Recognition of health and safety responsibilities

Background

The University’s health and safety management system states that Heads of Schools/ Directorates/ Departments/ Units are responsible for ensuring that all activities under the control of their School are carried out in accordance with the University’s health and safety policy, procedures and legislation. To achieve this they delegate health and safety responsibilities and tasks to other staff. This Safety Note gives guidance on when it may be appropriate to recognise the contribution of key staff in health and safety roles by making a case for additional reward via the formal procedures.

It is noted that in some cases the contribution made by an individual is ‘voluntary’ i.e. it is not specifically associated with a job role or grade, or identified in an individual’s contract of employment. However the contribution made may be essential to enable the University to comply with legislation and to provide a safe place of work. It is therefore important that such individuals are committed to what they are doing, and that good performance is recognised and rewarded.

University arrangements for rewarding staff

The University has several means of rewarding the contribution of staff:

a. Award of an extra increment on the pay spine, including progression to contribution points;

b. Award of a one-off lump sum payment by Faculties/Directorates;

Taking each of these in turn:

a. Award of extra increment on the pay spine

The University’s arrangements for rewarding staff include the ability to propose extra increments on the pay spine, and to progress an individual’s pay to the contribution points above the normal maximum. These awards are permanent and hence this method of reward should only be used where the individual has consistently performed above expectations, or has e.g. acquired additional health and safety qualifications such as a NEBOSH National Certificate in Occupational Safety and Health, and the health and safety element will be a permanent feature of the individual’s job.

b. Award of a one-off lump sum payment

Faculties/Directorates may award one-off lump sum payments for outstanding performance at any time during the year.

The criteria for proposals may include e.g. the successful completion of a project or one-off piece of work; undertaking additional work; assuming a higher level of responsibility for a finite period of time.
In the health and safety context lump sums may be used to reward either one-off contributions, or a continuing commitment.

Examples might include:
- Taking on Area Health and Safety Co-ordinator (AHSC) responsibilities where this is not directly associated with the individual’s job role;
- Successfully managing a major departmental move, where poor management and organisation could have led to health and safety risks not being adequately controlled;
- Identifying or introducing a new and safer method of working;
- Contributing significantly to the adoption of higher standards in the workplace;
- Overhauling and improving a department’s arrangements for managing safety;
- Making a major contribution in managing an emergency such as a serious injury, major fire etc.;
- First Aiders who have undertaken a First Aid at Work course and has been formally appointed as a First Aider for their department/building;
- Display Screen Assessors who have contributed to ensuring that their department’s display screen assessments are up-to-date and that potential risks to health from use of display screen equipment are being managed effectively.

These examples are not exhaustive or definitive. The decision to propose an award to e.g. an AHSC, should be viewed in the same way as the award of payments to other staff who contribute in other ways e.g. volunteering to take on a teaching and learning role. All are making an essential contribution to the successful running of the University/School/Directorate.

This guidance is provided for illustrative purposes only. All proposals in respect of rewarding staff are subject to the University’s normal procedures, on which advice can be obtained from Human Resources.

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