

Health & Safety Bulletin



Issue 22

May 2018

And it's Goodbye from Him



Many of you will already know that the Director of Health and Safety, Alastair Reid, retires on 30th June 2018, after 35 years in the Health and Safety Department, 19 of those as Director.

Alastair commented: "It has been a privilege to spend the majority of my career in this University, which has given me the opportunity to work with a wide range of great colleagues across all staff groups. I'd like to thank everyone for their support through the years, as we endeavour to keep the individual members of our University community safe and healthy, whilst avoiding the ever tightening clutches of our regulators! Particular thanks are due to my colleagues in the corporate Health and Safety Team, and to the raft of full and part time Health and Safety Managers, Advisers and Officers spread across the University's campuses. The process to recruit my successor is well

underway, and I know that you will all continue to offer the new Director your full assistance and support."

Fire Safety Unit



The Fire Safety Unit (FSU) regularly monitors weekly fire alarm tests and has noted a general decline in compliance with testing regimes in some areas in recent months. A fire alarm requires to be tested whilst the building is occupied,

and normally at the same time each week, with the test results recorded within the building's fire log book. The FSU is disappointed by the current trend and would urge all Building Managers and Fire Co-ordinators to ensure that weekly tests are completed as required.

Additionally, the FSU monitors fire alarm activations, and notes that the University has one of the worst false alarm rates in Edinburgh. The University instigated 404 calls to the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service last year, of which only 14 were for actual incidents - the rest were false alarms. False alarm calls are an inconvenience to staff and students, and also place a burden on our valued Fire and Rescue Service resources, as well as creating additional road risk for all road users. It is for these reasons that the FSU asks that all staff and students are aware of the inconvenience and dangers that arise from such incidents, and asks for more vigilance by ensuring that cooking of any kind is limited to kitchen areas, and self-closing doors remain closed in all kitchens and tea preparation areas.

Should you require any additional information on any of the above matters please feel free to contact the FSU at Fire@ed.ac.uk

University Health and Safety Policy Updated April 2018

The University Health and Safety policy has been updated with a new Foreword by the Principal, Professor Peter Mathieson, as well as slightly amended Emergency Procedures, to ensure they are in line with those published on the University website at <https://edin.ac/2JjYnbz> and <https://edin.ac/2Jhgpey>

The updated policy can be found on our website at <https://www.ed.ac.uk/health-safety/policy-cop/policy> and is sent to all new staff with their contract paperwork as supplied by Human Resources.



Contact health.safety@ed.ac.uk if you require any new copies of the policy.

Due to an upgrade of the current electronic management system, the Occupational Health Service will be off line and have no clinics during 23rd – 30th May. We will not have access to our data base and are not able to progress appointments. Thanks for your patience, this will undoubtedly impact on our service provision however, we hope our normal service will resume shortly after these dates.

Reminder Regarding Modified Electrical Items

A recent event involving a modified electrical item has highlighted the need to ensure that all electrical equipment is in good condition, not modified by a non-competent person and tested as required.

A modified battery for an electric bike had been plugged in to charge in a University building when it caught fire. A staff member received minor burn injuries and there was damage to property, however, the consequences could have been far more severe.

At this point in the investigation, it appears the battery had been modified by the owner who was not qualified or trained in this, and it is likely this amateur modification caused the battery to overheat whilst charging and catch fire.

The University Policy is clear that 'all electrical equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose intended.' (Framework: Arrangements Section 27 Electrical equipment). Although this was a personal item of electrical equipment, we would expect all staff and students to adhere to the University Health and Safety Policy, in particular if bringing these items into University premises and charging them in the electrical outlets.

As well as the Framework referenced above, more guidance is also available online at <https://edin.ac/2IGJYpm> in particular the Code of Practice ES CoP001 <https://edin.ac/2IMSm6V> which defines a competent person as someone who 'must have appropriate technical knowledge, training and information to enable them to work safely.'

We must learn from this event, and seek to prevent any such occurrence in the future.

Health and Safety Conference



Thank you very much to all staff who attended the recent Health and Safety Conference, held on Tuesday 20th March 2018 in the Informatics Forum.

We hope that you found the morning informative as well as enjoyable. We are still in the process of reviewing the workshop notes and receiving feedback. Once this is complete, we will publish the presentations, workshop outcomes and any pertinent feedback on our website at <https://edin.ac/2JBHABL>

Occupational Health Unit

As a reminder the Occupational Health Unit offer a free health assessment for all employees who are classed as night workers. We would like to let you know how we can help you.

Night workers are entitled to a free health assessment prior to commencing nightshift, the employer must offer regular health assessments to nightshift workers thereafter.

Employees do not have to take the opportunity to have a health assessment, but it must be offered by the employer.

These health assessments may be in the form of a questionnaire or, where necessary, a medical assessment.

As with all health assessments, employers must keep a record of:

- the name of the night worker
- when the assessment was offered
- when the assessment was carried out
- the results of the assessment

New and expectant mothers, and young workers should also be given special consideration.

If you would like to discuss this further please contact Occupational Health Unit directly and we can arrange how best to facilitate this.

Occupational.Health@ed.ac.uk

Contact Details

Health and Safety Department
Charles Stewart House
9-16 Chambers Street

T: 0131 651 4255

E: Health.Safety@ed.ac.uk

W: www.ed.ac.uk/health-safety

Forthcoming Training Courses

- **Transport of Biological Materials - 23rd May** <https://edin.ac/2jkNGu8>
- **Transport of Biological Materials - 24th May** <https://edin.ac/2jkOrmY>
- **First Aid at Work Annual Refresher training - 25th May** <https://edin.ac/2ji24Dx>
- **Fire Steward and Fire Extinguisher training - 29th May** <https://edin.ac/2r9JH8o>
- **Defibrillator training - 7th June** <https://edin.ac/2lLmQ9q>
- **Basic Course in Radiation Protection - 6th June and 13th June** <https://edin.ac/2CSC2Po>
- **Laser Safety - 20th June** <https://edin.ac/2jkRX10>