaise and consult with the Director of Works and Physical Development for the management of the risks involved with related issues e.g. equipment maintenance, ligature points, water systems, electrical installations and contractors;
- 13) Allocating the necessary human and financial resources to achieve the goals;

- 14) Ensuring that health and safety matters raised by staff and students are thoroughly investigated and any necessary recommendation/actions implemented.

5.4 Individual Staff and Students

Every staff and/or student has a responsibility to:

- 1) Take reasonable care of their own health and safety and other persons who may be affected by their actions or omissions;
- 2) Familiarise themselves with and abide by the health and safety policy and all applicable University policies, procedures and guidelines;
- 3) Co-operate with their heads on health and safety matters;
- 4) Identify and report to their heads any hazards that could cause harm arising out of work activities;
- 5) Report all occupational injuries, illnesses/diseases, near misses or other types of incidents, as per the University's Incident Reporting and Investigation Policy;
- 6) Tell their heads if something happens that might affect their ability to work safely e.g. becoming pregnant, suffering from an injury or illness, taking medications that cause drowsiness;
- 7) Be aware of the University health and safety policy and the necessary control measures to reduce risks;
- 8) Avoid interference with anything provided to safeguard health and safety;
- 9) Immediately report or repair any defects to equipment, furniture, machinery or concerns to their heads;
- 10) Regularly appraise themselves with, and follow, the latest information, instructions and training received;
- 11) Attend the relevant modules of Core Mandatory Training; and participate in a further training as identified by heads;

- 12) Know the local emergency arrangements i.e. actions to be taken in the event of fire;
- 13) Report to their heads when they are experiencing times of stress that will have an impact on work/studies and or personal wellbeing

5.5 Health and Safety Risk Adviser

He/she should be appointed with the responsibility for:

- 1) Providing specialist support to Provosts, Directors, Deans, staff and students where necessary;
- 2) Dealing proactively with health and safety matters;
- 3) Conducting regular internal health and safety audits in partnership with Provosts, Directors, Deans and Health and Safety Representatives;
- 4) Advising on new processes or equipment relative to their health and safety impact;
- 5) Maintaining and advising on up to date information on changes to health and safety legislation, Codes of Practice and other standards;
- 6) Assisting in the formulation and implementation of health and safety related University wide policies and procedures;
- 7) Providing direction and oversight of health and safety initiatives;
- 8) Delivery of Health and Safety related training; and
- 9) Reporting to the Vice-Chancellor

5.6 Health and Safety Representatives

Have delegated responsibility for:

- 1) Supporting Provosts, Directors and Deans with the day to day management of the health and safety programme in the

- colleges, faculties and units in accordance with legislative requirements and Trust policies and procedures;
- 2) Participating in meetings with other health and safety representatives and the Health and Safety Adviser and attending health and safety training courses where appropriate; and
 - 3) Participating in health and safety audits in partnership with Provosts, Directors and Deans

5.7 Health and Safety Committee

The Health and Safety Committee's main responsibilities are to:

- 1) Promote effective co-operation, communication, consultation and involvement in health and safety issues between the University and its staff and students;
- 2) Monitor and audit the successful implementation of health and safety legislation and policies;
- 3) Keep watch on the adequacy of safety and health communication and awareness in the workplace;
- 4) Assist with the development of new policies as required;
- 5) Consult with staff and students on policy and to liaise on incidents; and
- 6) Report to the Quality Assurance Committee.

6. SPECIFIC DETAILS OF THE POLICY

6.1 Arrangements for Health and Safety

Health and safety management can be seen by many as complicated and as an add-on to what we already do. However it need not be that way. Health and safety management is one part of Risk Management. It is the recognition and effective management of all threats and challenges to the University's objectives and values. The University's Safety and Risk Strategy Management outline all aspects of safety and risk. It aims to provide direction and clarity about safety and risk management. It outlines staff and students' roles and responsibilities and describes the systems and processes for effective risk management. Finally it promotes the absolute importance of a good safety culture. An overview of the general arrangements is provided below.

6.1.1 Risk Assessments

Risk assessment is simply a careful examination of what could cause harm to people, so as to determine whether enough precautions have been taken to prevent harm. As a University, we are required to assess and manage health and safety risks through the steps below.

- i. Departmental heads must undertake risk assessments for the areas and activities of staff and students under their control;
- ii. The assessment must be carried out before work that gives rise to the risk, or before the introduction of new equipment or new development or change of systems that could affect the health, safety and welfare of staff and students, service users, visitors and contractors;
- iii. Departmental heads are expected to make their staff and students aware of the results of the risk assessments, and provide them with the necessary instruction, training and supervision to undertake their work safely.

6.2 Health and Safety Inspections

Health and safety inspections are an invaluable way of identifying potential workplace hazards before they cause any health and safety problem. An inspection should cover all aspects of the working environment, work methods and work conditions. It is carried out in order to achieve some consistency of content for Health and Safety standards in the University.

Departmental heads and the Estates Office are to ensure their health and safety related inspections of areas under their control are carried out. A checklist should be provided.

6.3 Fire Prevention and Management

Each year people die or get seriously injured as a result of fires at work. Besides loss of life, fire costs Ghana millions of cedis; from damage to property to loss of business and insurance premiums. Many fires can be avoided by taking fire precautions. All necessary fire prevention, precautionary and management of fire safety measures are to be implemented within work premises to remove or reduce the likelihood of a fire occurring.

The University Fire Prevention Unit will make sure that:

- i. Fire Risk Assessments are completed for all premises;
- ii. Fire extinguishers are sited correctly, maintained and checked annually;
- iii. Arrangements for regular testing of fire alarms, fire detection and warning systems are in place;
- iv. Clear escape routes are provided and designated;
- v. Staff and students are also expected to co-operate fully in complying with any preventive (e.g. keeping walkways clear, using equipment and flammable liquids safely) and emergency procedures.

6.4 Manual Handling & Back Care

Work-related musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs), including manual handling of injuries are some of the most common type of occupational ill health in Ghana.

- i. Departmental heads are responsible for completing risk assessments for manual handling tasks for their staff and students;
- ii. Staff and students are expected to follow the detailed risk assessments, procedures and training;
- iii. All staff shall receive Manual Handling training at their induction;
- iv. Ad hoc manual handling training can be provided if a risk assessment identifies it as a requirement.

6.5 Slips, Trips & Falls

Slips and trips resulting in falls are the most common cause of major injuries in all workplaces all over the world. Most slips occur in wet or contaminated conditions and most trips are due to poor housekeeping. Slip, trip and fall incidents can be cut dramatically through good planning, positive management and good housekeeping.

- i. The Estates Office is responsible for ensuring that the floor surface is suitable and maintained;
- ii. All staff and students are responsible to ensure all work areas are kept tidy and pedestrian routes and stairs are unobstructed with no items protruding into the walkways;
- iii. Stock items and waste should be stored at the designated locations identified;
- iv. All spillages must be cleaned up using appropriate methods for the contaminant. If appropriate, use a wet floor sign and warn people of the hazards;

- v. Staff and students must wear sensible footwear which has good anti-slip properties;
- vi. Any defects to floor surfaces must be reported to the Maintenance Engineer;
- vii. Ensure that all walkways or sidewalk are cleaned and maintained. There should be regular inspection to remove weeds, sand and fallen trees/tree branches on the walkways/sidewalks;
- viii. Ensure that roads on campus are not flooded;
- ix. Appropriate warning signs should be erected at construction sites; and
- x. All constructions on campus should conform to the national standards contained in the “Building and Construction Materials— Accessibility Standard for Built Environment.” Before permits are given for any construction on campus, the design of such projects should conform to the standards set in this document.

6.6 Hazardous Substances

There are various potential hazardous substances that staff and students may be exposed to. However, appropriate risk assessment and controls should be in place to control hazardous substances in the workplace (e.g. hospital, laboratories and farms) to make sure that staff are not put at undue risk.

Departmental heads are responsible for:

- i. Carrying out control of substances considered hazardous to Health. They must also carry out assessments, where required, and make sure staff and students receive appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision in the use of hazardous substances and emergency arrangements;
- ii. Ensuring that systems are in place to eliminate, substitute, isolate or control the use of chemicals to an acceptable level;

- iii. The prevention of the use of latex gloves in hospitals and laboratories;
- iv. The prevention of sharps, injuries, skincare/dermatitis and prevention of Blood Borne Viruses (BBV) in the hospitals, laboratories and farms; and
- v. Control of Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM). The Director of Works should prevent exposure of staff and students during demolition of asbestos laden buildings.

6.7 Information, Instruction and Training

Staff and students will be provided with whatever information, instruction, training and supervision as necessary to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, their health and safety on campus.

- i. As part of staff and students' local induction, corporate induction, job specific and refresher training, they must be informed of their health and safety responsibilities and safe systems of work and procedures to follow;
- ii. The information should be communicated by the Health and Safety Committee through email, on the intranet, newsletters, departmental notice boards, meetings etc;
- iii. All staff and students are required to regularly appraise themselves with the latest information provided for their health and safety on campus and attend Core Mandatory training as and when identified by their heads;
- iv. There are appropriate safety signs to warn people of specific hazards within each premises;
- v. Fire safety rules must be displayed in all buildings on campus;
- vi. There should be instant messages alerting the university community of crime (s) that have occurred in and around the campus;
- vii. There should be severe weather alerts via SMS;

- viii. All warning systems should take into account the needs of persons with sensory impairment, such as deaf and blind persons; and
- ix. There should be well-labelled 'You – Are – Here' maps at important locations on campus.

6.8 Safe Plant and Equipment

By using safe, well-maintained plant and equipment/machinery for particular process (e.g. air conditions) and equipment operated by adequately trained staff, you can help prevent accidents and reduce personal and financial costs.

The maintenance Engineer is responsible for:

- i. Making sure that new plant and equipment meet health and safety standards before they are purchased;
- ii. Ensuring all plant and equipment (under their control) are suitable for use, inspected, examined and maintained as appropriate;
- iii. Making sure that patient lifting equipment in the hospital is appropriately examined at least every 6 months and maintained as required.

Departmental heads are responsible for:

- i. Making sure that equipment under their control is suitable for use and for the purpose and conditions in which it is intended to be used; and staff and students have received suitable training; the equipment is inspected and maintained as required;
- ii. Making sure there are arrangements for appropriate repairs when required.

All staff and students are responsible:

- i. To only use equipment that they have been trained and authorized to use;

- ii. To only use equipment as prescribed, intended for use and as instructed;
- iii. To not use work equipment if it is unsafe to use e.g. defective. Inform your supervisors and/or heads immediately and label 'do not use'; and
- iv. Any problems found with plant, equipment or fabric of buildings should be reported to the Maintenance Engineer.

6.9 Electrical Safety

The Maintenance Engineer is responsible for the inspection and maintenance of installed electrical systems and portable/transportable equipment for buildings under their control.

- i. Only competent persons authorized by the Maintenance Engineer are permitted to maintain/repair electrical systems and equipment;
- ii. All portable/transportable electrical equipment will be inspected and tested by the Maintenance department and they will hold all records – this includes Portable Appliance Testing (PAT).
- iii. Departmental heads must liaise with the Maintenance Department for advice on the correct selection of mains for electrical equipment and make sure the appropriate testing before use has been completed. Until the testing is done no equipment shall be used on University premises;
- iv. If you believe there is a fault with an electrical appliance or installed system, do not use. Isolate if safe to do so, label 'do not use' and report immediately to the Maintenance Department.

6.10 Noise

Noise is part of everyday life, but loud noise can permanently damage hearing. The staff that are potentially at risk from high levels of noise exposure are maintenance and/or construction workers.

The Maintenance Department is responsible for ensuring that:

- i. There are assessments in place for staff and students exposed to noise at work;
- ii. Action is taken to reduce noise exposure and make sure that legal limits on noise exposure are not exceeded;
- iii. Staff and students are supplied with hearing protection as appropriate;
- iv. Staff and students are provided with information, instruction and training;
- v. Arrange for health surveillance where there is a risk to health;
- vi. Provide advice to heads, students and staff on request.

6.11 Vibration

Hand/arm vibration comes from the use of hand-held power tools and is the cause of significant ill health. University staff that are potentially at risk from high levels of vibration exposure are maintenance workers.

The Maintenance Engineer is responsible for ensuring that:

- i. There are assessments in place for employees exposed to vibration at work;
- ii. Action is taken to reduce vibration exposure and make sure that legal limits on vibration exposure are not exceeded;
- iii. Provide staff and students with information, instruction and training;
- iv. Arrange for health surveillance where there is a risk to health;
- v. Provide advice to heads, students and staff on request.

6.12 Working at Height

Working 'at height' is when a person could be injured falling from it, even if it is at or below ground level. This does not include stairways or slips and trips on a level. Working at height remains the single biggest cause of workplace deaths and one of the main causes of major injury.

Common tasks requiring working from height are:

- i. Minor roof work i.e. using a ladder, standing on unguarded roof;
- ii. General maintenance tasks i.e. whilst using ladders;
- iii. Unloading a vehicle i.e. standing on the load area;
- iv. Cleaning tasks i.e. using a stepladder;
- v. Access to shelving i.e. using a stepladder or step stool;
- vi. Putting up a display i.e. using a stepladder or step stool.

The Maintenance Engineer is responsible for ensuring that:

- i. Work at height for areas under his control is properly planned and organised;
- ii. Those involved in work at height are trained and competent;
- iii. The place where work at height is done is safe;
- iv. Equipment for work at height is appropriately inspected;
- v. The risks from fragile surfaces are properly controlled;
- vi. The risks from falling objects are properly controlled.

Department heads are responsible to:

- i. Avoid the need to work at height where possible;
- ii. Make sure the stepladders are suitable for the task to be undertaken and are in good condition and preferably with suitable handholds.
- iii. Carry out regular checks on each stepladder or step stool to make sure they are in good condition;

- iv. Make sure that staff are trained and instructed on how to use stepladders or step stools safely and inform staff to carry out pre-use checks;
- v. Remove any defective or unsuitable stepladders from use.

All staff and students are responsible to ensure that:

- i. They do not work at height if it can be avoided;
- ii. They do not climb on to do shelving or racking under any circumstances;
- iii. They only use stepladders for recognised activities identified and they have received appropriate training and instruction;
- iv. They carry out pre-user checks and follow the safe use instructions for the stepladder or step stool (usually printed on each stepladder and step stool);
- v. If you find a defect or have a concern with the activity to be undertaken, then do not use; inform your supervisor or head immediately; meanwhile label 'do not use'.

Contractors:

Contractors must not work at height on roofs unless they have received approval from the University's Director of Works and Physical Development. Approval will only be granted when required work has been properly planned and organised, including a permit to work where required.

6.13 Lifting Equipment

Lifting equipment includes any equipment used at work for lifting or lowering loads, including attachments used for anchoring, fixing or supporting it. Examples include patient hoists, passenger lifts, Mobile Elevated Working Platforms, vehicle tail-lifts etc.

a) Patient Hoists

Although the use of hoists in our hospitals can reduce musculoskeletal risks, you should consider the other risks associated with hoisting people since people can be injured in the act.

The Director of Health shall ensure that:

- i. All hoists and slings to be used are maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions;
- ii. All hoist and sling combinations are compatible and appropriate for the patient and that risk assessments are repeated if the equipment combination or the patients' condition(s) change;
- iii. Staff and students are trained to handle the specific equipment so that they have the skills and competence to carry out the handling plan and understand the risks and measures to control them;
- iv. That staff and students inspect hoists and slings before use and they should be removed from service if defects are found.
- v. All slings are to be cleaned in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

The Maintenance Engineer will ensure that:

- i. All hoists and slings are thoroughly examined by a competent person at least every six months. A thorough examination is a systematic and detailed examination of the lifting equipment by a competent person to detect any defects that are, or might become dangerous;
- ii. In addition to the thorough examination requirements, all hoists are regularly serviced and maintained;

b) Other Lifting Equipment

The Maintenance Engineer will ensure that:

- i. All lifting equipment (including accessories) is periodically thoroughly examined, inspected and maintained as per the manufacturers instructions by competent persons;
- ii. Lifting operations are planned, supervised and carried out in a safe manner by people who are competent (trained and experienced).

Contractors needing to use their own lifting equipment:

- i. Must provide proof that their lifting equipment (including accessories) has been subjected to appropriate periodic thorough examinations, inspections and maintenance;
- ii. Must ensure that users are competent to use it safely;
- iii. Must ensure that approved risk assessments and safe systems of work are in place before work is authorized.

6.14 Driving on University Business

All staff that drive on University business, whether using a fleet vehicle, lease car or private vehicle, must ensure that they follow the laws applicable to driving as well as the University guidelines and procedures.

6.15 Display Screen Equipment

The significant use of Display Screen Equipment (DSE), e.g. computers and workstation equipment, can result in health problems if not used or managed correctly.

Departmental heads are responsible for making sure

- i. That suitable and sufficient assessment of all work stations and DSE are performed to determine the health and safety risks to persons exposed and the consequence of the use;

- ii. That all necessary steps are taken to reduce the risk identified to the lowest level reasonably possible;
- iii. That all employees who habitually use display screen equipment as a significant part of their normal work are made to undertake the appropriate eyesight test prior to their employment and at regular intervals after they have become users:

If display screen users experience visual difficulties or any other difficulties that may be attributed to work on display screen equipment, the University shall:

- i. Take steps to incorporate changes of task for display screen users to prevent intensive periods of on-screen activity;
- ii. Provide sufficient information, instruction, and training and supervision as necessary to ensure the health and safety of all staff who are users of display screen equipment.

All staff shall comply with the University procedures for Display Screen Equipment use.

6.16 Work Related Stress

Workplace stress can be a major factor in reducing staff performance, commitment, motivation, productivity, and increasing sickness and absenteeism.

- i. Departmental heads are responsible for identifying and managing the potential causes of stress.
- ii. Staff and students have a responsibility to report to their heads when they are experiencing times of stress that will have an impact on their work/study or wellbeing.
- iii. All heads must deal with issues of stress in a sensitive and constructive manner and refer to the Counselling Centre or the Director of Health.

6.17 Personal Safety

The nature of work undertaken within some sectors of the university, e.g. the hospitals, means that some staff are often required to work with patients and visitors who are in distressed or disturbed conditions, and therefore are anxious or in pain. There is an inherent risk of violence or aggressive situations. The University is committed to providing a safe and secure workplace for its staff and service users by aiming to prevent and deter crime by removing opportunities for it to occur or to re-occur.

Departmental heads are responsible for ensuring that the appropriate assessments and procedures are in place and all staff receive appropriate training

All staff and students are responsible for:

- i. Complying with the local arrangements and procedures designed to aid security;
- ii. Informing the appropriate heads if they have any security related concerns;
- iii. Reporting all acts of violence and aggressive behaviour to their heads and always complete the required incident forms;
- iv. Attending the appropriate conflict resolution training as identified by the Departmental heads.
- v. The University will seek to hold to account those who have committed crime against its staff and students by detecting and prosecuting offenders and seeking redress where viable.

6.18 Lone Working

People working alone or in isolation from others may be at particular risk because of their vulnerability in the event of an attack or illness. They may be at risk if they are not in regular contact with others and are not kept informed about relevant current developments.

- i. Departmental heads are responsible for making sure that lone working is avoided if possible. There are suitable risk assessments for lone working with appropriate personal safety plans and systems before the lone worker commences;
- ii. Heads must make sure that staffs that are required to work alone are aware of the risk assessments and the personal safety plans and know how to follow them.

6.19 Remote Working

- i. The University will provide the means to ensure that staff and students who carry out duties/studies from remote locations such as homes, IDL Centres, guest houses etc, carry out work station assessments.
- ii. Heads must ensure that a risk assessment is carried out to ensure the suitability of “Distant working” facilities/arrangements.
- iii. The University will ensure that all equipment supplied for the purposes of distant working is suitably tested and free from electrical defects.

6.20 First Aid Arrangements

Departmental Heads are responsible for informing staff of the first aid arrangements at each premise/location. This should include the designated first aiders, appointed persons, locations of first aid equipment and methods of summoning first aid assistance.

- i. All staff and students should keep themselves familiar with the first aid arrangements;
- ii. Nominated first aiders are required to keep their training up to date.

6.21 Pregnant Women and Nursing Mothers

The University has a legal obligation to ensure a safe and healthy work environment for pregnant or breastfeeding employees. All staff are entitled to a safe, secure working environment. Whilst there are no legal requirements on staff to inform the University that they are pregnant or have become new mothers, they should bear in mind that the University is not required to take any specific action until written notification has been provided.

- i. It is advised that pregnant staff inform their heads that they are pregnant.
- ii. Early identification of workplace risks is beneficial as there are hazards at work that could affect a pregnant person's health.
- iii. Once a staff has informed their head that they are pregnant, the head will carry out a New and Expectant Mother's Risk Assessment, with the pregnant person, and this will be periodically reviewed.
- iv. Once the staff returns to work, the head should ensure a new risk assessment is carried out and put appropriate facilities in place to protect the health and safety of the new/nursing mother.

6.22 Disabled People

The University must assess and manage the work risks to everyone, including those with disabilities.

- i. Staff and students who have disabilities that may affect the way they do their job and/or study should tell their heads. This is to enable the University to undertake risk assessments and make changes (reasonable adjustments) to help them do their jobs safely.
- ii. Departmental heads and the Director of Works are responsible to make sure arrangements for evacuation in emergencies are

planned in advance. This is also necessary for people who are temporarily disabled, e.g. with fractured legs.

6.23 Children and Young People

School Children and young people are more at risk from harm and are likely to be inexperienced, unaware of health and safety risks and physically or mentally immature. Therefore, we must make sure that additional safeguarding arrangements are in place before their work or work experience commence.

The University will develop an agreement that will ensure:

- i. Adequate supervision for the pupils of the University basic schools;
- ii. A plan of work for the placement for work experience;
- iii. Suitable and sufficient risk assessments are in place;
- iv. Arrangements for instruction and training before the work starts; and
- v. How the young person will be supervised and who will be responsible.

School children and young people on work experience are regarded as employees under health and safety law. However, the overall rule is that young people under 18 years old must not be allowed to do work which:

- i. Cannot be adapted to meet any physical or mental limitations they may have;
- ii. Exposes them to substances which are toxic or cause cancer;
- iii. Exposes them to radiation; and
- iv. Involves extreme heat, noise or vibration.

6.24 Contractors

- All contractors commissioned by the University to carry out work have legal responsibilities under the health and safety regulations to deal with specific hazards – but there must be co-operation and co-ordination between all the parties.
- Contractors are required to take necessary actions to ensure that their activities do not endanger themselves or others that can be affected by their acts or omissions;
- All Contractors are expected to adhere to the relevant University policies in full;
- Any contractor seen working in an unsafe manner must be reported to Director of Works immediately.

6.25 Asbestos

Asbestos is the name used for a range of natural minerals that were used in construction of a number of the University's buildings. Asbestos is only a risk to health if asbestos fibres are disturbed and released into the air and breathed in. Workers who carry out the maintenance and repair of such buildings are particularly at risk.

The Maintenance Engineer is responsible:

- i. For ensuring that systems are in place to manage asbestos in all University premises
- ii. To ensure asbestos surveys and appropriate risk assessments, management plans and registers are completed;
- iii. For carrying out annual monitoring of the condition of asbestos in the premises;
- iv. To have robust systems for informing contractors of the location of asbestos and agreeing the appropriate course of action before any work commences;

- v. Ensuring provision of adequate training (which includes information and instruction) to the maintenance staff, who are, or may be, exposed to asbestos, and their supervisors.

6.26 Visitors

Visitors can be at increased risk in premises as they may not be aware of the hazards and the controls to manage them. The Maintenance Engineer is responsible to make sure that there are local arrangements for the management of visitors;

- i. All visitors to offices and workplaces must report to the reception, sign in and follow the local arrangements for that site;
- ii. Those inviting visitors to their site, must make sure that visitors follow the local arrangements and are not left unaccompanied – as in the event of an evacuation they will need to be escorted from the building.

6.27 Smoking

Smoking is not permitted in any University buildings and facilities.

6.28 Alcohol and Drugs

The University recognises the adverse effects of alcohol and substance abuse on individuals and as such, it is concerned with and has a duty to protect and maintain the health, safety and welfare of its staff and students.

- i. No alcohol is allowed to be consumed in offices and lecture areas;
- ii. Unfitness for duty through substance abuse, including alcohol, may constitute gross misconduct. Such action is considered an offence and will be dealt with under the University's disciplinary procedure;

- iii. The University has a responsibility to offer help when it becomes apparent that an employee has a problem with substance misuse or alcohol that may affect their work performance; and
- iv. Sale of alcohol and any illicit drugs are not permitted in any University residential accommodation.

6.29 Internal Reporting of Incidents

All near misses, accidents and incidents should be recorded and reported to the head of department.

6.30 Consultation with Employees

The University recognises not just its legal duty to consult with staff and students about health and safety but is fully aware of the benefits it can have within the University. This entails not only giving information to staff and students but also listening to and taking account of what they say before making any health and safety decisions.

The University will provide its staff and students, or their representatives, with the information necessary to allow them to participate fully and effectively in through consultation with all stakeholders as everyone carries out their functions. The primary mechanism for consultation with health and safety issues is via the appointed, or nominated representatives – usually at the Health and Safety Committee.

6.31 Food Vendors: Chop Bars and Restaurants

Food vending has become a venue for many novice entrepreneurs attempting to start their businesses. The activities of some of these vendors pose a significant health threat to the University Community. There should therefore be regular vendor inspections to ensure that food safety rules are obeyed especially with regard to personal and environmental hygiene, and safety of food.

6.32 Waste Management and Environmental Hygiene

Waste management is important to protect the environment and the health of the University Community. This is becoming very necessary because of the increasing population of the University. There should be a policy to guide solid and liquid waste management.

7. POLICY DISSEMINATION

Links to an electronic copy of the policy shall be circulated via the Health and Safety Committee and the University website and intranet.

8. TRAINING AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS FOR THIS POLICY

Provosts, Directors and Deans must ensure that staff under their control are aware of this policy, including their individual responsibilities. The implementation of this policy does not require additional resources. There are no other training needs for the implementation of the policy. The implementation of this policy should provide clarity on how health and safety is managed within the University and how to obtain further information.

9. AUDIT, MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Health and Safety Risk Adviser is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy. Periodic evaluation reports should be prepared and submitted to the Health and Safety Committee for the purpose of monitoring the implementation of the policy.

Effective monitoring would be achieved through active measures including inspections, auditing and training, risk assessment and other reactive measures. There will also be review of incident statistics, accident investigation reports and ill health checks.

This policy will be reviewed within two years of ratification or earlier if need be due to concerns identified through monitoring the policy,

changes in national guidance, legislation, significant concerns raised via enforcement action or significant incidents.

10. OTHER RELATED POLICIES

In addition to the above general health and safety policy, some specific policy guidelines would be developed from time to time to compliment this policy.

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