



Further information on the introduction and implementation of first aid needs assessment

Within the University, first aid appointments are generally not led by a risk assessment of the hazards in that area or building. There is little adherence to the HSE guidelines for numbers and type of first aiders, for the risks within that area. Only 3-day first aid trained individuals currently appear on central Health and Safety Department first aid lists, those who have been emergency first aid trained, have no role in first aid within the University. Many first aiders are trained on an ad hoc basis, without any local consultation regarding local need or suitability. In other areas there are concerns that with an increase in hybrid working, there may be insufficient first aid cover, but without local consultation, and a universal appointment system; that is risk-based and follows the information set out by HSE for first aid numbers in different risk situations.

Currently there is guidance (based on guidance provided by HSE) on the numbers of first aiders and appointed persons, on the Health and Safety Department website. The suggested first aider numbers will not change from those currently suggested in HSE guidance.

The changes to first aid appointments will enable the corporate First Aid Trainer to provide much needed additional first aid training in field work, chemical hazards, general first aid awareness and AED training.

Moving forward, the number of first aiders, emergency first aiders, and appointed persons will be dictated by a building First Aid Needs Assessment (FANA), across the University. The Head of Area is ultimately responsible for provision of first aid. Where there is single occupancy of a building, the HSA/HSC will support the Head of Area, to undertake the FANA. On completion of the FANA the HSA/HSC should look at the current list of first aiders in their area and in consultation with the emergency first aid/first aider's manager, decide those who are to be appointed as FA/EFA and compile a list of nominated FA/EFA for their area. Where there are several occupiers of a building, the building MOBUG and the HSA/HSC attached to it will undertake the assessment and appointment of emergency, first aiders and appointed persons, in consultation with respective Heads of Area and respective managers. The HSA/HSC will forward these appointments and FANA to the Health and Safety Department in the first instance along with a list of surplus first aiders.

The Health and Safety Department are currently working with P&M on adaptations to the current training and recall systems, so that they will align with the new appointment system. The FANA should be reviewed annually, or if there are first aid related staff changes and updates, if risks change, or numbers and types of staff alter, and after significant incidents. Any updates should be sent to the Health and Safety Department.



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In situations where buildings are low risk in nature (office work), the current format with the provision of multiple 3 day first aiders, will change to a risk-based approach. The risk assessment will better reflect the first aid guidance already provided, leading to a reduction in the over-provision of 3 day first aiders and better use made of those trained in emergency first aid. **This change will better reflect the risk profile of the activities within the building.** Multiple universities have adopted this risk-based approach.

Where the building has mixed risks (both offices and laboratories) the assessment will need to consider all risks. However, cover for the high-risk areas may well preclude the appointment of further first aiders/emergency first aiders, depending on the results of the assessment.

In addition to risk, the FANA should consider the hybrid nature of working in that building, as well as holiday and sickness cover, and other local situations covered in the FANA assessment template, and the central or remote location of the building.

It is required that first aid notices, stating the name, qualification (emergency or 3 day), usual location, and contact details, should be in place on each floor by the stairwell, in communal areas such as kitchens and open plan offices, cafes, etc. The information should list the first aiders available within the entire building, including emergency first aiders or if there are appointed persons. The notices should contain information on the locations of the first aid boxes (or nearest to the notice) and AED location as well as how to call an ambulance and notify security.

It is recognised that there will be over provision of first aiders (who currently receive a stipend from the University) in low-risk areas and changes to this situation will need to be introduced following completion of the FANA assessments, possibly leading to a reduction in those receiving stipends. With regards to the management of existing excess first aiders, those appointed following a first aid needs assessment will be the only staff on the live list. It would be for Areas to decide how to manage surplus first aiders. However, they would need to inform the Health and Safety Department using the email firstaid.training@ed.ac.uk, of these individuals, to remove them from the P&M training list. In addition, notification is also required if the stipend for the surplus first aiders is to be removed before their current certificate ends, otherwise the stipend will be removed at the certificate expiry date. The Health and Safety Department would recommend a 'clean break' with the introduction of the FANA, for ease of local and central administration, but the final decision rests with the Area. It is recommended that discussions take place with staff affected at the earliest opportunity.

It has been necessary to introduce a completion deadline for the FANA and this is the **31st of August 2025**. **We have suspended all three-day first aid at work courses until the FANAs are returned.** The sooner the FANA is completed for each area, the easier the transition should be. We are also aware that we do not wish to continue to train staff on 3-day first aid courses who may no longer be required once the



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FANA is completed. Full support will be provided for H&SC and H&SA, with Teams 'drop in' sessions provided in May, June & July. Please ensure you have read the guidance and attempted the FANA before attending. If you are experiencing any particular issues with implementation or a crisis with FA provision during this transition period, please contact us directly at the above email address.

Document version

Version number	Summary of change	Date and by whom
V1.0	New Document	May 2025, Fiona Calvin

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