

# Health and safety information for University staff

Important information for all members of staff



## Message from the Vice-Chancellor

'The University of Reading is committed to excellence in everything we do. Ensuring the health and safety of all staff, students and visitors must be one of our highest priorities. The University Health and Safety Policy sets out the management framework we use to achieve that. As Vice-Chancellor, I am accountable to Council for all aspects of health and safety. In doing so, I rely on the full cooperation of staff and students in doing all they can to maintain the highest standards. It is the particular responsibility of managers who exercise control over their school, department or directorate activities, to ensure that those activities are carried out safely.

'Consistent with our mission statement to develop a culture that stimulates and supports our staff and students, let us work together to achieve excellence in health and safety.'

## Introduction

Health and Safety Services provide the following services:

**Standards** – development of standards to enable the University to comply with health and safety legislation;

**Advice and information** – for University management, Schools, Directorates, Area Health & Safety Co-ordinators and individuals, on health and safety legislation and best practice;

**Health and safety training** – we organise a wide range of health and safety training events for staff and students (see the training section of our website);

**Monitoring** – we conduct inspection visits and audits, investigate accidents, and monitor health and safety performance.

You can find out more on our website:

[www.reading.ac.uk/safety](http://www.reading.ac.uk/safety)

## Risk assessment

The University has a legal duty to assess the risks to employees and non-employees (e.g. students, visitors and contractors) from our work activities (see Safety Guide 4 under the ‘Resources’ section of our website). Heads of school/directorate are responsible for ensuring assessments are carried out and recorded, and that staff are informed of what they need to do or to know to work safely.

## University Health and Safety Committees

Three central committees provide a consultation mechanism for staff on health and safety and monitor the implementation of health and safety policies:

- Health and Safety Committee (HSC)
- Sub-Committee for Biological Safety (SCBC)



- Radiation Safety Sub-Committee (RSSC)

These committees have management and staff/trade union members – contact Health and Safety Services for further details. If you wish to bring an issue to the attention of one of these committees, contact your local management or staff representative, or Health and Safety Services. Higher risk areas (e.g. the science schools and Facilities Management Directorate) operate their own Area Health and Safety Committees where local issues are discussed.

## Local health and safety arrangements

Heads of schools and directorates (or equivalent) are responsible for health and safety matters within their department(s). Managers, principal investigators and supervisors are responsible for the day-to-day health and safety of their staff, students and visitors.

Information on local health and safety arrangements can be provided by your Area Health and Safety Co-ordinator (AHSC). They are members of academic and directorate staff who act on behalf of your Head of School/Directorate.

They, or your manager, will provide you with a copy of your school or department's own Area Health and Safety Code which provides local health and safety information for staff and students.

## Health and safety training

The following topics are included in the training programme run by Health and Safety Services:

**Induction** – included in the Centre for Staff Training and Development (CSTD) new staff induction.

**Managing health and safety** for line managers and Area Health and Safety Co-ordinators.

**Risk assessment** – general, Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH), manual handling, display screen equipment (DSE).

**Fire safety** for all staff, fire wardens and evacuation officers.



**Food safety** for food handlers, including staff who prepare or serve food at departmental and social events.

**Manual handling** for staff carrying out regular handling and lifting tasks.

**Laboratory health and safety** – general, biological, chemical, genetic modification, work with open sources of radioactivity, lasers, X-ray generators and optics, cryogenic gases, etc.

**Specific topics**, e.g. fieldwork, student placement, testing portable electrical equipment, safe management of events, defensive driving for University drivers, etc.

Further details are available on the Health & Safety Services website. Prior booking is required for the majority of these courses. Some other health and safety related courses, such as stress awareness, are available through CSTD, see the CSTD website for details.

## All staff should attend/receive:

- A local health and safety induction for your own workplace, including fire safety, emergency procedures and workplace hazards. Work through the Health and Safety Services induction checklist with your manager/supervisor;
- Task-specific training as required by legislation, risk assessment or University policy (e.g. working with display screen equipment, manual handling, food hygiene, portable appliance testing);
- Task-specific, on-the-job training as identified by risk assessment (e.g. safe use of work equipment, good lab practice);
- All new staff must watch the online fire safety video available on the Health and Safety Services web pages. See [www.reading.ac.uk/newstaffinduction](http://www.reading.ac.uk/newstaffinduction)

## Additional requirements for specific job functions

- Staff who regularly use computer workstations must complete a display screen training and assessment online package (DSEasy). You should receive an email from your local DSE Assessor advising you how to complete this; if not, please speak to your manager/supervisor.
- Staff who drive University vehicles, including minibuses, or where driving is a significant part of their job, must attend a driving ‘Safe Culture’ workshop.
- Laboratory staff must attend the university Laboratory Safety course and other mandatory training modules that are relevant to their work e.g. work with open sources of radiation, use of cryogenic gases, working with genetically modified materials, etc.

## Health and safety guidance and information

The University safety policies and guidance are available on the Health and Safety Services website, [www.reading.ac.uk/safety](http://www.reading.ac.uk/safety). These represent the performance standard that schools and directorates are expected to achieve. The website also contains other useful information and links.

## What you can do to stay safe at work

When working on University premises or on University business you are expected to take reasonable care for your own health and safety, and that of persons who may be affected by your acts or omissions at work or study. You must not interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare.

You 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. You can do this by:

- complying with local rules, safe working procedures and emergency arrangements;
- carrying out an effective risk assessment and implementing safe methods of work, if you are responsible for work activities including research and student activities;
- keeping your work area clear of obstructions, so that you don't create a hazard for others;
- driving/cycling safely on campus, having consideration for other road users, and keeping to the speed limits;
- attending all necessary health and safety training, both on and off the job;
- keeping up-to-date with new and safer ways of working;
- volunteering to take on important roles such as fire warden or first aider;
- drawing management attention to areas where safety could be improved.



## Reporting health and safety concerns

We all have a shared responsibility to prevent accidents. If you spot a hazard, please tell your supervisor or Area Health & Safety Co-ordinator. They should call Health and Safety Services if the matter cannot be dealt with locally, or Security Services if the matter is to do with personal safety on campus. Building or grounds maintenance issues should be reported to the Facilities Management Directorate (FMD) Help Desk on extension 7000.

## Hazards to watch out for

If you spot any of these hazards, please report them so that action can be taken to remove or reduce the risk.



- Obstructed fire exits and fire escape routes
- Fire hazards such as poor storage of flammable substances or smoking in ‘no smoking’ areas
- Unsafe storage: unstable loads or shelving, or heavy items stored above shoulder height
- Trailing cables and other trip hazards
- Spillages that have not been cleared up
- Vehicles speeding on campus or parking on ‘keep clear’ areas
- Damage to floor coverings, stairs, steps and footpaths
- Missing or damaged safety equipment such as fire extinguishers or inoperative safety guards
- Faulty electrical equipment or portable electrical appliances that have not been regularly tested
- Poor or damaged lighting
- Staff, contractors or students working or behaving unsafely.

## Accidents and work-related ill health

It is important that you report any accident or incident at work, work-related ill health, fire, or near-miss event (that could have resulted in injury or ill health) to your supervisor and to your Area Health & Safety Co-ordinator. The incident should be recorded and investigated so that any remedial action can be taken.

Significant near misses, work-related ill health and injuries that result in time away from work or more than simple first aid treatment, must be notified to Health and Safety Services. A report form is available on the Health and Safety Services website: [www.reading.ac.uk/safety](http://www.reading.ac.uk/safety). Cases of occupational ill health must also be reported to the Occupational Health Service provider, Health Management Ltd, via your manager or supervisor.

## Safety Matters newsletter

*Safety Matters* is the Health & Safety Services newsletter. This is published about once a term. The newsletter provides an update on current health and safety topics, forthcoming training, and new guidance and legislation.

## Other related University services

(not managed by Health and Safety Services)

- **University Occupational Health Service (Health Management Ltd)**

For advice on work-related health issues, health surveillance, first aid training, and rehabilitation after illness. Contact through Human Resources.

- **Health Management Limited**

Brightwell House, 40 Queens Road, Reading, Berks. RG1 4AU

- **Security Services**

Emergencies: extension 6300

Enquiries: extension 7799

- **University Counselling Service**

Tel: 0118 975 1823

- **Facilities Management Directorate**

Enquiries: extension 8958

Help Desk (for reporting facilities or building hazards): extension 7000

- **Insurance Office**

University Insurance Officer: extension 8309

- **Disabilities Office**

Enquiries: extension 8921

# Fire procedure

## What to do now

In your normal place of work, you must do the following.

- 1 Make yourself aware of:
  - the location of the nearest fire alarm call point;
  - your possible evacuation routes;
  - the sound of the fire alarm;
  - the location of your fire assembly point;
  - the location and type of your nearest fire extinguisher(s);
  - how to summon the Fire and Rescue Service.
- 2 If you need assistance to evacuate, make this known to your manager, supervisor or Area Health and Safety Co-ordinator.
- 3 Evacuate if the fire alarm sounds – except when you know for certain it is a routine weekly/monthly test of the alarm system. You must evacuate for fire drills.

## If you find a fire:

- 1 Sound the fire alarm (press the red call point button).
- 2 Evacuate to a safe place.
- 3 Telephone 999 for the Fire and Rescue Service (for an outside line on a University phone, use the prefix 0 or 9).
- 4 At Whiteknights and London Road campuses, inform the University Emergency Control Centre on extension 6300 (or 0118 378 6300 on an outside line). At Greenlands, inform Reception/ Duty Manager on extension 2000.

# First aid

## First aid

For an ambulance, telephone **999** (for an outside line on a University phone, use the prefix 0 or 9).

**or** call the University Emergency Control Centre on extension 6300 (or 0118 378 6300 on an outside line). At Greenlands, contact Reception/Duty Manager on extension 2000.

There is a local First Aider in your building – see your local notice board or Area Health and Safety Code for details of how to contact them.

At Whiteknights or London Road campuses, if you cannot quickly contact a First Aider, phone the University Emergency Control (extension 6300) and ask for first aid assistance.

## Other emergencies

If you suspect anything suspicious on campus (e.g. a possible bomb threat or suspicious package):

- alert the University Emergency Control Centre and report what you have found or know;
- alert a member of senior management within the building (e.g. Head of School/ Department);
- do not touch or handle any suspicious device or package inside or outside a building.

**Health and Safety Services**  
**Health and Safety Services Office**  
**Estates Building 50**  
**Shinfield Road**  
**hiteknights Reading**  
**RG6 6DQ**  
**United Kingdom**  
**Tel (0118) 378 8888**  
**<https://www.reading.ac.uk/health-safety-services/>**