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Welcome

We have a reputation for quality and excellence in this university, including our standards in health and safety. Preventing accidents and ill-health at work, and avoiding the resulting suffering and losses are of great importance to us all. Everyone has a part to play in managing and achieving good health and safety. This handbook summarises how we do it, where to get further details, and gives essential information on common issues. Please take time to read and assimilate it and bookmark the handbook for future reference.

University of Dundee Health and Safety Policy Statement

As the governing body of the University of Dundee, the University Court accepts its responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of staff, students and others affected by the University's activities. To discharge this responsibility Court provides leadership and support to sustain the importance of health and safety as part of the University's programme of good governance and risk control. The Court takes all reasonable steps to ensure that all staff are competent and accept their health and safety responsibilities.

The University Court has adopted this policy to promote excellence in the health and safety performance of the University's activities of teaching, research and associated undertakings. The University will work proactively to ensure full compliance with all health and safety legal requirements. The University aims to effect continual improvements in the health and safety of staff, students, and other people affected by the University's activities.

The University Court requires all staff and students to co-operate in achieving a high standard of health and safety performance, and encourages and rewards all staff in pursuit of this goal.

The University Court will ensure that it is kept informed of health and safety risk management issues, and that overall health and safety performance is
periodically reviewed. The Health and Safety Policy will be kept under annual review through the Health and Safety Sub-Committee.

This Health and Safety Policy Statement was approved by Human Resources Committee on 20 Nov 2012.
Contact Details

Safety Services are based in the Tower Building. Telephone 01382 384104, Fax 01382 385501, e-mails to individuals listed below, all @dundee.ac.uk.

Occupational Health is on the ground floor of 1 Cross Row, Tel 01382 386948

Head of Safety Services   Dr Ian Scragg   Ext. 84103   i.g.scragg@
Deputy and RPA           Damian Leddy   Ext. 88467   d.z.leddy@
Fire Safety Adviser      Tom Kane      Ext. 85030   t.kane@
Waste Manager & RPO      Martin Rollo   Ext. 88468   m.rollo@
Waste Technician         Bill Blair     Ext. 86442   w.blair@
Waste Technician         Derek Bateman  Ext. 84104   d.bateman@
Office Administrator     Lesley Hewitt  Ext. 84104   l.hewitt@
OH Nurse                 Isla Reid      Ext. 85410   i.y.reid@
OH Adviser               Audrey Burns   Ext. 85410   a.e.burns@
OH Clerical Support      Lynsey McNaughton Ext.86948 l.mcnaughton@
OH Clerical Support      Muriel McIntosh Ext. 86948 m.f.mcintosh@


There will also be a School/Support Service Safety Representative where you work and their names can be found at [http://www.dundee.ac.uk/safety/](http://www.dundee.ac.uk/safety/).

If you have concerns or queries about any health or safety issue, ask your line manager or School/Support Service Safety Representative, or contact Safety Services if the matter cannot be sorted out locally.

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School/Support Service Health and Safety Policy

Full details of the arrangements made by your Dean/Director to protect your health, safety and welfare can be found in your School/Support Service Health and Safety Policy, including the name and contact details of your
School/Support Service Safety Representative. A copy should be available for you to read (eg on Safety Noticeboard).

Emergency Telephone Numbers
In an emergency dial:
4141 if you are in City Campus, Taypark, and Botanic Gardens
2222 if you are in Ninewells Hospital or Dental Hospital
77-4141 if you are in NHS Floors of Frankland Building, or 4141 if you are in Geography labs
9-999 if you are in Kirkcaldy Campus

All telephones are labelled with this information, please inform your School Safety Representative if you find a handset that is not labelled.

Emergency Arrangements
Whatever building you go in, make sure you get to know:
- the layout of the building
- where the emergency exits are, as well as your normal route in and out
- siting of telephones
- emergency phone number for that building (number is on telephone)

It's too late to find out much when an emergency actually happens.

If you need to phone emergency number you must speak clearly and say:
- who you are
- where you are, i.e. what building/floor/room and give the phone extension number
- what emergency services are needed and briefly what has happened
- exactly where the emergency assistance is needed. Give the name of the building, the street and the postcode if you know it

Make sure the operator has understood what you told them by asking for it to be repeated back to you.
Fire
Fire is a serious hazard and can never be discounted.
Make sure you know:
- the means of escape from the place where you normally work
- how to raise the alarm in case of fire
- the university emergency telephone number (and local variations outwith City Campus)
- the fire procedures for your building (see the blue fire action notices)
- do not use lifts if a fire alarm is sounding

Training on the use of fire extinguishers is available through Safety Services, contact Tom Kane, University Fire Safety Adviser on Ext 85030.

First Aid
Trained First Aiders and Appointed Persons along with the location of first aid boxes are listed on green First Aid notices in buildings – check you know how to summon first aid if it is needed. In small Units your First Aider or Appointed Person may be in an adjacent Unit.

Accidents and Ill Health
It is important that you report any accident, incident or event that could have resulted in injury or ill health that you have in the course of your employment, however trivial, and this should be done by notifying your School/Support Service Safety Representative and completing an Accident and Incident Report Form. Any ill-health symptoms which you think are related to your work should be similarly reported without delay. Problems picked up early have a greater chance of being put right without permanent damage.

Health Issues
If you think there is anything at work that is adversely affecting your health, raise the matter with your School/Support Service in the first instance. You
can also contact Occupational Health on Ext. 86948 or Safety Services on Ext 84104.

If you use chemicals or handle hazardous substances, make sure that you read the COSHH risk assessments for them and take the recommended precautions.

Aches and pains in the upper part of the body may be caused by poor use of PCs. Make sure that you have had a DSE risk assessment. Everyone in Scotland is entitled to a free NHS eye test.

If you feel stressed at work, try to analyse what is causing this and take what actions you can to eliminate the causes or take the matter up with your manager, supervisor or Safety Representative. Other sources of help are available through Human Resources, First Call-Staff Support Network, Occupational Health, and the Counselling Service if the problems cannot be sorted locally.

**Health Surveillance**

The University will do everything it reasonably can to protect your health at work. However, there are some work activities where there remains a slight risk of ill health eg working in a noisy workshop. In these situations you will be asked to undergo health surveillance. Usually this means meeting a nurse in the Occupational Health Service, and completing a questionnaire or undergoing a test eg a hearing test. This is primarily for your benefit, so please attend scheduled appointments and complete questionnaires accurately.

**Reporting Health and Safety Concerns**

All staff have a responsibility to draw to the attention of their line manager anything they see wrong in terms of health and safety. Please help to keep the University a safe workplace by notifying health and safety defects to your Safety Representative or Estates and Buildings as appropriate, and by doing so you may prevent an injury or loss.

In particular watch out for:

- obstructed means of escape
• untidy storage
• security breaches (e.g., a fire escape door being left open)
• vehicles speeding on campus or parking on "keep clear" areas
• damage to stairs, steps and footpaths

Employees’ Responsibilities
Everybody has responsibilities under health and safety law:
• for things they do, or don’t do (acts and omissions)
• not to interfere with or misuse things provided for health and safety at work, and
• to co-operate with their employer’s efforts to comply with health and safety law

As an employee of the University of Dundee you are expected to carry out your duties competently and to the best of your ability.

Personal Safety and Security
Consider your own safety in everything you do:
• think before you act
• be aware that intruders and thieves may be encountered on campus
• avoid situations which may lead to confrontation
• keep to recognised footpaths
• ask for help or further information when you need it

Lone Working
There is nothing unsafe about occasional late working on your own in the office provided certain basic precautions are taken, such as:
• ensuring that intruders and opportunist thieves cannot get in (security)
• someone knows where you are
• you have access to a phone to summon help
Where the lone work is more hazardous than normal office activities, a risk assessment needs to be made taking into account that risks may be increased due to the absence of other people around. Your School Safety Representative can advise on this risk assessment and on any activities that must not be carried out when working alone. Laboratory work needs careful consideration. Full details can be found in your School/Support Service health and safety policy.

Where the lone working is away from University premises, considerations of personal safety are more wide ranging, and guidance on additional precautions to be taken can be found in the Safety Policy Arrangement Fieldwork on the Safety Services website.

Visitors
Your Unit must be made aware of all visitors you bring to the University (eg children), and your Unit must ensure all visitors receive health and safety training and appropriate supervision. Further details can be found in your School/Support Service health and safety policy.

Travelling as Part of University Work
Road traffic accidents can be fatal so it is vital that you:

- use public transport or a reputable travel organization whenever possible
- for car journeys over 150 miles a risk assessment is required—see http://www.dundee.ac.uk/safety/sections/general/policy/40-2008.doc
- if driving, obey the Highway Code, observe speed limits and wear your seat belt
- check you have a valid license: license requirements can be found at: http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Motoring/DriverLicensing/WhatCanYouDriveAndYourObligations/DG_4022547
- check tyres, lights, fluid levels before setting off on a long journey
- ensure luggage or loads are secure, and the vehicle is not overloaded
• do not drive if you feel unwell, or suspect you are impaired by medications, drugs or alcohol
• if you become sleepy when driving on a long journey STOP in a safe place, lock doors, snooze or rest for 10-20mins, then drink some strong coffee before continuing the journey
• park in a well-frequented area as near as possible to your destination
• conceal any valuables or attractive items before locking and leaving the car
• never use a mobile phone while driving, but carry one for emergencies
• have your car keys ready when returning to the car
• let someone responsible know your itinerary and expected time of arrival/return
• let the responsible person know when you have arrived/returned

Slips, Trips and Falls
These cause nearly half the injury accidents we see at the University, so it is important to watch out for causes and try to eliminate hazards. Help yourself by wearing suitable shoes for work. If you do fall, please report it on an Accident and Incident Report Form even if you do not hurt yourself. It may reveal a hazard that could be removed and prevent someone else getting injured.

Premises defects such as damaged stair treads or loose paving slabs can be reported on the Estates and Buildings Faults and Repairs hotline by phoning extension 88181.

There is a checklist on Safety Services web site to help identify hazards

Lifting, carrying and transporting
Before lifting, pushing, pulling or carrying a load consider:
• your physical capability and whether what you are wearing restricts your movements
• the size, shape, awkwardness, and weight of the load
• the route along which the load must be moved – check it is clear and free from obstructions

Then:
• rock, test lift or gauge the load to check you are comfortable with its weight
• establish a good balance with feet apart facing the direction of travel
• bend your knees and let your legs do most of the work
• don’t stoop, share the bending between your legs and your back
• if lifting, keep the load close to your body
• lift smoothly- don’t jerk
• don’t twist- move your feet to turn
• don’t try to be a hero! Ask for help if you need it.

**Personal Protective Equipment**

In some circumstances the only way your health and safety can be ensured is by requiring you to use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for certain tasks. The decision to use PPE is only made when other means of controlling risks have been considered and found impractical, so this is a last line of defence. If needed, you will be supplied with, and trained in the proper use of, suitable PPE and have the risks and control measures involved in your work explained to you. You will be expected to take care of the PPE issued to you, store it safely and report any defects to a responsible person.

**Welfare and Drinking Water**

A supply of potable drinking water is available for all staff, and this may be from the tap or suitable containers depending on the location. Places where staff can eat and take rest breaks are also provided, but these are not necessarily within each Unit as long as they are reasonably convenient.
Heating, Lighting and Ventilation

The temperature in offices, labs and lecture theatres should not fall below 16°C and should be maintained at a comfortable level. While there is no maximum temperature specified for workplaces, temperatures persistently above 30°C are usually uncomfortable and should be reported to Estates and Buildings. Localised heating or cooling may sometimes be an appropriate response to temperature extremes but increases electrical consumption. Help yourself to feel cool at work by wearing loose and comfortable clothing on warm days, and by wearing thicker clothing on cold days.

Adequate lighting levels for work vary according to the tasks, and the Unit will provide suitable lighting, supplementing it with local task lighting if needed.

Adequate ventilation by means of circulating fresh or purified air is needed in all workplaces. Where windows open this usually provides sufficient ventilation.

Electricity

Electricity kills quickly and indiscriminately if mishandled. It can also cause nasty burns, fires and other damage.

Don’t get complacent, follow some simple good practices:

- switch off appliances at the end of the day
- switch off and unplug appliances that are used less often
- only use the appliance for its intended purpose
- use the appliance in a safe and stable position
- do not place items on an electrical appliance that could cause it to overheat or obstruct cooling air supplies
- position leads, extension leads and plugs carefully to avoid tripping hazards and so that you can reach the socket to switch off quickly if something goes wrong
- if you use a multi-socket extension lead do not overload it and make sure it is fused
- one extension lead is enough! Never add a further extension lead
• use an extension lead of appropriate length, but always fully uncoil a wind-up extension lead before use
• report any damaged sockets, light switches or other fittings and do not use them until they have been competently repaired
• never attempt electrical repairs or alterations unless you have been trained and authorised to do them
• if you bring electrical equipment in from home it needs to be PAT tested before it is plugged in to the University’s sockets
• visually check electrical appliances before use (see checklist below) and don’t risk using one where you can see something wrong. (95% of faults on portable electrical appliances can be seen.)

Remember to switch off and unplug any appliance before you carry out the following visual checks:

**Appliance**

• damage to casing
• damage to grommet, sleeving or other protection at the point where the lead passes through the casing
• damage to switches
• loose screws or other parts
• water damage, evidence of past spills of liquid, or other contamination

**Leads**

• cuts, punctures or abrasion
• discolouration or distortion which might indicate overheating
• hardening of the outer insulation
• kinks
• taped or other non-standard joints
• in a position where damage is likely

**Plugs**

• physical damage, cracks, holes in casing, bent pins
• discolouration or distortion which may indicate overheating
• outer insulation layer of lead is not secured within the plug casing, or if you can see the coloured insulation on the wires
Safe Working with Personal Computers and other Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

Most staff in the University use computers for a significant part of their time, and many use it at home as well. The dangers are insidious and often underestimated, hence this guidance.

Computers and display screen equipment bring great benefits to working life but they are not totally risk-free. Through understanding the risks and how they can be controlled everyone should be able to work safely and avoid any health problems that could arise.

**Responsibilities**

University of Dundee will provide suitable equipment and workstations, give training (of which this document is part), assess workstations, arrange changes in activity or breaks to avoid lengthy periods of DSE use at work, and provide free eye tests and corrective glasses as needed to employees who use DSE for a large part of their work.

People who use DSE at the University have responsibilities to follow the advice and training on working safely, and to report promptly equipment faults or any ill-health symptoms which they think are related to DSE use to a manager, supervisor or Safety Representative.

**The risks**

Bad posture, poor ergonomic design of the workstation or intensive keying without adequate breaks can cause aches and pains, which, if ignored may lead to more persistent discomfort and sometimes chronic musculoskeletal disorders which disrupt home and working life. If symptoms are recognised early, remedial action can put things right saving a lot of suffering and worry.
Sitting in the same position for long periods and lack of normal exercise can both contribute to aches and pains so it is important to change your position and get up and do something else whenever possible. Taking adequate rest pauses from intensive keying and a break before you feel tired, or stretching and loosening muscles will also help.

Laptops are unsuitable for prolonged work and should be used on a table of suitable height to allow the best position that is attainable. Wherever possible, use a desktop PC, or get a docking station and screen for the laptop, or at least get a keyboard and mouse so you can work more comfortably for short periods.

Eyestrain, headaches and stress can all be caused by intensive working at DSE without adequate breaks or when the workstation is not adjusted to your needs.

**Adjusting your workstation**

Adjusting the desk, chair and screen to suit you is very important especially when you may be using different workstations. The seat height should allow your feet to be placed flat on the floor with your thighs parallel to the floor or sloping slightly downwards towards the knees, and your elbows should be just above desk height. A footrest may be needed if your feet cannot be placed flat on the floor when you have your elbows just above the desk surface. Sit with your back supported by the backrest of the chair and adjust its height and tilt to be comfortable.

The keyboard and screen should be directly in front of you, not at an angle, and your eyes should be roughly level with the top of the screen about 50–80 cm away from you. The screen may be tilted slightly upwards for comfortable viewing. Looking down slightly to the screen is OK but needing to look up to it is not.
There should be room on the desk in front of the keyboard to rest your wrists or the heels of your hands while using the keyboard and your forearms should be parallel to the floor with elbows close by your sides. Key gently!

If you use a mouse this should be within easy reach on a mouse mat beside the keyboard. Don’t grip the mouse tightly and remember to move your whole arm from the shoulder when moving the mouse rather than making hand and wrist movements. Intensive mouse work can lead to muscle problems, so try changing hands occasionally, and speak up if you are experiencing discomfort using the mouse – there are other types that can be tried if improving your technique does not sort the problem.

Things you use most frequently should be arranged to be within easy reach and you should not need to be twisting to reach items you use a lot. If you do a lot of copy typing, a document holder beside the screen will avoid the need for repeated neck movements.

**Breaks or changes in activity**

Even when you have followed all these instructions and feel comfortable, it is important to remember to take regular breaks from DSE work either through doing something else or relaxing your hands, eyes and arms and exercising the parts of the body that have remained static. Stretching, turning your head from side to side, and hunching and relaxing your shoulders all help. Focusing your eyes on the distance for a few seconds gives them a rest too.

**Eyes**

Flickering images, dirty screens, glare and reflections may all make your eyes have to work harder to see all the detail and cause strain, but extensive research has failed to show that DSE causes eye problems. Everyone in Scotland can get a free NHS eye test, and if corrective glasses are needed solely because of DSE work, these can be provided by the University (for details see the Safety Services web site). Occasionally people suffer from dry or sticky eyes or have trouble with contact lenses when working with DSE.
Lack of humidity, and concentrating so hard that they blink less frequently, are both possible causes that can be addressed.

*Keeping it safe*

While the University’s compliance with the Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992 as amended can go a long way to making DSE work safe, it is up to every DSE user to remember and practice good working habits as given in this booklet.

Detailed guidance on DSE use is given in the University Guidance “Working with Display Screen Equipment” on the Safety Services web site.

*Version 9, 2013*