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1 SCOPE

This Safety Code of Practice 2 (Part 1) sets out the organisational arrangements and responsibilities for the management of health and safety within the University, in support of the University health and safety policy. Other parts of this Code cover other aspects of the safety management system, including consultation and communication, emergency preparedness; training and competency; and monitoring, audit and review. This Code is supplemented by the policies, Safety Codes and Notes published by Health & Safety Services on other specific health and safety topics, and by other policy documents published by University Functions e.g. Estates & Facilities.

This Safety Code of Practice covers the health and safety management system for all of the University of Reading’s activities, on and off campus, and including where appropriate any subsidiary organisations and legal entities.

1.1 Subsidiary organisations

The University has a number of separate legal enterprises, including overseas campuses, and spin-off companies. This includes HBS South Africa and University of Reading Malaysia. They are required to operate in accordance with the University of Reading health and safety policy. They must develop and maintain their own safety management systems that take account of local national legislation, requirements and relevant standards. This includes University of Reading policies and procedures unless:

- these conflict with national requirements, or
- an alternative approach has been agreed with the governing body and the University of Reading Health & Safety Services Director.

1.2 Management system

The University’s management system is based upon the requirements of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations; the Health and Safety Executive publication “Managing for health and safety” (HSG65), and the University’s Safety and Health Association (USHA) and Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) document ‘Leadership and management of health and safety in higher education institutions’ (published October 2015).

GUIDANCE:

Throughout this and other Safety Codes of Practice the word “manager(s)” and “management(s)” are used to refer to all those in a managerial or supervisory capacity who organise and control work activities, and as part of this are responsible for managing the associated risks and safety requirements. This will include senior members of School/Function/Department/Unit management, research leaders, Principal Investigators, lecturers, research and technical staff.

Figures 1 and 2 summarise the key organisational arrangements.
The following sections set out the levels of responsibility and accountability relating to health and safety. See also Figures 1 and 2 above.
2 RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 University Council

The University Council has overall responsibility for health, safety and risk management within the University. The role of Council is to set the strategic health and safety aims and objectives of the University; to ensure that adequate resources are allocated; and to monitor and review performance by means of periodic written reports from the Officers of the University.

2.2 Vice-Chancellor

The Vice-Chancellor has overall executive responsibility for health and safety at the University. In this the Vice-Chancellor is supported by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor who chairs the Health and Safety Committee, to whom day-to-day responsibility is delegated.

The Vice-Chancellor is responsible for providing leadership and direction to ensure that:

- The University’s health and safety policy is implemented effectively at all levels within the University and across all its operations
- The necessary resources are made available for the safe operation of University activities
- The University’s health and safety policies are regularly reviewed and updated as necessary, to reflect compliance with all statutory obligations
- Responsibility for health and safety is properly assigned and promoting active acceptance of this responsibility throughout the University
- There are effective communications and a culture of active engagement with health and safety.

2.3 Senior management of the University

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Pro-Vice-Chancellors and Officers of the University, as members where applicable of the University Executive Board and other relevant University Committees and in their individual capacities are responsible for ensuring that:

- Adequate resources are available to Heads of School and Functions to enable them to meet their health and safety responsibilities
- All management decisions taken either individually or in committee reflect the intentions of the health and safety policy
- All actions and decisions of Council, the University Executive Board, and relevant Committees are communicated and implemented in their areas of responsibility
- Collectively and individually they provide health and safety leadership throughout the University.

2.4 University Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee

The University Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee (UHSWC) is an advisory and consultative body which reports to the Strategy and Finance Committee on all matters of health, safety, welfare and wellbeing.
2.4.1 UHSWC Terms of Reference

Its Terms of Reference are to:

a) Contribute to the development of, and approve, University policies, management systems, procedures and standards on health, safety, welfare and wellbeing.

b) Monitor health and safety performance and compliance, including receiving reports on the outcomes of health & safety audits, accident and incident investigations, reports of inspection visits by regulatory authorities etc.

c) Make recommendations for improvement or remedial action to the Strategy and Finance Committee and/or the University Executive Board.

d) Promote effective two-way communications on health & safety between the Officers of the University and Heads of School/Function.

e) Encourage consultation and co-operation between the University authorities, its employees and students and promote best practice in matters relating to health and safety.

2.4.2 Executive responsibility

Within the limits of finance made available, the Chair (Deputy Vice-Chancellor) and management members of the University Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee have executive responsibility for health, safety and wellbeing at the University. The Chair is responsible for reporting to the Strategy and Finance Committee and (via the University Executive Board) to the University Council on health and safety performance, including: information about any significant failures; outcomes of relevant investigations and audits; issues of concern or legislative compliance; and recommendations for improvement.

The Chair has the authority to stop or suspend any University activity, or prohibit the use of any articles, substances, plant, machinery or equipment on the campus or during University activities elsewhere, if he/she should consider it necessary to prevent accidents, ill-health or breach of regulations. This authority is delegated to Health & Safety Services.

2.4.3 Membership

Membership of the committee is set out in the University Calendar. The membership comprises management members and employee representatives, and a representative of the Students’ Union. The Committee must have sufficient expertise to advise on the range of health and safety issues likely to arise in the course of work or study at the University.

2.4.4 Reporting

The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee reports to the Strategy and Finance Committee, with an annual report to Council. In addition, reports are presented by the Chair to the University Executive Board.

2.4.5 Sub-Committees

The University Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee may establish sub-committees to consider and advise on specialist matters and/or to meet legal requirements. Currently there are two such Sub-Committees:

- Sub-Committee for Biological Safety
This Sub-Committee advises on the safety of Genetic Modification (GM) work and work involving biological agents. It functions as a Genetic Modification Safety Committee as defined in the Genetically Modified Organisms (Contained Use) Regulations.

- Radiation Safety Sub-Committee

This Sub-Committee advises on all matters relating to the acquisition, safe transport, use, storage and disposal of materials producing ionising radiation and the use of all equipment which generates X-rays, ultra-violet, laser and microwave radiations.

Both Sub-Committees oversee compliance with the relevant statutory provisions and Approved Codes of Practice, and recommend any action to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of employees, students and others on University premises. The Sub-Committees provide advice on risk assessment, approve applications for new projects, review local School rules, monitor their implementation and advise on the provision of appropriate facilities, equipment and training.

The Terms of Reference for these Sub-Committees are published in the relevant Safety Codes of Practice.

The Sub-Committees have the authority to instruct work to stop or to withdraw project approvals if they are not satisfied with the safety management arrangements.

### 2.5 Schools/Functions

Schools/Functions and other Units are primarily responsible for operational health and safety management of all work activities carried out by staff and students.

#### 2.5.1 Heads of School/Function

Heads of School/Function and equivalent Unit Managers, including Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that all activities under the control of their School/ Function/Department/ Unit are carried out in accordance with the University Health and Safety policy and procedures and in compliance with legislation. As such they must ensure that:

- They set a clear leadership example and promote a high degree of health and safety awareness
- Responsibilities and safety management organisation within and between the School/ Function/Department/ Unit are clearly defined
- There are effective local arrangements for consulting and communicating with staff and students on health and safety matters
- Risk assessments are developed and maintained, and control measures identified in the assessments are implemented
- There are effective emergency response procedures and staff and students are made aware of the actions required of them in the event of an emergency
- Staff understand their individual responsibilities for health and safety
- Staff are trained and competent to perform their duties safely
- Students have sufficient information and understanding to work safely and are appropriately supervised
- Work areas are inspected on a regular basis and any deficiencies are remedied or reported to the responsible person
• Contractors are selected who can meet University health and safety standards, and that the work of contractors is monitored to ensure these standards are met
• All incidents involving, or having potential to cause, injury or impaired health to persons, or damage to property are investigated and reported in accordance with University procedures, and that appropriate corrective actions are taken
• An annual health and safety review and improvement plan is prepared and implemented
• Appropriate records are maintained
• Any gaps in existing provisions are identified and corrected
• Effective communication is maintained with Health & Safety Services.

**GUIDANCE:**
Further information is given in other parts of Safety Code of Practice 2, and specific management responsibilities are identified in each of the topic Safety Codes published by Health & Safety Services.

### 2.5.2 Research leaders

The responsibility for the health and safety management of research projects is delegated to those persons who direct the research. This includes, but may not be limited to, research directors/leaders/supervisors/principal investigators ("research leaders"). They are best placed to understand the risks involved in their projects. They have responsibility for the safety of staff and students engaged in the research activity, and for any other persons who may be affected by the research activity.

Research leaders must take reasonable care for their own safety, and for that of anyone who might be affected by their activities at work, including postgraduate students, research assistants, technicians and other support staff. They must cooperate with the University to help the University comply with its legal duties and making sure that projects under their direction comply with the law. This includes activities undertaken on University premises and off-campus, including fieldwork.

**GUIDANCE:**
Health & Safety legislation is goal-setting and there are very few absolute prohibitions. Legislation is unlikely to restrict the nature of research although it will require research leaders to work in way that ensures that risks are properly assessed and controlled.

A summary of the responsibilities of research leaders includes:
• Being aware of the legal requirements for their area of research and ensuring that the policy requirements of the University and their School are implemented
• Ensuring that University or relevant regulatory permissions or licenses are in place prior to work commencing (for example ionising radiation permits, HSE notification of GM work etc.)
• Identification and management of the risks in their field of work
• Ensuring that risk assessments are completed by competent people for all relevant activities and that they are read, understood and followed by researchers prior to commencing work
• Setting an example by their own behaviour – lead by example
• Ensuring that researchers and students have received the appropriate training, including relevant formal courses and on the job technique specific training
• Monitoring to check that researchers and students follow safe working practices
• Reinforcing the importance of good housekeeping and occupational hygiene in laboratory and workshops
• Providing adequate supervision of their research staff and students, proportionate to the level of individual’s experience
• Drawing the attention of School management to deficiencies or concerns about health and safety, including failure to follow safe systems of work, lack of maintenance or inadequate facilities or resources
• Reporting accidents and near misses, contributing to investigation of incidents and acting on the findings of relevant investigations
• Sharing best practice with other members of their School, and the wider university community, where appropriate.

2.5.3 Health and Safety Co-ordinators

Health and Safety Co-ordinator(s) (HSCs) are appointed to provide advice and co-ordinate day-to-day health and safety matters. HSCs should be suitably senior members of staff who have the knowledge, competence and authority to support the Head of School/ Function/ Department/ Unit. The HSC must be given sufficient time for health and safety duties. If no appointment is made, the Head of School/Function/Department/Unit is responsible for implementation of health and safety procedures. Regardless of whether or not an appointment is made, the Head of School/Department/Unit retains overall managerial responsibility.

Where the HSC is a member of Technical Services and is partnered to support a School, the HSC is responsible for setting up local systems to enable the School to comply with University requirements. The School is responsible for ensuring that all staff and students adhere to these requirements.

GUIDANCE:

In higher risk Schools, Health & Safety Co-ordinator support is provided by Technical Services.

In lower risk Schools and Functions, Health & Safety Co-ordinator support is provided by other members of staff, and the role is in addition to their substantive post.

The full range of duties of an HSC are set out in Safety Note 1. In summary these are to implement university H&S policies, procedures and management arrangements locally, including: providing advice to staff and students; co-ordinating workplace inspections; maintaining records; investigating incidents and accidents; ensuring that first aid and other emergency arrangements are in place; and monitoring and reporting on performance/compliance on behalf of the Head of School/ Function/ Unit.

2.5.4 Technical Services

The Director, Technical Services, is responsible for ensuring that:

• Health & Safety Co-ordinators who support the higher risk Schools and who are members of Technical Services, are fully competent to provide an effective service to the Schools.
• Where School-owned facilities are operated by Technical Services, any non-compliances with legislation with regard to equipment and management are reported to the responsible Head of School.

2.5.5 Building Support

Campus Services are responsible for appointing Building Support staff. They are responsible for the co-ordination of fire safety evacuation arrangements and first aid within buildings, and for liaison with Estates & Facilities on general building safety, security, maintenance and infrastructure issues. Full details are given in Safety Note 48.

2.5.6 Other appointments

Heads of School/Function must make the following appointments, where appropriate to the work of the unit, to ensure that appropriate management and emergency arrangements are in place:

First Aiders

Each School/Function must carry out a first aid risk assessment to determine the first aid provision required in the area. This will indicate the number of First Aiders and Emergency First Aiders who may be required. Generally this will be co-ordinated by Building Support to ensure adequate coverage and distribution within buildings. Further guidance is given in Safety Code of Practice 8.

Evacuation Officers and Fire Wardens

It is a legal requirement that all workplaces must have effective arrangements for managing a building evacuation in the event of a fire or other emergency. Therefore Evacuation Officers and Fire Wardens must be appointed by Schools/Functions/Units for the buildings that they occupy, co-ordinated by Building Support. See Safety Code of Practice 2 Part 3 and Safety Code of Practice 6 for more information.

School Laser Supervisors

Heads of Schools that possess high powered open beam lasers must appoint a School Laser Supervisor (SLS), to be responsible on behalf of the Head of School for the supervision of laser operations within the School. The full duties of the SLS are set out in Safety Note 3.

School Radiation Protection Supervisors

Heads of Schools that use ionising radiation must appoint a School Radiation Protection Supervisor (SRPS), to be responsible on behalf of the Head of School for the local implementation of safety procedures to do with the acquisition, use, storage and disposal of sources of ionising radiation (Safety Code of Practice 18) and, where appropriate, non-ionising radiation. The full duties of the SRPS are set out in Safety Code of Practice 16.

GUIDANCE:
The SRPS will normally be the Health & Safety Co-ordinator for the School.

2.5.7 Health and Safety Code

Health and Safety Codes (or equivalent documents) must be made available to staff and/or students who work or study in the School/Service/Function/Department/Unit. The Code is a short summary statement of the local health and safety arrangements; it is not intended to duplicate central documents such as the University health and safety policy or Safety Codes of Practice.
GUIDANCE:
A model H&S Code is available on the Health & Safety Services web site, which should be adapted by Schools/Functions/Units to suit their own local circumstances. H&S Codes may be issued on a building basis where it is helpful to do so, but otherwise shall be prepared by a School/Function/Department or Unit. It is expected that the HSC for the School/Function/Unit will be responsible for developing and maintain the Code.

2.6 All staff and students

Every employee and student at the University and every person working on its premises must take reasonable care for their own health and safety, and that of persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work or study. Staff and students are encouraged to be proactive in the management of health and safety and to help managers in the continuous improvement of health and safety performance.

All employees, students and other persons working on University premises must consult their immediate supervisor on the precautions relevant to their activities. They must comply with university policies, local rules, safe working procedures and emergency arrangements. They must not interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare.

Anyone who is aware of an accident, near miss, unsafe activity or condition or cases of occupational disease or ill-health must report this to their manager/supervisor or Health & Safety Co-ordinator or to Health & Safety Services so that preventative measures can be taken.

2.6.1 Disciplinary procedures

Any members of the University who are found to be:

- Deliberately misusing health and safety facilities; or
- Flagrantly breaching the University health and safety policies or procedures; or
- Flagrantly failing to observe any of the relevant statutory provisions

may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the relevant University disciplinary procedure. They may also be personally liable under health and safety legislation and civil law. The Head of School/Function/Department/Unit concerned should seek advice from Human Resources (for staff disciplinary procedures) and the University Secretary (for student disciplinary matters).

2.6.2 Supervision of undergraduate students

Undergraduates should be assumed to be initially untrained in all matters of health and safety. Academic and, where appropriate, non-academic staff have a duty to instruct, supervise and train students, so far as is reasonably practicable, in all matters necessary to ensure their health and safety while working in University premises, on supervised fieldwork and during University work elsewhere. This is particularly important where students might be expected to work with potentially hazardous equipment or substances.

GUIDANCE:
Safety Code of Practice 7 ‘Outside Normal Working Hours Procedures’ and Safety Code of Practice 32 ‘Fieldwork’ have further information on supervisory requirements.
2.7 **Health & Safety Services**

The Health & Safety Services Director is the H&S professional lead within the University and is responsible for:

- The development of University health and safety policies, procedures and management arrangements to ensure that the University meets its statutory obligations
- Recommending and taking the lead in the implementation of health and safety objectives, priorities and performance indicators
- Contributing to the development of a University health and safety plan
- Monitoring and auditing health and safety performance
- Reporting on health and safety matters to the University Health and Safety Committee and other committees as required
- Providing health and safety advice and support to members of the University, including specialist advice on radiation, biological safety, fire safety, asbestos management and statutory compliance relating to the built estate
- The provision of general health and safety training for staff, and students where appropriate
- Co-ordination of accident/incident investigations, the provision of advice on remedial actions, and the analysis of incident statistics in order to advise on preventative intervention strategies
- Liaison with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and other enforcement agencies on all matters relating to health and safety at the University.

The Health & Safety Services Director is responsible to the Chair of the University Health and Safety Committee for the maintenance and development of the University’s health and safety management system. The Health & Safety Services Director also has direct access to the Vice-Chancellor if required.

By delegation from the Vice-Chancellor and Chair of the Health and Safety Committee, Health & Safety Services staff have authority to stop work or suspend any University activity, if they should consider it necessary to prevent accidents or cases of ill-health (see section 2.4.2).

2.7.1 **Director of Estates and Facilities**

Health & Safety Services is a unit within Estates and Facilities and as such the Director of Estates and Facilities has line management responsibility for the H&S Services team and for any other health and safety matters delegated to him/her by the University Executive Board. He/she also has responsibility for the safety of the university estate—see section 2.10.

2.7.2 **Fire Safety Adviser**

In addition to the general duties listed in 2.7 above, the Fire Safety Adviser is responsible for:

- Developing fire safety management standards and procedures
- Ensuring that building fire risk assessments are undertaken
- Acceptance, on behalf of the University, of fire safety management strategies and those aspects of building design relevant to fire safety, for new build and refurbishment projects
- Liaison with the Fire and Rescue Service on matters relating to the enforcement of fire safety legislation.
2.7.3 Biological Safety Adviser

In addition to the general duties listed in 2.7 above, the University Biological Safety Adviser is responsible for:

- Developing policies, standards, systems of work and providing advice on local rules for intentional work with biological agents and genetically modified organisms
- Advising on the referral of staff and students to the University’s Occupational Health provider for health surveillance when necessary
- The acquisition of any required licences or authorisations for work with hazardous biological agents
- Operation of the Sub-Committee for Biological Safety
- Maintenance of (in consultation with the University Occupational Health provider), a database of workers involved in genetic modification projects
- Liaison with the relevant regulatory authorities.


2.7.4 University Radiation Safety Officer

The University Radiation Safety Officer is responsible for:

- Developing policies and standards and providing advice on local rules for work with sources of ionising radiation
- Monitoring and audit on matters of radiation protection
- Authorising and monitoring the acquisition, use, storage and disposal of sources of ionising and non-ionising radiations
- Maintenance of records associated with sources of ionising radiation
- The acquisition of any required permits for work with sources of ionising radiation
- Operation of the Radiation Safety Sub-Committee
- Liaison with the relevant regulatory authorities.

In doing so he/she may call upon the services of the Radiation Protection Adviser (see section 2.8.4). The full duties of the University Radiation Safety Officer are set out in Safety Code of Practice 16.

Guidance: The Scientific Safety Adviser fulfils the role of Biological Safety Officer and Radiation Safety Officer.

2.7.5 Radiation Protection Adviser and Radiation Waste Adviser

The Radiation Protection Adviser (RPA) and Radiation Waste Adviser (RWA) services are delivered under contract to the University. The contract is managed by the University Radiation Safety Officer. The RPA/RWA is responsible for the delivery of professional services in accordance with the Ionising Radiations Regulations 1999, the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2010 (as amended), and the Basic Safety Standards Directive. Further information is given in Safety Code of Practice 16. This includes advice on the management of work with sources of ionising radiation, compliance with permit and exemption conditions and restriction of exposure and dose assessment; audit and inspection of radioactive materials and management systems; and training of Radiation Protection Supervisors.
2.7.6 **Asbestos Co-ordinator**

The Asbestos Co-ordinator is responsible for:

- Maintaining an effective asbestos management strategy and providing competent professional advice on Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs) to the University Duty Holder
- Ensuring that regular inspections of ACMs are undertaken, and updating the Asbestos Register to reflect the current condition
- Programming surveys in University premises to identify any ACMs that may be present, and updating the Asbestos Register
- Providing professional support and advice in the event of any incidents involving the release of asbestos fibres, reporting any incident of alleged asbestos exposure to the Health & Safety Services Director, and assisting with any investigation
- Promoting awareness of the hazards of ACMs by providing appropriate training to university staff as required, and in particular to those whose work might bring them into contact with ACMs
- Monitoring to ensure that Project Managers, Building Managers and staff are aware of their responsibilities under the Asbestos Management Plan

Further information is given in the University’s Asbestos Management Plan.

**2.8 Occupational Health**

The University Occupational Health Adviser is responsible to the Director of Human Resources for the provision of professional advice on the medical aspects of occupational health and related topics. Duties include:

- Providing a pre-employment health assessment for staff
- Working pro-actively and in partnership with the University on the management of sickness absence, including the provision of occupational health advice on sickness absence cases
- Overseeing and reviewing procedures relating to occupational health
- Providing health surveillance and/or immunisation, where identified as necessary by legislation, University policies or risk assessment
- Working with Unit managers and others to maintain occupational health surveillance records
- Health promotion and awareness
- Undertaking periodic inspections of University premises where an occupational health medical input is required
- Liaison with the relevant regulators, such as Senior Medical Inspectors and specialist inspectors from the HSE
- Compiling occupational ill-health data and providing information relating to the medical aspects of occupational health.

The Occupational Health Adviser is supported by the Occupational Health Medical Adviser who acts as sole medical adviser to the University of Reading Employees’ Pension Fund. This service is contracted out.
2.9 **Insurance and Security**

The **Insurance Officer** and the **Security Services Manager** are responsible for developing policies and procedures in their respective areas, in support of the University Health and Safety policy.

2.10 **Maintenance of University facilities and estate**

Within the resources allocated by Strategy and Finance Committee, Estates and Facilities (E&F) is responsible for maintaining the built estate, including grounds, in a manner that provides a safe and secure environment for staff and students, which is fit for purpose and complies with current legislation. This includes the utilities infrastructure, including:

- Electrical, gas, water and fixed heating systems
- Fire detection, alarm and protection systems (see Safety Code of Practice 34 Part B)
- Fixed pressure systems
- Fixed Local Exhaust Ventilation (LEV) systems
- Maintenance of the fabric of the building, where necessary in accordance with legislation and Approved Codes of Practice
- Cleaning and waste disposal services.

Maintenance encompasses routine maintenance of plant and equipment and statutory inspections and test as required by legislation e.g. the Electricity at Work Regulations, the Pressure Systems Safety Regulations and other relevant regulations.

Schools/Functions/Departments/Units are responsible for the maintenance, inspection and test as appropriate of Unit-owned equipment.

**GUIDANCE:**

Equipment owned by Schools may include e.g. stand-alone pressure vessels such as compressors and autoclaves; lifting equipment such as slings or hydraulic lifting devices; all portable electrical appliances.

See Safety Code of Practice 46 for more detailed information on the maintenance and inspection of work equipment and systems.

2.10.1 **Duty Holders**

Specific sets of regulations require ‘Duty Holders’ to be appointed to ensure that management systems operate effectively. The ‘Duty Holder’ is the University, but specific duties are delegated to named individuals within E&F. These named individuals must have the professional competence, experience and qualifications to enable them to develop, maintain and review the relevant management system, and ensure operation in accordance with legislative requirements.

Duty Holders must be allocated sufficient resources to enable them to fulfil the statutory requirements. If they believe that the resources allocated are not sufficient, they have a duty to report this to their manager.

**GUIDANCE:**

E&F Duty Holders have been appointed for:
- HV and LV electricity
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<th>Systems</th>
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<td>Gas systems</td>
<td>USHA/UCEA DOCUMENT ‘Leadership and management of health and safety in higher education institutions’ (published October 2015).</td>
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## Appendix 1: Version control

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