

HEALTH AND SAFETY

MAKING A SAFER UNIVERSITY

January, 2024

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OF SUSSEX

Meet The Team

Hello! I'm Katie Bennett, the Head of Health and Safety at Sussex. I'd like to introduce the University Central Health and Safety Team, responsible for supporting and advising on safety across the campus.

Our team aims to continuously improve safety standards and compliance, promoting the University as a safe and healthy environment for work, study, to visit and enjoy. Comprising professionals with expertise in fire, chemical, radiation, and biological safety, we bring experience in managing complex and high-risk working environments, including laboratories, workshops and construction sites.

To get in touch and for more information, visit our [website](#). Stay tuned for upcoming Health and Safety newsletters, where we'll introduce individual team members.

Katie Bennett - Head of Health and Safety



Five Step To Wellbeing

We think of our mind and body being separate, but what you do with your body can have a powerful effect on your mental wellbeing. Evidence shows that there is a link between being physically active and positive mental health. This doesn't mean you have to spend hours in the gym though if this doesn't appeal to you. It is important to find physical activities you enjoy and how to fit more of them into your day.



Physical activity causes chemical changes in your brain which can positively change our mood. It is recommended that adults aged 19 and over should have 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity a week, such as walking or cycling.

Find activities that you enjoy and make them part of your life. Follow the link to [SussexSport's](#) for info on the services they provide.

Mike Young - Senior Safety Manager

Defects and Incident Reporting

Following the recent Professional Services Bigger Picture meeting a query was raised regarding health and safety issues related to staff rooms. Unfortunately no further information was provided. However, this acts as a timely reminder, to ensure that they are regularly checked and any issues reported. This could be done through existing workplace inspection arrangements.

Any hazards that teams identify should be reported to the [SEF service desk](#) whilst any safety incidents colleagues are involved in should be reported via [Sussex Direct](#). For example: a loose ceiling tile should be reported to [SEF service desk](#) whilst a ceiling tile falling down and with potential to hitting someone should be reported via [Sussex Direct](#)

Please remember that when reporting safety incidents on Sussex Direct, you should also report near misses. These are occurrences where people have not been injured, but the occurrence has identified that something needs to be done to prevent others potentially being injured. By reporting near misses, we can ensure measures are put in place to eliminate or reduce the likelihood of someone being injured by the same thing next time.

Colleagues can also contact their Divisional Director or Head of School if they identify any serious issues.

Mike Young - Senior Safety Manager

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Charging Electrical Items and Fire

With so many electronic devices in our lives, it can seem like we are almost constantly charging items ready for their next use. On my desk right now, I have my UoS supplied Dell laptop and my mobile phone. At home I have various bike lights, my trusty Garmin sports watch, my Mac, portable speakers, e-bike and more! I don't vape but that is yet another addition to the potential 'risk' list.

'Risk' may seem like a strong word, and I must state that the purpose of this article is most certainly not to scare or cause worry, however it is my aim to raise awareness and to improve the safety and welfare of all.

Recently in the news and social media there have been some worrying cases of fires involving the charging of electrical items.

Recently a member of UoS had a dangerous and frightening incident involving using an incompatible charger with their Dell UoS-supplied laptop. The charger for a Mac was used to charge the Dell laptop. This led to a fire, the smoke alarm alerting the occupier to the fire whilst they slept in the comfort of their home! The laptop was written off and there was potential for considerably worse to happen had their smoke alarm not woken them.



Advice from the National Fire Chiefs Council states:

- Always use the manufacturer approved charger for the product, and if you spot any signs of wear and tear or damage, buy an official replacement charger for your product from a reputable supplier.
- Charge batteries whilst you are awake and alert so if a fire should occur you can respond quickly. Don't leave batteries to charge while you are asleep or away from the home.
- Working smoke alarms save lives, but only if they're in the right place. One on every level is an absolute minimum!

So, the bottom line is: Only use a compatible charger and do not charge when you are asleep.

If this article has whetted your appetite, please look out for opportunities to attend Fire Warden training with the UoS Fire Team, where the above and other home safety tips are included to help improve everyone's safety!

I look forward to meeting you at your Fire Warden Training where the main focus is fire safety at work however plenty of home safety tips are explored too.

Raj Baksi - Fire Safety Trainer

Slips Trips and Falls

As we are now firmly into winter, we all need to be careful when moving around the campus due to the dark, cold and rainy weather we are experiencing, as slip, trips and falls account for over a third of all major injuries suffered at work and even led to two fatalities!

When you are moving around the campus if you notice any issues with the surface such as potholes, slippery surface and poorly lit areas report them on the [Sussex direct incident](#) reporting and to [SEF service centre](#).



Following reported injuries on a slippery access cover, we've taken swift action. The hazardous cover and others posing similar risks have been replaced with new, secure access covers featuring suitable grip. Our goal is to significantly reduce the likelihood of any recurring incidents. Your safety is our priority!

Jed McDonald - Health and Safety Advisor

Challenge H&S to Toads



Have you ever played a game called [Toads](#)? It's a pub game that originated in Sussex and the Health and Safety Team have been playing and our own crafted Toads table.

We've engaged in friendly games with HR United Team and Estates and are so far undefeated! If any team wants to challenge us to a game, all you need to do is find a team of 4 people and we will be happy to give you a game! Rules can be found [here](#)

Team Mascot