

University of Glasgow

Health Safety and Wellbeing Committee

Minute of Meeting held on Thursday the 13th of March 2025 at 10am in the Melville Room

Present: David Duncan, Richard Reeve, Barbara Welsh, Sharon Burns, Mark Wildman, Iris Duane, Simon Ambrose, Jenna Millar, Steven Richardson, Peter Haggarty, Mhairi Docherty, David Harty, Gary Stephen, Hazel Bookham, Bruce Jolliffe, Selina Woolcott

In Attendance: Debbie Beales (Clerk)

Apologies: Louise Stergar, Paula McKerrow, Chris Kennedy, Somaria Maharaj, Phil Whitfield, Cyril Pacot, Alex Shearer

1. Minutes of the Meeting held on 6th of December 2024

The Minute of the 6th of December 2024 was approved.

2. Matters arising

2.1 Covid vaccine update (verbal HB)

Hazel Bookham informed the Committee that, following consultation, The University of Glasgow shall not provide the COVID vaccine to staff as the NHS continues to offer the COVID vaccine for those deemed at particular risk. The Committee expressed concerns that the NHS could decide to reduce the criteria for eligibility further and David Duncan agreed to take the issue to SMG for further discussion.

2.2 Procedural changes (verbal update PH)

Peter Haggarty informed the Committee that Selina Woolcott, Director of USR, retires at the end of this month. An existing safety specialist will cover the post until it is filled and, as soon as that person is named, the Committee will be informed. University, Safety & Resilience (USR) are to merge with the Estates Compliance Team and David Harty circulated a paper showing how this new structure could look. However, the new Incoming Director of USR will decide what the final structure should look like. The former post of Head of SEPS will not be replaced.

2.3 Main Library, security issues (Paper 1)

The Committee noted the Paper that was circulated. Gary Stephen informed the Committee that an incident had taken place in the Library where a student behaved in a highly inappropriate way. This was witnessed by several students, one of whom filmed the incident and posted the footage on social media. Security staff were concerned that the student was mentally unwell and tried to defuse the situation while ascertaining if he required medical attention. In hindsight, Police Scotland should have been involved immediately as this was clearly a crime and all Security staff will receive training on when to escalate an incident to Police Scotland.

2.4 Transport and pedestrian safety on campus (SW)

Selina Woolcott informed the Committee that the working group for this item had met twice and a draft action plan has been created. David Harty will continue to update the Committee

on the progression of this.

3. Estates Safety Report (Paper 2)

The Committee noted the Paper that was circulated. Highlights included:

- Joint working has begun between University Safety & Resilience (USR) and the Compliance Team in anticipation of the merging of the teams.
- A Service Catalogue is in production to summarise the service provision across both teams.
- The Estates Safety Report will combine with the USR reports for future meetings.

4. Occupational Health and Wellbeing Report (Paper 3)

The Committee noted the Paper that was circulated. Highlights included:

- Renewal of the Safe Effective Quality Occupational health Service (SEQOSH) certification (the 5-year enhanced audit).
- OHW have transitioned to Orchid Live, the digital records system.
- The current OH Physician retires at the end of March 2025 and OHW aim to have his replacement in post before he leaves.

5. SEPS Report (Paper 4)

The Committee noted the Paper that was circulated for information only.

6. Audit update (Paper 5)

The Committee noted that part of the Paper had not been fully updated from the previous meeting. Selina Woolcott agreed to circulate the correct version via email.

7. RPS Report (verbal update BJ)

Bruce Jolliffe informed the Committee of the following:

- There was a data breach in December through the dosimeter badge provider. Four UofG staff were affected but, other than their names, no other data was affected.
- An overexposure report for a lens dosimeter was received. Upon investigation it was found to be due to careless badge storage, rather than actual overexposure, which highlighted a need for training on using dosimeters safely.
- Bruce highlighted Reg16 of the Ionising Radiations Regulations 2017 which states that 'Where work with ionising radiation undertaken by one employer is likely to give rise to the exposure to ionising radiation of the employee of another employer, the employers concerned must co-operate by the exchange of information'. As the University shares resources and employees with the NHS, CRUK and SUERC, he is planning proactive work to ensure that the University is compliant in this regard.

8. Sickness absence stats (Paper 6)

The Committee noted the Paper that was circulated. At the request of the Committee, the report included the following additional data:

- Unit comparison absence summary which included the proportion of staff in each unit with sickness absence as well as total days lost.

- Days lost in 2024 by reason/unit
- Proportion of staff with recorded absence in 2024 by reason/ unit
- Top 5 absence reasons by reason/unit

The Committee thanked Mhairi Docherty creating this document, which they found extremely useful.

9. HSW Annual Report (Paper 7)

The Committee noted the Paper that was circulated. Highlights included:

- 2024 saw a lot of change across the whole of the service, including a name change to University Safety & Resilience (USR). Departures included David McLean, Head of SEPS, Jim Gray RPA semi-retiring into an Associate post, Dr. Phil Rodger, Chemical Safety Adviser, Dr. Alice Gallagher, Biological Safety Adviser, and Liridona Jahdaut, Business Continuity Adviser.
- New into post were David Scott, Fire Safety Adviser, Bruce Jolliffe, Head of Service for RPS, Ross Slavin, Chemical Safety Adviser and Aude Aumeunier, Biological Safety Adviser.
- USR also welcomed the Estates Safety & Compliance Team, which consists of 7 members of staff, into the Service. This merger will facilitate a broader corporate safety service over the coming months.
- Total numbers trained through the USR training programme were 10,984 (4,000 higher than 2023) this was considerably boosted this year by POD running a drive on mandatory training updates across the University. This total includes online courses.
- Supporting the first wheelchair-using person to be accepted onto the Veterinary Medicine course in the UK by the Royal College of Veterinary Science in tackling accessibility issues and risk assessment.
- Advising and reassuring staff in relation to increased levels of anxiety-causing, damp-loving moulds. Facilitating disposal of potentially explosive crystals.
- This will be the final annual report from the current Director of USR, Selina Woolcott, who retires at the end of March 2025. Selina informed the Committee that she felt great pride in what her team have achieved over the years – facilitating staff to work safely.

The Committee thanked Selina for her service over the years. The University is indebted to Selina for her excellent judgement, sound advice, and ability to work with colleagues.

10. HSW Policy review (Paper 8)

The Committee noted the Paper that was circulated. Selina Woolcott informed the Committee that, although due for review, will continue in its current format, other than updating the service name, until the next Director of USR is in post. The review date will be changed accordingly.

11. Any Other Business

1. Health and Safety Executive (HSE) – Stress. HSE recently wrote to Birmingham University. When talking about stress, the usual terminology used by HSE is “managing stress”. In this letter, they questioned what measures the University had in place for “preventing stress” which suggests a potential change in how HSE is looking at stress in Universities. Selina Woolcott informed the Committee that it is possible that the HSE will contact the University of Glasgow in the coming months, to see what measures the UofG has in place for preventing stress.

2. The TU Safety Reps asked the Committee if UoG Commercial has a safety policy. The Convenor, David Duncan, agreed to report back to the Committee via the Clerk.

12. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the HSWC will take place at 10am on Friday the 30th of May 2025 at 10am in the Melville Room.