



PRIFYSGOL
BANGOR
UNIVERSITY



a guide for
Heads of College & Directors of Professional Services
on managing health and safety

Under Review



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 WHY HEALTH AND SAFETY?

At the heart of the University's approach to health and safety is the principle that no person should be harmed or made ill as a result of its activities. As well as this moral duty there is an array of health and safety legislation that affects our everyday work; the majority of which is criminal law. In order to meet the many obligations the University seeks to operate an effective health and safety management system, the benefits of which are far reaching and aim to:

- Maximise the well-being / productivity of people at work.
- Stop people becoming ill or being injured as a result of their work.
- Support the University's reputation in the eyes of students, future employees, funders / stakeholders, research partners, governing bodies and the wider community.
- Reduce the likelihood of serious business disruption as a result of a major incident.
- Reduce if not eliminate the possibility of criminal or civil litigation against the University, Colleges, Professional Services (Services), Managers and individuals.

1.2 DOESN'T IT COST MONEY?

Each year employee accidents and ill-health cost British employers an estimated £3.9 to £7.8 billion. It is often assumed that insurance will cover any financial losses. But policies generally do not adequately cover costs involved in the general day to day running of a business and the impact which health and safety failings can have on the organisation.

Outside of possible legal expenses involved with work-related accidents and ill health, there are also the 'knock on' effects of covering absences, recruitment, training and negative impacts on staff and student morale and the ability to undertake general day to day activities. The ill effects on Managers and colleagues can be extremely adverse.

Case studies show that there can be significant business benefits through the implementation of a good health and safety system. Health and safety should be seen as a supportive mechanism to help deliver your goals and those of your staff and students.

1.3 WHAT IS THE UNIVERSITY HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY?

Central to the overarching University health and safety management system is its **Health and Safety Policy**. This Policy is a legal requirement and sets out the Institution's headline policy, managerial and organisational arrangements for health, safety and well-being, and identifies and assigns responsibilities for these. The Policy is supported by various **Policy Standards & Procedures** and **Guidance Notes** that advise upon the health and safety controls and arrangements for specific hazards and risks, for example electrical safety, radiation safety, overseas travel.



1.3.1 HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

The following summarises the **general responsibilities** for each of the key roles outlined on the Organisation Chart found on the next page:

University Council: The University's governing body is the 'employer' and has ultimate corporate responsibility for health and safety.

The H&S Consultative Forum: *Currently under development.* The Forum will provide a two-way consultative and information sharing forum for staff and student representatives. The Forum's Terms of Reference are approved by the Executive. The Forum will be chaired by a member of the Health, Safety and Emergency Management Committee, with representation from the Campus Trades Unions and the University staff and student community. The Forum will enable staff and students to come together and will provide the opportunity to share experiences, knowledge and information to drive positive change.

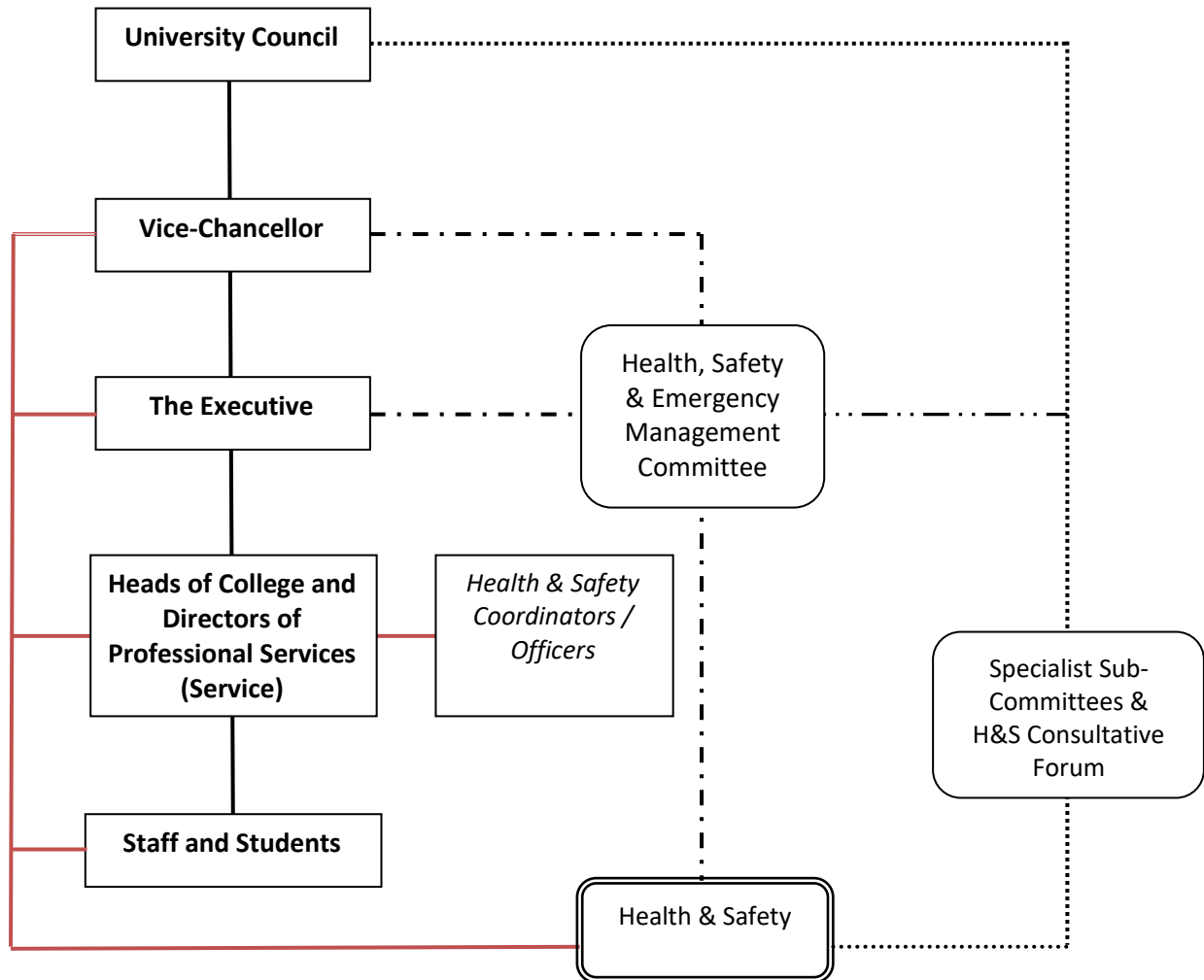
Vice-Chancellor: As the Chief Executive Officer the Vice-Chancellor is responsible to Council for promoting, administering and implementing the University's Health and Safety Policy, and retains overall responsibility for health and safety.

The Executive: Collectively and individually the Executive is responsible for the decisions it makes and their impact on health and safety. Members of the Executive who line-manage Heads and Directors of Professional Services are required to satisfy themselves that health and safety is being suitably managed and promoted within those Colleges and Services.

The Health, Safety & Emergency Management Committee (HSEMC): To support the Vice-Chancellor and the Executive Board, a Health, Safety and Emergency Management Committee, chaired by a member of the Executive, has been established. The primary function of the Committee is to oversee, on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor, all aspects of University health, safety and emergency management arrangements, seeking assurance and directing, as necessary, to ensure the University operates a good health and safety management system in accordance with its own H&S Policy, and in accordance with Sector standards.

Health and Safety (H&S): Is the central service whose primary purpose is to advise and support the University and its Colleges, Schools and Services in most areas of health and safety to enable the continuation of work whilst complying with the law and promoting good health and safety standards.

Heads of College / Directors of Services: Both the University's Health and Safety Policy and health and safety legislation in general delegate a high level of responsibility to those deemed to be in *control*, particularly those in senior positions. Heads of College and Directors of Services are responsible for the day to day management of health and safety in their College / Service. This includes responsibility for planning, implementing, monitoring and reviewing measures to assess and control risks from College / Service activities. Adequate resources should also be allocated as necessary.



Key:

- - - - - Health, Safety & Emergency Management Committee reporting line
- Consultative and Advisory Committee reporting line
- Direct Managerial reporting line
- . . . - Provides a report to the Executive
- Provision of advice and support by Health & Safety



2. ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF HEADS / DIRECTORS

2.1 CAN I DELEGATE?

Heads of College and Directors of Services are, as Senior Managers, accountable and responsible for the day-to-day management of health and safety within their College or Professional Service. As Heads / Directors will always have a legal responsibility for the safe operation of an activity if it remains within the remit of their College or Service, you as a Head / Director cannot delegate accountability.

You may of course delegate duties and responsibilities to Heads of Schools or sub-Units, in line with College/Service managerial and organizational arrangements as not even Heads or Directors can do everything. When you do delegate tasks and duties within your College/Service you must still satisfy yourself that the tasks are being performed and review the effectiveness of these arrangements. Remember, if you do delegate be sure to document this and ensure the person is clear on what is delegated and understands and is competent to carry out these tasks.

As a Senior Manager you are expected to take a lead as necessary, promote and take responsibility, just as with everything 'managerial' within your area of control and influence.

2.2 DOES THIS INCLUDE BUILDINGS?

Although not generally responsible for the building structure or services you are responsible for the way your College or Service operates within and how it uses a building(s). Campus Services is responsible for the fabric, structure and services of all University buildings¹ for example, water, heat and electrical services and for the grounds outside of your building(s).

Your responsibilities may include confirming the building is suitable for your activities and that risks associated with your activities within a building (and beyond) are assessed to ensure everyone's health and safety. In addition, there may be a small number of *testing* obligations, for example: *fire alarm checks* and the organizing of *fire drills* may be a duty of the predominant building user. Further information on specific requirements can be found in your College / Service's Overview Risk Assessment (Self-Assessment).

2.3 WHERE DO I START?

Each College / Service must have arrangements in place to effectively manage health and safety and assess risks associated with its work and undertakings. Normally the health and safety management system / approach will be fully integrated with other College or Service management systems, reflecting the complexity of the College's / Service's activities and working environments.

The University expects each College / Service to put into place effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review procedures necessary to safeguard safety and health. Further information on this approach can be found in '**5 Steps to Health and Safety Arrangements**'.

¹ Responsibility for Halls of Residence is different to the general estate and separate arrangements are in place



2.4 HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW AT THE MOMENT?

How much do you truly know about your College/Service's activities and the potential risks that are involved? Ask yourself:

- What are the significant risks within your College/Service?
- How do you make sure these risks are assessed and managed?
- What accidents / near misses occurred last year and how many days were lost due to injuries or staff sickness absence over the last 3-5 years, is there a trend developing?
- Who within your College/Service has specific health and safety duties and responsibilities and do you know that they have the time and resources to fulfil these?
- What health and safety training is given to your staff and your students?
- Is health and safety discussed formally within your College/Service and are staff and students (where applicable) consulted and informed?
- Do health and safety inspections take place and are you as the most senior staff member involved?
- How do you actually know if your College/Service is managing health and safety, do you monitor standards and review how your College/Service is managing it?
- Are there any barriers to improving health and safety, can these be overcome?
- Is health and safety included during Performance Development Reviews (PDRs)?

And, finally:

- Are you considered to be a supporter of health and safety, somebody who champions and supports health and safety?

An unfortunate but perhaps necessary way to focus the mind is to consider the worst and ask yourself "could I have realistically done more to prevent something from happening?" Remember, HSE Inspectors may enter any workplace without notice and think nothing of challenging everything, and possibly one of their toughest questions, especially if the HSE Inspector(s) talk about your "right to remain silent" will be "what did **you** do to make sure it was safe?"

As a Head of College or Director of Service you can positively influence behaviour and can achieve so much, ensuring health and safety works to support your activities and is respected in the process.



2.5 WHO CAN HELP?

The appointment of a College / Service **H&S Officer** or **H&S Safety Coordinator** may be essential. A good knowledgeable person, with experience of how things work in your College / Service should provide some reassurance that the day-to-day task of overseeing health and safety is being undertaken properly. However, they will need help, time and support to carry out this role and attend any training needed to enable them to fulfil their duties. Most importantly they will need to be seen to have your full support to ensure the cooperation of all within your College / Service.

As the central support Service, H&S will do its utmost to support your work activities to not only comply with the law but to also ensure good health and safety standards are maintained, and health and safety works to support your activities and ambitions. In addition, H&S provide a valuable health-support and promotion service that helps staff to stay healthy and to return to work following periods of sickness absence.

3. FIVE STEPS TO HEALTH AND SAFETY ARRANGEMENTS

PLAN	1. PLANNING	i. Risk Assess / Initial Review	Undertake and/or keep up to date an overview Risk Assessment that identifies key hazards and risks within the College / Service, and supplement with detailed assessments where needed. Identify and review management practices and arrangements for the delivery of good health and safety performance.
		ii. Policy	Use the Risk Assessments to review your Health and Safety Policy and confirm it sets standards, addresses key hazards, risks, and controls, and assigns duties and responsibilities to carry out its stated objectives.
		iii. Priorities / Standards	Also, use the Risk Assessments to help establish priorities and performance standards - invaluable when setting targets.
DO	2. ORGANISATION	i. Organise	Involve staff and students in the wider risk assessment process including identifying and implementing controls.



	<p>ii. Communicate</p> <p>iii. Competence</p>	<p>Confirm systems are in place to consult with and communicate health and safety information to staff and students.</p> <p>Identify training needs and provide adequate training, information, instruction and supervision.</p>
	<p>3. CONTROL</p> <p>i. Control</p>	<p>Ensure health and safety procedures and responsibilities are clear and are known / understood (normally via your College / Service H&S Policy). Provide supervision as necessary to ensure controls are implemented and followed.</p>
CHECK	<p>4. MONITORING</p> <p>i. Monitor</p>	<p>Carry out checks / audits to ensure your health and safety management system is working. Produce and follow an action plan for delivery of your Risk Assessments.</p>
ACT	<p>5. REVIEW</p> <p>i. Review</p> <p>ii. Improve</p>	<p>Formally review how you're managing health and safety. Taking action which is recorded and tracked to completion as necessary.</p> <p>Use the findings of the monitoring / review process to continually improve health and safety systems.</p>

3.1 PLANNING

- H&S Policy:** Every College / Service has already produced a **Health and Safety Policy** which should have addressed key aspects of their activities and risks and which should detail how health and safety is managed. It should be easy to follow and only as exhaustive as needed to reflect the level of risk and complicated nature of the College/Service's activities. As part of this process your College/Service will have already completed an **Overview Risk Assessment (normally in the form of a Self-Assessment)** of your primary hazards and risks. This Risk Assessment will be invaluable during the process of reviewing your Policy and confirming whether or not you are doing everything that is reasonable.



- **Risk Assessments:** A risk assessment is nothing more than a careful examination of what, in your College / Service, could cause harm to people, the environment and property. This includes identifying what controls you already have in place and then deciding if you can do more to prevent or reduce the likelihood of harm. In general you will have two levels of risk assessments:
 - **Overview Risk Assessment:** The template Overview Risk Assessment takes the key points from legislation and University Policy and will enable each College/Service to identify primary risks, consider how risks are managed and help to identify what needs to be done next. Each key point acts as an indicator, which Colleges / Services can assess themselves against to see how well they are performing (usually undertaken as part of the annual Self-Assessment).
 - **Task / Themed / Detailed Risk Assessments:** Supplementary Risk Assessments will ensure specific tasks are carried out safely. These tend to be undertaken for the more hazardous activities or areas; for example fieldwork, use of higher-risk equipment, difficult processes, travelling to 'hostile' areas of the world, hosting school (children) visits and the use of hazardous chemicals and agents.
- **Priorities / Performance Standards:** Risk Assessments help to establish *priorities* and *performance standards* which are invaluable when identifying what needs to be done. Targets and priorities should reflect levels of risk as well as the ease of putting controls in place. For example, if the risk is an imminent danger it should be dealt with immediately.

3.2 ORGANISATION

Your arrangements for health and safety management would normally reflect the College's or Service's general management system and structure.

Each of your managers and other supervisory staff would normally be responsible to you for health and safety within their areas of control, as they are for everything else they control and manage.

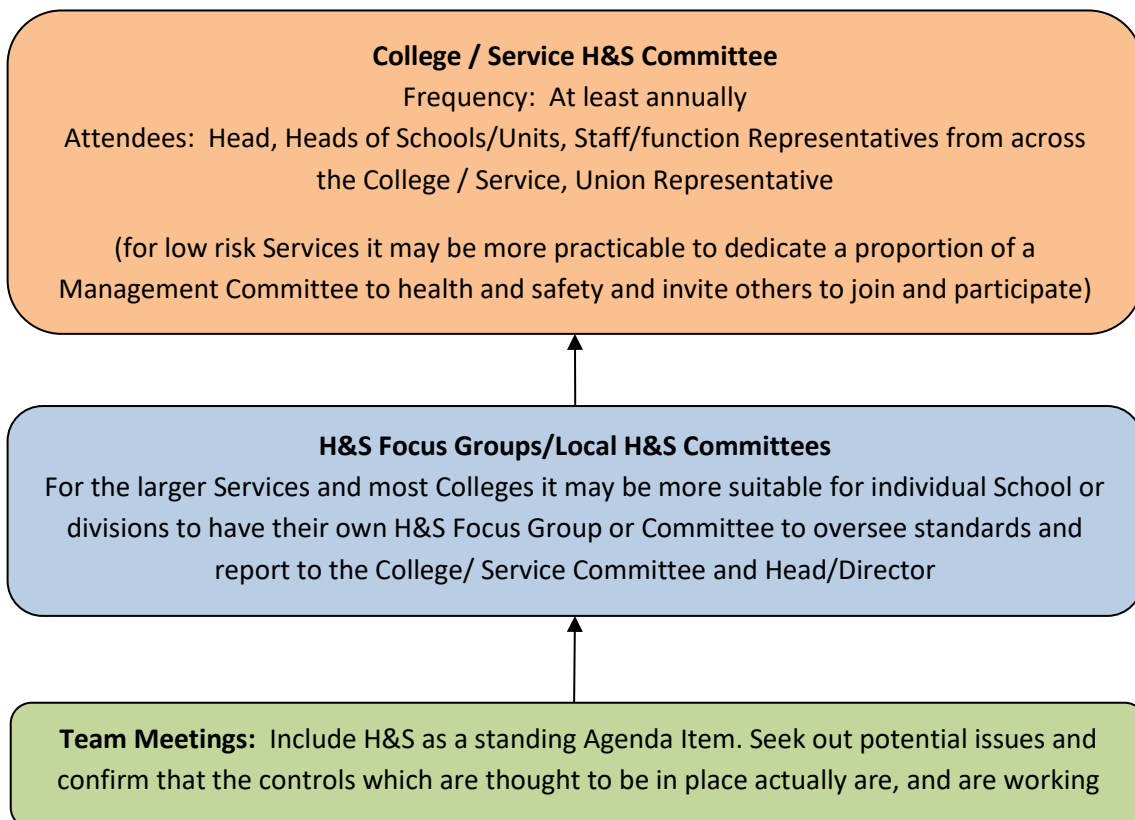
- **Specific Responsibilities and Duties:** You cannot be expected to personally manage every aspect of health and safety so you will have to delegate some/many duties. This will typically be along the same lines as the general management arrangements, for example to College Managers, Heads of Schools, Supervisors and other supervisory members of staff. To help you, you can also appoint an H&S Officer/Coordinator who has a clear remit to oversee, help and guide health and safety standards.
- **Communicate:** Health and safety controls won't work if no one knows about them. Ensure the communication process; formal and informal is two-way, to allow staff and student *consultation* and to ensure relevant health and safety information is passed back in good time. It is important you think about your target audience, for example students and academic staff



will be familiar with Blackboard and MyBangor, whereas other staff may not even have access to a computer.

- For larger, more complex Colleges /Services and those with more acute and significant risks, it is anticipated that local groups and Committees will support your Health and Safety Champions and overseers, on behalf of the Head/Director. Be this through Focus Groups or existing local Committees and groups.

A suggested simple health and safety meeting structure is as follows:



- **Competence:** The University is a fairly unique environment with hundreds of activities taking place every day, some of which may be 'higher' risk and rarely encountered outside of Higher Education or Research. As such all new staff and students should receive a **Health and Safety Induction** on the College/School or Service's arrangements and expectations with the 'induction' being as long and as thorough as the potential risks require.

You must ensure there is a system in place to identify activities that necessitate additional training, experience and / or supervision so staff and students are **competent** to undertake specific tasks, including how to deal with an emergency in case things go wrong. Training, instruction and supervision should seek to ensure they do not start any task until they are



competent and confident to do so, protecting not only their own, but others health and safety in the process; and of course, only starting once a suitable risk assessment is in place.

In addition, systems should be established to monitor training to ensure it remains in date or is refreshed where needed. Training requirements should be assessed regularly, at least annually, and/or be included as part of your staff review process. Records should also be kept.

3.3 CONTROL

Knowing and understanding what your risks are and how these are controlled is essential to managing health and safety. Controls can be in the form of “written procedures” that state how the risk is to be managed and by whom. For example, *written protocols on how to use a complicated piece of equipment, procedures when taking a large group of students on field research/study (i.e. minibus travel, activities once on site, emergency procedures)*.

In lower risk environments controls can be as simple as delegating supervisory duties and responsibilities and undertaking periodic workplace inspections. Controls need to reflect the potential risk and time and effort needed to make sure risks are managed properly.

You need to be assured that all your College’s / Service’s activities are managed and suitably controlled. There is little justification for not having suitable controls in place for aspects of a long standing academic programme which poses a significant level of risk; for example, *laboratory modules, directed study in the field, social project work, using hazardous equipment*.

Similarly, it is expected that suitable written procedures (often referred to as ‘safe systems of work’) are in place for potentially hazardous activities carried out by a Service; such as planned equipment maintenance, storage facilities, transport and dealing with the public.

3.4 MONITORING

There are generally two types of health and safety monitoring, **reactive** and **active**. Both essential in determining areas for improvement.

- **Active:** The basis of active ‘compliance’ monitoring are performance standards which define who does what, when and with what desired result. Active monitoring should provide information to determine if workplace precautions are in place, operating and are effective.

For example, if your Policy states you will induct all new students in health and safety this commitment (“*all students shall receive an Induction*”) is a performance indicator which can be measured against with evidence gathered that the standard is being achieved. Similarly for new members of staff and visiting academics.

Usually, active monitoring will be supported by a checklist (of performance measures / benchmarks) that will identify what is expected and the evidence needed to show compliance. For example: Fieldwork; performance standard is “*all supervised and research field work should*



be risk assessed". The measure can be picking a taught module that includes fieldwork and several research projects with a check made to ensure risk assessments were in place. This indicative measurement will in most cases reflect the wider level of compliance.

Active monitoring would also take the form of general H&S Inspections, which Heads and Directors are expected to take part in from time to time. Inspections look at both hardware (premises, plant/equipment and substances) and software (people, procedures and systems) including, where practicable, individual behaviour and performance. Active monitoring should identify and solve problems before anything goes wrong.

- **Reactive:** The basis of reactive monitoring is to assess and monitor things that have gone wrong, or could have. Reactive monitoring should answer the following questions:
 - Are failures occurring (injuries/ill health/loss/incidents/near misses)?
 - Where are they occurring?
 - What is the nature of the failures?
 - How serious are they?
 - What were the potential consequences?
 - What are the reasons for the failures?
 - What are the costs?
 - What improvements in the health and safety management system are required?
 - Are you getting better/worse?

Reactive monitoring seeks to discover what has happened and *why* an incident occurred, identify the failures which allowed it to happen and consider whether it's a trend or more needs to be done to support health and safety.

It may be appropriate for lower risk Schools / Services to perform a simple exercise of undertaking a H&S Inspection of rooms and areas; supplemented with a more detailed review of higher risk undertakings, such as fieldwork.

For Colleges, Schools and Services with a higher risk profile more detailed monitoring, utilising a tailored questionnaire or approach will be appropriate. For example, it may be practical to develop specific monitoring questionnaires to assess health and safety within biological and chemical laboratories, archaeological digs, working at heights, overseas travel or undertaking social research away from University buildings.

Monitoring is not just about assessing "what you can see" but also processes and activities. For example, *the University requires that all staff who claim mileage or drive on University business produce their driving licence and be approved to drive.* Is this undertaken?

Monitoring how you manage risk is essential and is an integral part of good safety management practice.



- **Overview Risk Assessment:** Your Overview College/Service Risk Assessment will offer a good base on which to develop your own tailored active monitoring system. The Risk Assessment will identify your key risks and summarise what you are doing to ensure the risks are not realised; your active monitoring (Self-Assessment) can then check to confirm that the controls stated are in place, are sufficient for the risk level and are working. Your Overview Risk Assessment (Self-Assessment) will be submitted to Health and Safety Services annually.

This process should also be supplemented by regular walk-round Inspections of your areas.

3.5 REVIEW

Reviewing what you do and how successful and efficient your controls are will reassure you as the Head/Director and support the continual improvement loop, which is often a key component of management systems. It also shows strong commitment to health and safety and reinforces the level of importance amongst your team.

Reviews are often best undertaken by a 'step-back approach' where you look again at the wider picture, absorb the evidence from Inspections and monitoring, consider how your College / Service has developed in recent years (and whether your risks have changed due to new activities or modules) and evaluate how fully you have implemented the recommendations of previous Inspections, risk assessments and monitoring exercises.

If your review shows you have identified all of your significant risks with all recommendations from Inspections and risk assessments put in place, you are continuing to actively monitor standards and their implementation, your incident and ill-health record is good and there were no significant changes to modules/activities then your review will be readily completed.

If your review shows that many actions previously identified have not been dealt with, new modules have been introduced without a full risk assessment or suitable consideration, or no local Inspections or monitoring has taken place, then a more robust approach will be needed to ascertain why, and to make sure standards are improved in the future. Simple recommendations or actions should not be repeated year on year on a risk assessment or Inspection – they should be resolved or challenged for their suitability in the first place.

Reviewing is not a 'tick-box' exercise, it is important that you challenge assumptions and what you do so you can decide if your College/Service needs to do more, or conversely is doing too much. During a review ask a few questions that can be used as a good indicator of what is happening within the College/Service. For example:

- If the H&S Policy or Risk Assessment(s) states that the *use of laboratory gases is restricted to trained and authorised personnel and all piped-gas systems are inspected and tested*, you need to confirm that this is actually happening. Are all systems on the Insurance Schedule and being tested? Are all operators trained and authorised?



- It is expected that *all new staff receive both a central and local H&S Induction, are told about emergency procedures and informed how their College/Service operates and of their role within it.* Is this happening, are staff being informed of how things work and what's expected of them, do they know that they need to risk assess activities they lead on?
- If you state *all electrical equipment will be inspected and/or tested every year* and you find you are not achieving this standard ask if the standard is actually suitable, or is it set too high? The University's own guide to electrical testing does not require an annual inspection and/or test of all equipment, so why is that your standard?
- It is anticipated that *all social research and studies in the 'field' are suitably assessed, be these supervised studies or not.* Social Research for example can be one of the most hazardous activities undertaken due to the unpredictability of people, so are systems in place and is appropriate training and information given?
- You will probably have *high expectations of your local H&S Officer or Coordinator,* are these realistic, can that one person actually achieve everything that is expected of them, are they trained and do they have enough time to do all of the things you want them to do?

Health and Safety (H&S) will also undertake periodic audits, either themed (assessing risk subjects/activities) or of the College/Service's overall health and safety management system. These audits assess compliance against University policies and applicable legislation and will utilise the information provided in your College / Service Overview Risk Assessment. From time to time you may also be subject to an audit by an external body.

Results from audits will be fed back to the Health, Safety & Emergency Management Committee, the Executive, with summaries posted on the Health and Safety Services Website.



4. WHAT IF IT GOES WRONG?

If something does go wrong the consequences on you, your colleagues and the University will vary dependent upon the nature and seriousness of the incident. Further guidance on what to do in such an event can be found at www.bangor.ac.uk/hss/inflink/accidentandincidentfinalb.php.en. In summary:

- **Investigating:** ALL accidents and incidents must be reported to H&S within 7 days of the event on the **Accident and Incident Reporting Form**. Serious accidents should of course be reported immediately. H&S may then investigate but in all cases a local investigation, by your own colleagues, should be carried out to understand what went wrong and to spot any underlining issues. It is important we learn from every accident, incident and near miss to try to understand underlying causes to prevent a re-occurrence.
- **HSE / Police Involvement:** H&S must report certain incidents within a set time to the HSE, which is why the prompt return of the Accident and Incident Reporting Form is essential. If the HSE or the Police decide to investigate an incident, contact will normally be through H&S and, where appropriate, via the University's Solicitors. H&S will also explain to you and your staff what will happen and what will be required, for example interviews, witness statements.
- **Civil Claims:** If someone decides to sue the University for Compensation the matter will be handled through the University Insurance Officer. You will be required to provide copies of all paperwork relating to the incident in a definite time frame.

NOTE: All dealings with members of the Press and Public should be directed through the Director of Corporate Communications and / or his staff.

5. SUMMARY

As Head of College / Director of Service you are encouraged to:

1. Get to know what your College /Service does, how it works and understand what the significant hazards and risks are.
2. Learn how health and safety is currently being managed, get to know the key people involved, understand your Overview Risk Assessment and other documentation and systems which you have, and consider whether more support can be offered.
3. Review what is in place and what is included in your Overview Risk Assessment; can you identify something that is not included in the documentation? Challenge what is being said and ask for evidence that it is happening. Challenging can immediately reassure you if evidence is offered confirming that the system is working, and is working well.
4. Participate in local H&S Inspections. Be seen and ensure health and safety is considered at the most senior and other appropriate Groups and Committees.



5. If a manager or other senior member of staff acts on your behalf on a day to day basis confirm or establish a system of checking and support. Ensure your Policy is implemented and that risks are assessed and systems put in place.
6. Ask yourself if staff are fully aware of their duties and the potential dangers in the workplace; does anybody need additional training or information?
7. If the system does not already exist, make sure new staff are supported with new activities suitably assessed to ensure health and safety is considered. Know who should be undertaking the risk assessments and be re-assured that they know it is their job to do this.
8. Confirm the College/Service regularly monitors what it does, receives and considers accident and ill-health statistics with a more thorough review undertaken every few years.

You are not expected to do everything but as a Senior Manager you are expected to manage health and safety as you would be expected to manage everything else within your area of responsibility.

There is help available both from the centre and locally, and a lot of work has already been done to support health and safety across Colleges and Services. It is now up to you to continue that work or take it forwards, so that you and your colleagues can be reassured activities across your College or Service are well managed.

6. USEFUL INFORMATION

Further information on all aspects covered by this booklet can be found on the H&S Website. In addition, please don't hesitate to call ext. 3847 if you wish to discuss any area in greater detail or what central support is available to you.

- [H&S Website](#)
- [A-Z Section](#)
- [Health and Safety Coordinator Role](#)

