

Health and Safety Policy



University of Essex
Employee Guide





This leaflet briefly outlines the University's Health and Safety Policy. It describes the responsibilities we all have to look after ourselves, our students, work colleagues and others who may be affected by what we do at work. It is important that you take time to read the leaflet because it provides valuable information on your responsibilities and how to meet them.

We are committed to providing a safe and healthy University, where staff and students work proactively and collaboratively to improve health and safety. This is essential in helping the University to achieve its purpose of contributing to society through excellence in research and excellence in education.

Your responsibilities

The law requires the University to protect you from work-related harm. You also have a legal responsibility to look after yourself and others affected by your work. Following the University's Health and Safety Policy will help you to ensure you are meeting your legal responsibilities and help the University to meet its responsibilities to you.

You are responsible for your own health and safety and the health and safety of others affected by your work activities. The extent of your responsibilities will depend on your role. Your responsibilities as an **employee** are to:

- Follow the University's and your Department's¹ health and safety standards and procedures
- Report accidents, work-related ill-health, and incidents promptly. Also any unsafe conditions or working practices that could lead to someone being harmed
- Take part in health and safety training and development as required
- Use work equipment safely and in accordance with instructions and/or training
- If you organise activities and projects (including research projects), you must ensure that suitable precautions are put into place to protect people from harm



If you are not sure what you need to do to meet your responsibilities, you must ask for help. You will find details of who to contact in this leaflet.

Whatever your role, you also have a responsibility to help our students to develop sensible health and safety risk management skills as part of their education, whether this be through teaching activities, involving them in the safe design of research projects or student events, or leading by example in exhibiting safe behaviours.

If you are a **line manager** you are responsible for the health and safety of your employees and the work areas and activities within your area of control. You must make sure that employees understand what they need to do to stay safe and work safely and in accordance with the University's and your Department's requirements. You must also ensure that suitable risk assessments are carried out for your hazardous work activities, and that your risk assessments take account of individuals who may be at particular risk (e.g. due to age, inexperience, pregnancy or a disability). You must provide suitable equipment and substances and make sure that they are used safely and maintained in a safe condition. If you are a **Head of Department**¹, you have overall responsibility for the management of health and safety in the department in accordance with the University's requirements.

¹ The term department includes section, unit, school or faculty office.

Strategic responsibilities

Whilst Council has overall responsibility for health and safety at the University, the **Vice-Chancellor**, and members of the **University Steering Group (USG)** have delegated authority from Council for the effective implementation of the Health and Safety Policy. All members of USG are collectively and individually responsible for the strategic management and monitoring of health and safety. Their full responsibilities, and those of other specific managers, can be found in the Health and Safety Policy on the University's health and safety website at:

► www.essex.ac.uk/health-safety

Meeting your responsibilities

The University has a range of health and safety standards that tell you what you need to do to meet your responsibilities. These can be found on the health and safety pages of the University's website. Your Department or manager will also have risk assessments and safe working procedures relating specifically to your work. Make sure that you are following them. If you don't understand what you need to do, or feel you need further training and development, speak to your manager.

If you are a manager make sure that you understand the health and safety risks arising from the work you are responsible for. Keep



employees informed on anything that affects their health and safety and make sure they get the information, training and equipment they need to do their work safely. Regularly check that safety precautions are in place and being followed. Guidance and training is available to help you manage health and safety. You will find details of who to contact for help in this leaflet.

If you don't meet your responsibilities

You have a responsibility in law to co-operate with the University to help it meet its responsibilities, so failure to do so could ultimately result in disciplinary action. More importantly, it could result in you, a colleague or a student being harmed. Your manager will need to discuss why you are having difficulty meeting your responsibilities with you and help you to overcome any problems. Disciplinary action would only be considered in rare cases, for example where you knowingly did something that could cause serious harm to yourself or others.

What to do if you have a health and safety concern

If you identify a health and safety concern or hazard take action to remedy it (if it is in your control) and/or report it to your line manager. Also make sure a health and safety incident

form is completed. Premises hazards should be reported to the Estates Management Section (or for Southend and Loughton, the Facilities Management provider).

It is important that we learn from all incidents or unsafe work activities that have or could have caused harm. That is why it is important that you report them promptly. Find out more about reporting health and safety incidents from your manager or by following the link on the University's website at:

► www.essex.ac.uk/health-safety





Getting help

Your line manager will provide you with health and safety information specific to your job role.

Each department has a **Health and Safety Liaison Officer (HSLO)** or **Departmental Health and Safety Officer (DHSO)**. These are employees who assist their Head of Department with co-ordinating health and safety arrangements. They will be able to provide advice on departmental health and safety procedures or direct you to specialist technical advice.

Departmental notice boards display contact details of your HSLO or DSHO and other key people in your department who can help you. Alternatively follow the contacts link at:
▶ www.essex.ac.uk/health-safety

Help and advice from the University

The full Health and Safety Policy and further information on health and safety at the University of Essex can be found on the University's website at:
▶ www.essex.ac.uk/health-safety

The **Health and Safety Advisory Service (HSAS)** are a team of professional health and safety and fire safety advisers. They provide technical advice, training and support, to help you and the University meet legal requirements and provide a safe working environment. They also carry out regular monitoring to check that health and safety requirements are being met.

The University's **Occupational Health Service** provides a confidential, impartial occupational health service to all staff, which includes advice on the prevention of work-related ill health, fitness for work and adaptations to assist those with disabilities, ill health or injuries to return to or remain at work.

Safety Representatives are appointed by Trade Unions to represent all employees on health and safety. You do not need to be a Union member to ask for their assistance with a health and safety concern. The Health and Safety Law poster displayed in your workplace includes their contact details.



Health and Safety Advisory Service (HSAS)

General enquiries:

T (01206 87) 2944

E safety@essex.ac.uk

Fire safety advice:

T (01206 87) 4847

E fire@essex.ac.uk

Occupational Health Service

Confidential advice:

T (01206 87) 2399

E ohquery@essex.ac.uk

Reporting premises defects

Colchester:

T (01206 87) 2959

E ems-helpdesk@essex.ac.uk

Southend:

T (01702 32) 8214

E fmhelp@essex.ac.uk

Loughton:

T 7320 (internal) or 0208 5085983

