

University of Sussex

SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICAL AND PHYSICAL SCIENCES

Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy May 2021

Review Date: February 2024

1. Head of School Statement

The School of Mathematical and Physical Sciences is committed to best practice in health and safety performance and to meeting its responsibilities for the health, safety and well-being of its staff and students and others, including visitors, who may be affected by University activities. This can only be achieved through the application of good practice in health and safety and positive actions by its managers and staff. In addition, the school aims to ensure that all staff receive suitable and sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision, in order:

- to comply with relevant safety legislation
- to respond to emergency situations
- to report accidents and assist in investigations.

The school also wishes to ensure that all staff know how to respond to emergency situations such as fire alarms or accidents, and that any accident or near miss on the premises is reported and investigated. The School of Mathematical and Physical Sciences, in liaison with other Schools and building users, aims to develop and maintain at a high level a general culture of safety awareness.

Vanessa Styles
Head of School of Mathematical and Physical Sciences

2. Safety Management

The **Head of School** is responsible for safety in the School. The following officers are appointed by the Head of School to manage various aspects of health and safety within the school.

School Health and Safety Officers:

- **School Health and Safety Manager / Safety coordinator** is responsible for all health and safety matters in the School and oversees the school's health and safety plans, management, and documentation. They ensure that appropriate additional people are appointed for specialist health and safety roles within the School. In addition, this person organizes H&S inspections, the School H&S committee meetings, training and induction, and any additional H&S related activities that occur. As a "safety coordinator" this person is responsible for ensuring that incidents are reported appropriately and for performing any subsequent investigations.
- **Deputy safety co-ordinator** is appointed by the Head of School and has the same responsibilities as the safety co-ordinator.
- **Laser Protection Supervisor (LPS)** is appointed by the Head of School and is responsible for enforcing safety measures for the safe use of lasers and all other non-ionizing radiation sources in the School.
- **Radiation Protection Supervisor (RPS)** is appointed by the Head of School and is responsible for the safe use of ionizing radiation sources and any equipment which generates radiation in the School.
- **Fire Wardens** are appointed by the School Health and Safety Manager and are drawn from volunteers within the School who are willing to undergo the required training.
- **First Aiders** are listed on the MPS H&S noticeboard and on the web, and consist of volunteers who have undergone the training, and who have informed the School Health and Safety Manager that they wish to be listed as such.

Their brief is to ensure all of the following occur: inform all staff of relevant legislation, carry out safety inspections, ensure risk assessments of the workplace are in place and appropriate, and from these identify any necessary training needs and/or preventative/protective measures, and implement them. Matters involving outside agencies, e.g. the Health and Safety Executive, will be brought to the attention of the School through the School Health and

Safety Co-ordinators. The Head of School is supported and kept advised of developments by the Quality Safety Health and Environment (QSHE) Team (SEF).

Committee

The School Health, Safety and Environment Committee will meet three times a year to consider safety matters arising within the School and will receive reports from safety leads on building inspections, accidents and incidents, safety audits and changes in legislation or University policies.

Line Managers and Principal Investigators

Line managers and PIs are responsible for ensuring safe environments and safe practices for all people and activities within their management areas. In particular, PIs need to appoint a lab manager to be the H&S lead for their labs and to ensure that risk assessments, training records, and other documentation is kept up to date. They are assisted in this by the various safety officers listed above.

Employees' and students' responsibility

All employees and students of the University are required to take all reasonable steps to ensure their own safety and that of others who may be affected by the things they do, or fail to do. They are expected to follow the safety rules, regulations, and management systems provided. They are required to participate in safety training where necessary, act in accordance with their training, not tamper with any safety equipment, and to inform responsible people if there are any defects with the safety systems and equipment provided. Staff and students have a duty to co-operate with the line managers and supervisors in matters of health and safety.

Incident Reporting

All members of the school have a duty to ensure that all H&S incidents, including near-misses are reported to one of the H&S coordinators or via the incident reporting portal as soon as possible following the incident.

Safety Information

The School Health and Safety Co-ordinators will maintain all relevant safety information, the School's Health & Safety Guidance notes, risk assessments, COSHH, DSEAR, etc. forms. They will also provide information on the Safety Notice board which is located by office 3A3 Pevensey 2 and on the School web pages. All new staff are made aware of the University Health and Safety Policy and the Staff Health, Safety and Environment Handbook in their induction.

The H&S induction for new staff is normally provided by the H&S coordinators but can also be performed by the relevant line manager and by faculty members for undergraduate students. Visitors do not normally receive a H&S induction unless they are to work in laboratories, in which case it is the responsibility of the laboratory PI to ensure that the relevant health and safety inductions have been carried out.

A-Z of specific Health and Safety matters:

Accidents and Emergencies

In the first instance emergencies of any sort should be reported to security on x3333 or 01273-873333 who can alert the university emergency team and request additional assistance from fire, ambulance, or police if necessary. The university security are responsible for arrange the attendance of emergency services since they will need to escort them onto campus and provide access to the area in question. All accidents or 'near-misses' must also be reported to the Health and Safety Co-ordinators as soon as possible; they in turn will make an official report using the University's on-line accident report form. For RIDDOR incidents, reporting to the HSE is performed by the Safety Office team from the on-line incident report.

Display Screen Equipment

All users have access to the University's [Display Screen Equipment Policy](#) and the HSE booklet 'Working with VDUs' on the School and University website. A Display Screen Equipment risk assessment is required for all members of staff and is carried out using the online tool on the Health and Safety Office website. If further assessment is required, the School has trained DSE assessors who can come to undertake a full assessment.

Driving at Work

Persons wishing to drive on University business, e.g. to travel to meetings or conferences, are required to confirm to their line manager that they have a valid driving license, that insurance is in place for business use and that the vehicle has a valid MOT certificate. Expenses for the journey may be rejected if this has not been done. The Head of School issues a reminder to this effect at the start of each academic year, and this instruction is also included in the standard H&S induction for new staff.

Electricity at Work

All portable electrical equipment owned by the School will be subject to regular testing for electrical safety (the PAT); testing is carried out annually. Any personal items of electrical equipment such as kettles are subject to the same testing requirements and may be removed if not meeting regulation standards of electrical safety.

Eye Test

All employees identified as display screen equipment users will have access to a free bi-annual eye test and they can request this from their line manager here: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/hso/wellbeing/eyetests>

Fieldwork

Any students undertaking a placement or fieldwork should have a risk assessment undertaken by their supervisor and this will be held by the School Administrator.

Fire Precautions

There is a procedure for ensuring safe and speedy evacuation in the event of the fire alarm sounding. Details are in the School's Health & Safety Guidance notes. It is the responsibility of the School to ensure fire wardens are available in every area of the School's facilities.

First Aid

During normal working hours First Aid is provided by the Emergency Response Team, and by Security Officers at all other times. There are first aid boxes within the School Office in Pevensey 2, and outside the labs on levels 4A and 5A. There are also emergency telephones available to dial x3333 in the foyer of Pevensey 2, in the student space corridor of 3C, and in every laboratory and office space.

Laboratory Safety

All laboratories must have current safety signage on the external door. Every lab supervisor must ensure there are current safety procedures, guidance and training for any member of staff, student or visitor to the lab. Risk assessments are required to be updated annually or when the activities change. Children are not permitted in any research laboratory unless it is a public tour that has had a suitable risk assessment logged and all visitors are suitably escorted by a trained individual. Children are permitted to enter a teaching laboratory when there is an open day or similar organised event, and the child or children must be accompanied by a responsible adult at all times in the building. For the purposes of this document, "children" are defined as anyone under the age of 18.

Manual Handling

Supervisors or managers should make risk assessments for tasks involving the movement of heavy items, e.g. stationery, furniture, etc. Staff of the School should not move heavy items, but ask a premises assistant who has been trained in manual handling to do so.

New and expectant mothers

It is advisable to inform your line manager, Health and Safety coordinator, or one of the School Equality and Diversity champions if you become pregnant, so that a risk assessment may be carried out to ensure your ongoing safety at work. New mothers may also require privacy or facilities. People working with ionizing radiation and anything which requires a COSHH assessment are required to notify their line manager as soon as they discover that they are pregnant, as there are different regulations in these situations. Further information and guidance is available at <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/hso/wellbeing/nems>.

Radiation

The School maintains specialist officers specifically trained to manage the Health and Safety aspects of these activities. Any planned use of radiation (ionizing or controlled non-ionizing) must be discussed with either the RPS or LPS prior to the activity commencing and all personnel working with these types of radiation must be suitably trained and familiar with the relevant safety systems. Purchases of equipment capable of creating hazardous levels of radiation, including lasers, UV systems, high power RF systems, and anything capable of producing ionizing radiation must be agreed with either the RPS or LPS.

Out of Hours working

Persons wishing to gain access to the building outside normal working hours must follow the University's [Lone Working Policy](#) where applicable, and any local rules for individual labs and areas. This is to ensure their own safety in the event of an emergency.

Reporting maintenance problems or safety hazards

Any person can report building or environmental issues via mps-sef@sussex.ac.uk. For safety concerns it is best to inform the school safety manager directly to ensure a speedy resolution.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessments undertaken on the work activities of staff and students are recorded and made available to those affected by the activity. Risk assessments will be reviewed regularly and further risk assessments will be carried out if new work practices are introduced. Mechanisms that are put in place to ensure safety policies and procedures are carried out will be audited and monitored by the Safety Inspection Team.

Smoking

In line with [University policy](#), smoking is prohibited in all areas of the School, including offices, and from a distance of two metres of any building. This includes the use of electronic cigarettes.

Stress at Work

The School believes that its staff are its most important asset and that their well-being is essential to effective work performance and the provision of a high-quality service. The University policy and training for staff details are available here: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/hso/wellbeing/workplacestress>

Training

The University provides a range of training in matters related to health, safety and environment. Staff may be required to attend training if their job requires it. Staff should check with their line manager/supervisor. Bookings onto scheduled training courses may be made via the Sussex Direct>Personal tab, using cost code TC001-03. Courses can be found listed here: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/hso/training/schedules>

Travel

Any travel overnight or outside the UK undertaken by staff or students in the School on University business should be risk assessed using the form <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/mps/internal/documents/mps-travel-risk-assessment-form.docx>. The risk assessments are signed off by the relevant supervisor and stored by the School office.

Visitors

The School welcomes visitors for academic and research purposes. Staff hosting visitors should comply with the MPS Visitor Policy and ensure that visitors are aware of general health and safety in the building and specific health and safety in laboratories. The University holds Public Liability Insurance which covers the University for its legal liability for damages in respect of accidental injury to non-employees.

Waste Disposal

Normal household waste removal is provided by SEF for all public areas and offices. Laboratory waste must be separated and managed appropriately. Chemical waste can be disposed of through an agreement with the Chemistry department at cost. The School Health and Safety Manager may be contacted for more details. Radioactive waste must be managed in line with legislation. Staff working with ionizing radiation must inform the School Radiation Protection Supervisor. Electrical equipment cannot be disposed of in the normal waste-stream and must be placed into the WEEE recycling area. For other controlled items such as human tissue, drugs, etc. the Technical Services Manager should be contacted for advice.

It is the responsibility of the purchaser/requisitioner to ensure that there is an appropriate method of waste disposal for any items purchased or brought onto campus. There are a number of items that are controlled at purchase time to ensure that we do not violate any permits. In particular, all radioactive materials, laser systems, anything capable of providing ionizing radiation, and controlled substances require prior permission before purchasing or bringing them on site. Please discuss requirements with the Technical Services Manager before making this sort of acquisition.

Wellbeing

The School intends to create and maintain a happy and healthy environment for work and study. This is reported on in the staff survey. Any suggestions to improve the working environment can be made to Health and Safety Coordinators, the School Administrator, Heads of Department and the Head of School.

Date of Review	To be reviewed by
February 2025	Head of School; Health and Safety Coordinators and Safety Officers

Appendix 1 – Current MPS safety officers

Head of School: Professor Vanessa Styles

Health and Safety Lead: Dr. Cassandra Churchwell

Radiation Protection Supervisor: Dr. Cassandra Churchwell

Laser Protection Supervisor: Professor Matthias Keller

Appendix 2 – Organizational chart

