

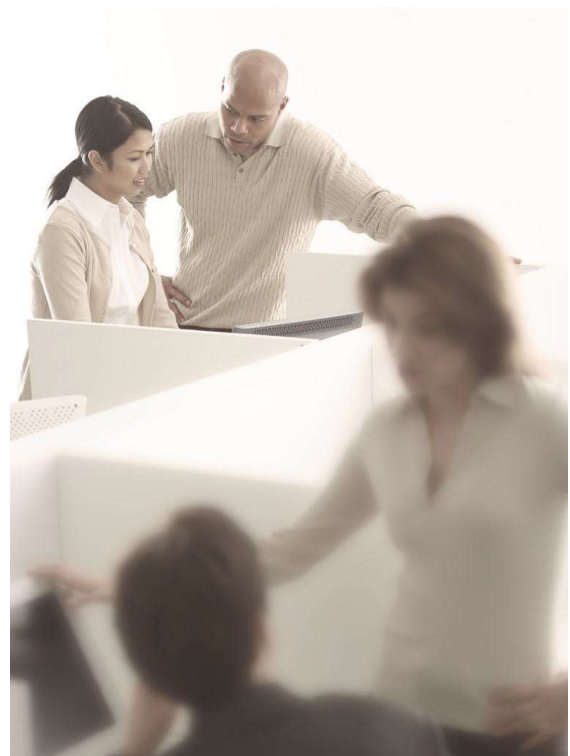


**St Mary's  
University  
Twickenham  
London**

## **Health and Safety Consultation & Communication with Staff and Students**

### **HSPG 8**

(Version 3) – June 2022



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# **Policy on Health & Safety Consultation & Communication with Staff & Students**

## **1. Statement of Policy**

The University recognizes the value of consultation and communication with employees and students in promoting a health and safety culture and in achieving the objective of reduced accidents and ill-health.

The main forum for employee and student consultation will be the University health and safety sub-committee. Communication will be by a variety of methods including the publishing of a health and safety policy, use of health and safety notice boards, articles in the University newsletter, verbal and written advice from the Health & Safety Officer and, where appropriate, provision of publications from the Health & Safety Executive and other authoritative sources.

Accident, incident and hazard reports are an important means of communication and staff are encouraged to use them. These are dealt with in a separate policy.

Staff with concerns over any health and safety matter should feel free to discuss it with their line manager. The Health & Safety Officer can give advice to staff and students, and safety representatives may also be able give advice to those they represent.

This policy should meet the legal requirements of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 which include the requirement to organise a health and safety sub-committee, if requested to do so by union safety representatives, and the requirement to provide information to employees. The duty to consult and communicate with union safety representatives is expanded by the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 and by the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. In addition, there is a duty on employers to consult, either directly or through elected representatives, with employees who are not union members this is contained in the Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees Regulations) 1996

## **2. Organisation and responsibilities**

### **2.1 Health & Safety Officer**

- Will organise regular meetings of the University health and safety sub-committee and deal with matters relating to its constitution and functions;
- Liaise with other managers, as appropriate, to ensure that the committee has adequate numbers of management representatives;
- Ensure that accurate minutes of the meetings of the committee are kept;
- Ensure that the committee fulfils the function of providing effective two-

way communication and consultation with employee representatives. In particular there is a legal requirement to consult on the matters mentioned in appendix 3 and appendix 5 and the Health & Safety Officer will take steps to ensure that such consultation takes place in good time;

- Take steps to encourage union and non-union employees to elect representatives of employee safety;
- In the event of there being no representatives of employee safety, will ensure that adequate steps are taken to consult employees on the matters given in appendix 5;
- Receive representations on health and safety matters from union safety representatives where such representations cannot be dealt with by the Health & Safety Officer;
- Receive representations on health and safety matters from representatives of employee safety where such representations cannot be dealt with by Health & Safety Officer.
- So far as is practicable, attend health and safety sub-committee meetings and offer advice to committee members on all aspects of occupational health and safety including policy and the organisation and arrangements necessary to make adequate provision for health and safety;
- Present to the committee accident statistics, reports, discussion documents, and other documents as appropriate;
- Ensure that a copy of the University health and safety policies are available in departmental offices and the LRC;
- Ensure that statutory notices, University notices and information sheets and other items of interest in promoting health and safety are displayed on the University health and safety notice boards.
- Use such means as are appropriate to disseminate health and safety information to staff and students; this may include use of the University newsletter, distribution of leaflets and information sheets, etc.

## **2.2 Staff representatives**

Staff representatives appointed to the committee will

- Endeavour to attend meetings of the committee;
- Strive to provide an adequate level of consultation on matters of health and safety with employee and student representatives.

### **2.3 Faculty / Professional Service Management**

- Will receive representations from non-union/union safety representatives and from representatives of employee safety on health and safety matters within the control of the line manager. Where necessary such representations may be referred to the Health & Safety Officer.

### **2.4 Union Safety Representatives**

- Will represent members of their respective unions at the University location where the representative is based, and so far, as is practicable, at other locations.
- The functions of union safety representatives will be those given in section 2(4) of the Health and Safety at Work Act and regulation 4 of the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations. See appendix 2 for more details.

### **2.5 Representatives of Employee Safety**

- Any volunteers may offer themselves for election by a group of non-union employees;
- Will represent members of their respective electoral groups;
- The functions of representatives of employee safety will be those given in regulation 6 of the Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations. See appendix 4 for more details;

### **2.6 Student Safety Representative**

- The student union representative will represent the views of the student body at meetings of the health and safety sub-committee and will communicate the outcome of any consultations to the students.

## **3. Arrangements**

### **3.1 The following arrangements will apply**

- The University will hold regular meetings of a health and safety sub-committee where employee and student representatives may discuss issues relating to health and safety with University managers. The prime function of the committee is to provide a forum for consultation. The responsibility for ensuring health and safety rests with the employer;
- The committee will be chaired by a nominated Chair and will have staff members, employee representatives, a student member, and ex-officio

members as may be agreed by the Chairman and Health & Safety Officer;

- The committee will meet at least once a term or more frequently as decided by the Health & Safety Officer;
- Minutes will be kept of all meetings of the health and safety sub-committee and copies of the minutes will be placed in departmental offices where staff and students will have access to them;
- Where possible committee members will notify the clerk to the committee of items for discussion at least one week in advance. These items will then be placed on the agenda
- For the meeting. Other items may be raised by any committee member under any other business and time permitting, these will be discussed
- Union safety representatives will represent members of their respective unions at the University location where the representative is based, and so far as is practicable, at other locations;
- The functions of union safety representatives will be those given in section 2(4) of the Health and Safety at Work Act and regulation 4 of the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations. See appendix 2 for more details;
- Items on which the union safety representatives must be consulted are given in appendix 3;
- Union safety representatives will be given sufficient time off, with pay, to perform the functions in connection with their appointment, including attending training. This is a legal requirement under regulation 4 (2) (a), (b) of the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations;
- Representatives elected by non-union employees are known as “representatives of employee safety”. They will represent a particular group of employees. All employees in a group will be eligible to vote in any election for a representative of employee safety;
- Efforts will be made to encourage the election of representatives of employee safety to represent non-union employees. Where this is not possible consultation will be with employees directly;
- The functions of representatives of employee safety will be those given in regulation 6 of the Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996. See appendix 4 for more details;
- Items on which non-union employees or their representatives must be consulted are given in appendix 5;
- Representatives of employee safety will be given sufficient time off with

pay, to perform the functions in connection with their appointment, including attending training. This is a legal requirement under regulation 7 (1), (2) of the Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations;

- The student services representative will represent the views of the student body at meetings of the health and safety sub-committee and will make efforts to communicate the outcome of any consultations to the students;
- Copies of the University health and safety policies will be made available to all staff and students via the St Mary's intranet.
- The University will maintain health and safety notice board and these will be used to post statutory notices, University notices and information sheets and other items of interest in promoting health and safety at the University. Other means of disseminating information (e.g. University newsletter) may also be used;
- The University Health & Safety Officer will, within the limits of his/her knowledge and ability, provide information and advice to staff and students on matters relating to safety and health.

## **Appendix 1**

### **The Composition of the Health & Safety Sub-Committee**

#### **Management Representatives**

Chair - COO

Health & Safety Officer

Elected Rep for Academic Staff – Sn Lecturer Management & Social Sciences

UNISON Representatives

UCU Representatives

Director of Estates and Facilities

Sports St Mary's Manager

Catering

Technical Services Manager

Information Technology

Clerk to the Committee

#### **Head of Customer Services LRC**

Non Union Representative

Interim Sn Services Manager

EA to Director of Estates

Student Union CEO

## Appendix 2

### Functions of union safety representatives

The main function of safety representatives given in Section 2 (4) of the Health and Safety at Work Act is to represent the employees in consultations on health and safety with the employers.

More detailed functions are given in regulation 4 (1) of the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations and these are reproduced in slightly modified form below. Nothing in the above-mentioned regulations imposes any duty on a safety representative over and above the duties imposed on all employees by Sections 7 & 8 of the Health and Safety at Work Act.

The more detailed functions of the safety representatives are to

- Investigate potential hazards and dangerous occurrences at the workplace (whether or not they are drawn to his or her attention by the employees he represents) and to examine the causes of accidents at the workplace;
- Investigate complaints by any employee he or she represents relating to that employee's health, safety or welfare at work;
- Make representations to the employer on matters arising out of the above investigations;
- Make representations to the employer on general matters affecting the health, safety or welfare at work of the employees at the workplace;
- Carry out inspections of the workplace in accordance with the above-mentioned regulations;
- Represent the employees he or she was appointed to represent in consultations at the workplace with inspectors of the Health and Safety Executive and of any other enforcing authority;
- Receive information from inspectors in accordance with Section 28 (8) of the Health and Safety at Work Act;
- Attend meetings of the health and safety sub-committee.



## **Appendix 3**

### **Matters on which union safety representatives must be consulted**

The Health and Safety at Work Act, Section 2 (6), places a general duty on employers to consult union safety representatives

- With a view to the making and maintenance of arrangements which will enable the employer and his employees to co-operate effectively in promoting and developing measures to ensure the health and safety at work of the employees and in checking the effectiveness of such measures.

The employer is required by regulation 4 A of the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations to consult the union safety representatives in good time in respect of the following matters

- The introduction of any measure at the workplace which may substantially affect the health and safety of the employees the safety representatives concerned represent;
- Arrangements for appointing a competent person or persons to assist the employer in meeting legal requirements in respect of health and safety;
- Arrangements for nominating a sufficient number of competent persons to implement evacuation procedures from premises in the event of serious and imminent danger;
- Any health and safety information that the employer is legally required to provide to employees the safety representatives concerned represent;
- The planning and organisation of any health and safety training the employer is legally required to provide to employees the safety representatives concerned represent;
- The health and safety consequences for the employees the safety representatives concerned represent of the introduction (including planning) of new technologies into the workplace.

**Functions of representatives of employee safety**

The main function of representatives of employee safety are given in regulation 6 of the Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees Regulations and these are reproduced in slightly modified form below.

Nothing in the above-mentioned regulations imposes any duty on a representative of employee safety over and above the duties imposed on all employees by Sections 7 & 8 of the Health and Safety at Work Act.

The functions of the representatives of employee safety are to:

- Make representations to the employer on potential hazards and dangerous occurrences at the workplace which affect, or could affect, the group of employees he or she represents;
- Make representations to the employer on general matters affecting the health, safety or welfare at work of the group of employees he or she represents, and in particular on matters which are the subject of consultation with the employer;
- Represent the employees he or she was appointed to represent in consultations at the workplace with inspectors of the Health and Safety Executive and of any other enforcing authority.

In addition to the above functions which are specified in the Regulations, the University requires representatives of Employee safety to:

- Endeavour to attend meetings of the health and safety sub-committee.

## Appendix 5

### **Matters for consultation with non-union employees or their representatives**

The employer is required by regulation 3 of the Health and Safety (consultation with Employees) Regulations to consult non-union employees or their representatives in good time in respect of the following matters

- The introduction of any measure at the workplace which may substantially affect the health and safety of the employees;
- Arrangements for appointing a competent person or persons to assist the employer in meeting legal requirements in respect of health and safety;
- Arrangements for nominating a sufficient number of competent persons to implement evacuation procedures from premises in the event of serious and imminent danger;
- Any health and safety information that the employer is legally required to provide to employees;
- The planning and organisation of any health and safety training the employer is legally required to provide to employees;
- The health and safety consequences for the employees of the introduction (including planning) of new technologies into the workplace.

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