

Health and Safety Strategy and Plan 2020-2025

Helping Greenwich Work and Study Well

Introduction

This Strategy and Plan is based on the principle that Health and Safety is much more just than a compliance requirement. People – our staff and our students – are fundamental to our mission as a university, so it is essential that we ensure their health, safety and wellbeing when working and studying at the University of Greenwich (UoG). Illness and injury should **never** be an inevitable or expected consequence of doing business. The realistic goal is not to be risk free but to create an environment where risk is properly appreciated, understood and managed to ensure that everyone leaves healthy and uninjured. This approach aims to protect people by managing risk in a proportionate and effective way, supporting innovation and increasing productivity.

During the last five years, our Health & Safety strategy was based on continual improvement. The challenge we face over the coming five years is to improve even further. It is important to acknowledge that this will not be at the expense of what is already done well, but to focus on the areas where collective effort will make the greatest improvement.

The UoG Health and Safety Strategy and Plan has been developed to support the University's strategic aims and objectives, taking themes from the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) '[Help Great Britain Work Well](#)' strategy, our existing [Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#) and embedding best practice as set out in Universities Safety and Health Association (USHA) guidance [USHA/UCEA Leadership and management of health and safety in higher education institutions](#).

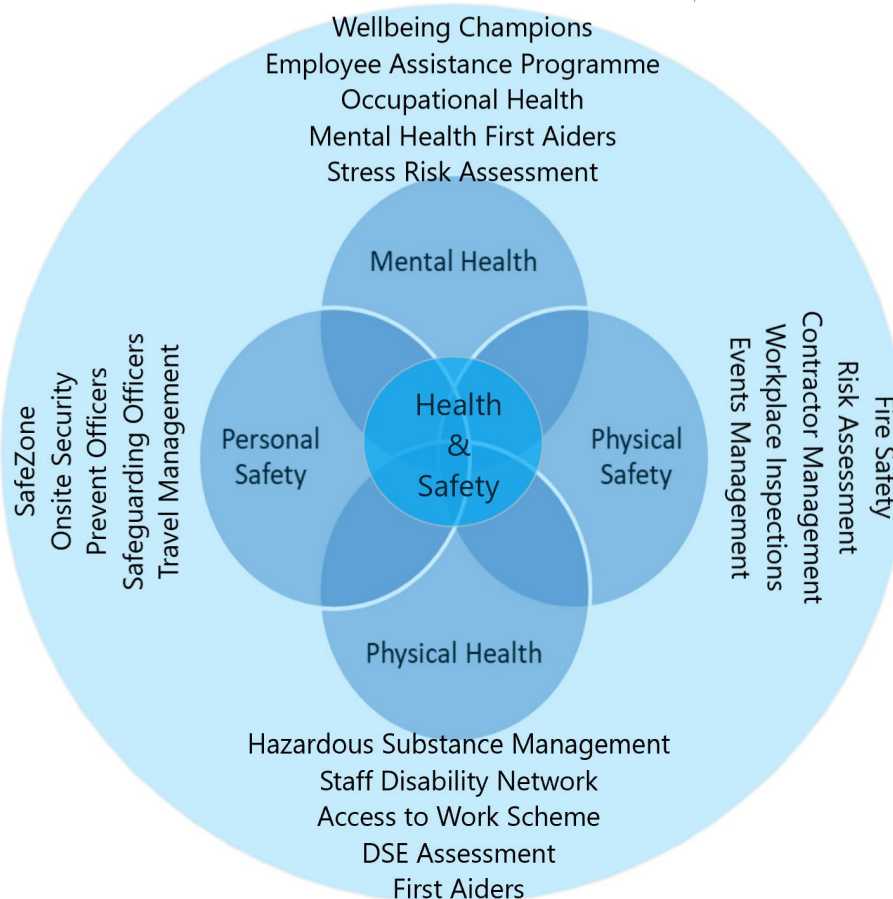
Aims of the strategy

The strategy is based on continual improvement in order to protect the health, safety and welfare of all staff, students and visitors. The principles are simple:

1. Those who create risks have a responsibility to manage those risks; those who manage staff / students have a responsibility to prevent them from being harmed, including harm presented by public health concerns – placing the ownership of risk in the right place.
2. Action should be proportionate to the risks that need to be managed – which means we need well-thought-out control measures that are tailored to each part of the Institution, to the nature of the work undertaken and the people who work there.
3. Health and Safety is not just about physical safety:
 - **Health** is defined by the World Health Organisation as 'a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.'
 - **Safety** is defined as 'freedom from unacceptable risk of harm.'

Mental health, physical health and personal safety are therefore equally as important as physical safety, and all contribute to an individual's overall health. This is acknowledged in our [Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#), which sets out how we will support the wellbeing of staff and students, broadly and holistically

Our provision includes a range of tools and activities to support staff and student health, safety and wellbeing. These are provided by the University, Greenwich Students' Union and other partners, and we aim to develop, connect and enhance these tools and activities through delivery of this strategy. Our current provision for students and staff can be summarised in the following diagrams:



It is often said that too much complexity and bureaucracy has built up around health and safety. However, many people already have the knowledge to make the themes of the strategy a reality. Our aim is therefore to be smarter. By keeping things as simple and straightforward as possible, we will ensure that all areas are able to be successful and productive.

This strategy is therefore built on a basic premise: by acting together in a supportive and encouraging environment, with support and promotion from senior management, academic leadership, professional services, students and staff, complemented by effective and proportionate risk management, the system can be greater than the sum of its parts. Doing so will provide a clear direction on where resources should be targeted to greatest effect. The result will be greater broad and wide ownership of the issues, with everyone able to enjoy the improved productivity that a strong health and safety culture will bring.

The resultant strategic objectives are included in Table 1 and can be broken into 5 key areas;

1. Act Together
2. Manage Risk Well
3. Monitor and Measure Health and Safety Performance
4. Share Our Successes
5. Keep Pace with Change

The health and safety strategy is underpinned by the [University Health and Safety Policy and arrangements](#), which include guidance on both routine and emerging issues, such as COVID-19.

Governance

The achievement of this strategy requires the commitment of the Governing Body, which has ultimate responsibility for health and safety, and the involvement of University staff, students, trade unions, Greenwich Students' Union and other stakeholders. The strategy should be considered as an evolving document which will be overseen by the University Health and Safety Committee and revised as appropriate for approval by the Governing Body. The strategy has been drawn up by the University Head of Health and Safety with the support of the Health and Safety Champion. Implementation will be monitored and supported by the University Health and Safety Unit. However, the following fundamental governance arrangements remain:

- strong and visible leadership from the Governing Body;
- directors, managers, supervisors and all employees having the competence to identify and control the risks created by their work activities;
- collaboration and partnership, including genuine worker engagement.

Planning and Communication

The Health and Safety Plan for 2020-2025 (Table 1) sets out arrangements to implement and measure the strategy over the five year period. Actions and associated KPIs to achieve the objectives and outcomes in Table 1 will be reviewed annually ([Table 2: KPIs](#) provides those proposed for 2020/21).

Faculties/Directorates/Units will be required to incorporate appropriate actions at a local level through their specific action plans. The implementation of these plans will be monitored by the Health and Safety Unit through the health and safety auditing process and annual review of Safety Statements.

Monitoring and Review

This document will be reviewed periodically by the University Health and Safety Committee to ensure that it is fit for purpose and continues to meet the requirements of the University while being responsive to changes and developments. The University Health and Safety Committee will also regularly monitor progress against the associated KPIs. Progress will be reported in the Annual Health and Safety Report to the Governing Body.

Table 1: Strategic Health and Safety Plan 2020-2025

Our objective	The planned outcome	We will know we have succeeded if.....
Act Together to develop collective ownership amongst everyone who shares responsibility for helping Greenwich work and study well	Staff will be engaged in securing a safe and healthy workplace with an increased level of communication which embeds H&S matters and provides efficient resources/guidance, resulting in a reduction in accidents, incidents and ill health	*All Senior leaders and governance staff have attended the half day health and safety risk management course within twelve months of appointment
		Everyone knows where they can go, to seek advice, if they need it
		*All Faculties / Directorates / Units / Trade Unions are represented and attend both the University Health and Safety Committee and the Health and Safety Consultative Committee meetings.
		*Sickness absence data is used to inform improvements in attendance, productivity and H&S performance.
Manage Risk Well by supporting Faculties, Directorates and Units to ensure that staff are competent and provided with the right mix of training, skills, experience and knowledge to embed a sensible and proportionate approach to risk management and improve on the gains made in safety whilst giving health the same priority.	Improved management of significant risks throughout the university	We have an agreed training programme to support all H&S role holders
		*All Faculties and Directorates have a record of risk assessments
		*All Faculties /Directorates / Units produce a health and safety risk register and review it regularly.
		*All staff defined as users under the display screen equipment (DSE) regulations have undertaken relevant training and have a current DSE risk assessment for their workstation
		Emergency plans are developed that encompass all relevant risks and are practised
		*All staff (and students) are familiar with the emergency procedures and have this knowledge routinely refreshed
		*A framework is established to support those involved in responding to incidents, including incidents relating to mental health.

Our objective	The planned outcome	We will know we have succeeded if.....
Monitor and measure health and safety performance to improve productivity whilst protecting workers' health and safety	Revised audit process will be effective in monitoring health and safety performance and will drive improvements, giving assurance to the Governing body	We have a comprehensive 5 year audit plan
	No legal actions or notices served against the University	*Agreed short and long term targets for improvement are established for all Faculties / Directorates / Units
Share our successes to create a positive health and safety culture that all staff and students are pleased to support.	More accurate accident, incident and near-miss reporting, investigation and learning from accidents. Be increasingly joined up to deliver improved outcomes and minimise unnecessary burden	*No prohibition or improvement notices, or notices of contravention are served on the university or its contractors (by the Health and Safety Executive, Local Authority Environmental Health Departments or Fire Authority)
		The online incident reporting system remains an effective way to record and report data.
Keep pace with change: use innovation and new technologies to ensure a proportionate, risk-based approach and support better outcomes.	Improved management of significant risks throughout the university	All managers will be actively involved in accident, incident and near-miss investigations and taking actions to prevent a recurrence.
		*There is an increase in the number of SCORM compatible H&S training modules.
		*All staff will have completed essential H&S training modules.
		*There is increased uptake of the onsite personal safety application (SafeZone) to bring us in line with sector average.
		*All faculties / Directorates / Units will be able to provide evidence that essential records are kept / maintained

Items marked with a * will have measurable data, while others have single outcomes or are not currently measurable, but all will be recorded and monitored through a series of key performance indicators. An annual plan detailing these indicators can be found in Table 2. It is flexible and regularly reviewed in light of progress and feedback from students and staff.