

## Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy

### 1. OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

#### 1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework under which the University of Sussex operates in order to allow its staff, students and visitors undertake their activities safely and without detriment to their Health, Safety or Wellbeing and in compliance with the University's statutory responsibilities for Health & Safety.

#### 1.2 Statement from Vice Chancellor

At the University of Sussex we strive to deliver excellence in everything we do. Our success and distinctiveness, are defined through our institutional values of kindness, integrity, inclusion, collaboration and courage, which underpin our education, research and engagement activities.

In support of these institutional values, the University of Sussex seeks to protect and promote the Health, Safety and Wellbeing of all individuals who may be affected by University activities. We will take all reasonably practicable steps necessary to ensure that the appropriate protections, and safeguards are in place.

As an institution we recognise our legal and ethical responsibilities for the Health, Safety and Wellbeing of our staff, students and visitors. At Sussex, compliance with statutory obligations is the minimum expected standard for all activities undertaken on behalf of the University.

All staff have a duty to bring to the attention of the employer any failings in the current safety arrangements, and we welcome suggestions for further improvements to these arrangements.

Professor Adam Tickell  
Vice-Chancellor & President



DATE 28<sup>th</sup> October 2019

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## 2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to all staff, students, contractors and visitors.
- 2.2 This policy applies to all University of Sussex activities undertaken by individuals as part of their work, research or education including travel on University business.
- 2.3 This policy applies to all facilities operated by the University of Sussex including on its Falmer Campus and at other sites in the United Kingdom or abroad (where additionally, local legislative requirements might apply).

## 3. GOVERNANCE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 3.1 University Council

Ultimate responsibility for Health & Safety rests with the University Council, as the governing body of the University. Council receives an annual report from the University's Health & Safety Committee on current safety standards and plans to address any areas of concern.

Routine governance and management of the University is delegated to the Vice- Chancellor and the University Executive Group (UEG).

### 3.2 Vice-Chancellor

The Vice-Chancellor is a member of the University Council, and is accountable to Council for the Health & Safety performance of the University.

As the head of UEG the Vice-Chancellor receives a monthly report from the accident review meeting (See appendix 4 figure 1).

### 3.3 University Executive Group

UEG advises and supports the Vice-Chancellor in the day-to-day running of the University. UEG is responsible for ensuring that Schools and Professional Services Divisions have adequate resources to meet their operational objectives and targets in a safe manner.

### 3.4 Chair of the University's Health & Safety Committee

The Chair of the Health & Safety Committee is appointed by the Vice-Chancellor and has the authority to set and finalise Health & Safety Strategy for the University.

The Health & Safety strategy is based upon recommendations made by Safety Sub-committees, School/Divisional committees and the Safety Office.

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The Chair will seek assurance on Health & Safety operational plans and will take such action deemed necessary to improve standards. Assurance and necessary improvements are achieved by appointing Safety Sub-Committee Chairs, who are empowered to act in the Chair of the Health & Safety Committee's stead on safety matters within the remit of the Sub-Committee. For details of the Health & Safety Committee structure please see appendix 4.

The Chair of the Health & Safety Committee will report to University Council on safety performance, with support from members of the Health & Safety Committee. The Chair shall undertake a review of the effectiveness of current committee structures every 3 years.

### 3.5 Health & Safety Committee

The purpose of the Health & Safety Committee is to promote a positive Health & Safety culture in all members of the University

This includes acting as a consultative body for recognised Trade Union representatives, agreeing safety strategies, advising the University on Health & Safety matters and taking all reasonable measures required to ensure the Health & Safety of University members.

The committee shall have oversight of compliance matters relating to the University estate and audit/inspection programmes.

The Committee reports to UEG and full terms of reference for this Committee are available in "The Organisation of the University" document.

### 3.6 Heads of School or Directors of Professional Service Divisions

Heads of School and Directors of Professional Service Divisions are responsible for implementing the University's Health & Safety Policy within their School or Division. They must set out their own local arrangements for safety management.

Local arrangements shall include ensuring that appropriate information is provided to individuals that may be affected by the activities of the School or Division, as well as ensuring the provision of appropriate equipment, knowledge, time, training and supervision. In addition to the above, the Head of School/ Professional Service Director will:

- i) Ensure that a suitable register of the Health & Safety risks within their School or Division is in place and that risk assessments are in place for activities where there is a reasonably foreseeable risk of injury or ill health.
- ii) Appoint in writing suitable Safety Coordinator or Coordinators to manage local safety risks, and appoint individuals with technical knowledge to cover specific hazards present within their department, including but not limited to: Biological Safety Officers, Radiation Protection Supervisors or laboratory/workshop supervisors.

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- iii) Ensure that their staff have adequate resources to carry out their assigned duties safely.
- iv) Chair the School or Divisional Safety Committee and where required appoint a suitable deputy chair to act in their stead.

### 3.7 Directors with Specific Responsibilities

In addition to the above the following Directors have specific responsibilities for Health, Safety & Wellbeing.

#### i) Director of Human Resources

The Director of Human Resources is responsible for the University’s provision of Occupational Health Services and acts as the Director with operational responsibility for monitoring and promoting staff physical and mental Wellbeing.

#### ii) General Counsel and Director of Governance and Compliance

The General Counsel and Director of Governance and Compliance, has operational responsibility for the Health & Safety Office & ensuring that resources allocated are sufficient to maintain compliance with safety standards across the University’s estate via a programme of audits and inspections.

The General Counsel and Director of Governance and Compliance will work closely with the Chief Technical Officer and the Director of Estates, Facilities & Commercial Services, to ensure a holistic approach to Health & Safety across Professional Services.

#### iii) Director of Estates, Facilities and Commercial Services

The Director of Estates, Facilities and Commercial Services is responsible for ensuring that the work and maintenance regimes of any partners or contractors employed by the University meet the University’s safety standards.

### 3.8 Head of Health & Safety

The Head of Health & Safety is responsible for the daily operations of the Safety Office and must ensure suitable levels of competency with the Safety Office team. The Head of Health & Safety will:

- i) Develop and maintain the University’s Health & Safety policies, standards, guidance and training programmes.
- ii) Manage a team of safety advisers who will assist members of the University in identifying and controlling risk.

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- iii) Maintain an incident reporting system, review incident trends and identify any lessons that can be learned from incidents.
- iv) On behalf of University management, oversee a Health & Safety risk register which reflects University activities.
- v) Monitor Health & Safety performance across the University; including monitoring of compliance issues relating to Health & Safety.
- vi) Establish networks for the exchange of good practice both internally and externally.
- vii) Liaise with Human Resources, Occupational Health Services and recognised Trade Union Safety representatives on relevant matters.
- viii) Investigate and report on relevant matters to regulatory bodies.
- ix) Oversee the University audit and inspection programmes.

### 3.9 Safety Co-ordinators

Safety Co-ordinators are appointed in writing by the Head of School or Professional Service Director. They duly act under such authority with regard to compliance with safety standards.

The duties of individual coordinators will vary depending upon the School or Division but should include:

- i) Managing local safety arrangements.
- ii) Carrying out checks and or inspections.
- iii) Providing regular updates to the Head of School or Professional Service Director.

The suitability of the duties assigned to individual Safety Co-ordinators should be assessed in consultation with the University's Safety Office.

### 3.10 Line Managers/Principal Investigators/Group Leaders/Subject Heads

Staff in supervisory positions have a Health & Safety obligation for individuals operating under their instructions, including students who operate in areas they control.

This obligation includes ensuring that individuals acting under their instruction or supervision have received sufficient relevant safety information/training for the tasks being undertaken and that all activities where there is an identifiable risk of injury or ill-health are managed through an appropriate risk assessment.

Additionally, the post holders named above must ensure that local safety procedures meet the University's standards as outlined in specific University Health and Safety Policy/Guidance

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governing specific hazards. These can be found on the Health and Safety section of the University Website.

**3.11 All Staff, Students, Contractors & Visitors**

Every individual has the responsibility to:

- i) Take all reasonable steps to secure their own Health & Safety.
- ii) Take due consideration of the safety of others that may be affected by their actions.
- iii) Not misuse or interfere with equipment or facilities in place to ensure their safety or the safety of others.
- iv) Comply with University policies and standards and any local safety arrangements and ensure that they are familiar with local safety arrangements.
- v) Stop work where there is an uncontrolled safety risk which they reasonably consider has the potential to result in serious injury.
- vi) Bring any safety issues to the attention of their line manager or the Safety Office team and use the accident/near miss reporting system as appropriate.
- vii) Individuals that are not members of the University of Sussex deemed to be acting in a manner that poses a risk to their safety or the safety of others may be asked to leave site.
- viii) Staff and Students acting in a manner that poses a risk to their safety or the safety of others may be subject to improvement programmes and or disciplinary action.

**3.12 Students’ Union**

As an independent body the Students’ Union is responsible for ensuring the Health, Safety & Wellbeing of its staff and ensure that all activities and events organised by the Students’ Union are carried out in a safe manner. The Students’ Union must maintain its own Health & Safety policy and safety management structures (although the safety of University buildings remains the responsibility of the University). The Students’ Union can utilise the expertise of the Safety Office as required where appropriate expertise is available. Where specialist expertise is required that is not available from the Safety Office the Student Union shall source suitable competent advice. While occupying University buildings the Students’ Union must comply with University’s Health & Safety policies and shall inform the University in good time of any event or activity that could disrupt the functions of the University. The relationship between the University and the Students’ Union is managed at the Executive Liaison Group.

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## 4. POLICY

### 4.1 Health & Safety

The University of Sussex is committed to providing an excellent Health & Safety standard and to drive a programme of continuous improvement in its safety culture. Compliance with legal requirements is the minimum expected standard.

In order to achieve this the University shall:

- i) Provide leadership, resources and consider the safety implications arising from operational or strategic decisions.
- ii) Require ownership of any hazards associated with an individual's work, supporting the identification of these through clear communication and consultation.
- iii) Provide clear definitions of working arrangements.
- iv) Maintain suitable risk control systems and measuring metrics.
- v) Take such actions identified as necessary by monitoring and auditing incident investigations.

The University recognises that failures in Health & Safety management have the potential to lead to serious injuries including loss of life. It is committed to taking all reasonable precautions to mitigate the likelihood and severity of any potential accident.

For more details on how the University manages Health & Safety please see the Health & Safety section of the University of Sussex's Website.

For organisational charts relating to Health & Safety see appendix 4.

### 4.2 Student Personal Safety & Wellbeing

Support services for student Health, Safety & Wellbeing are overseen by the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education & Students).

The Division for the Student Experience provides services for students including:

- i) Support for students with a disability or long-term health condition.
- ii) Wellbeing, counselling, general health and mental health information/advice.
- iii) Campus and residential support (pastoral, welfare, disciplinary and social).
- iv) Chaplaincy.
- v) Co-ordination of support for students at particular risk.

The on-site Health Centre provides the services of an NHS general practice to students.

Information on Health, Safety, Fire Safety, Security and how to access Welfare services is made available to all students. For more information on how to access these services refer to the Student Support and Safety Office sections of the University of Sussex's Website.

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### 4.3 Wellbeing

The University of Sussex is committed to ensuring that all members of the University have support available to assist them in maintaining their physical and psychological Wellbeing. Support can be accessed via:

- i) Via referral from the individual's, line manager to University's independent Occupational Health Services provider.
- ii) Confidential Counselling and specialist advice is available as part of the Employee Assistance Programme, this service can be accessed via self-referral from the Human Resources Website.

In instances where an individual is in disagreement with their line manager with regard to Wellbeing or Occupational Health support, the University's Human Resources Division should be contacted. A list of Human Resources contacts for each School or Division is available on the Human Resources website.

### 4.4 Occupational Health

Occupational Health services at the University of Sussex are provided by an external provider. This provision includes:

- i) Fitness to work assessments for students and staff.
- ii) Health Surveillance for Research<sup>1</sup> students and staff.
- iii) Vaccinations or immunisations for Research students and staff.
- iv) Professional advice on work related ill health.
- v) Tracking and reporting trends relating to work place injury and referrals.
- vi) Assisting Human Resources in rehabilitation and return to work programmes.
- vii) Assisting in the risk assessment for new employees.
- viii) Informing the Safety Office of reportable work related ill health.
- ix) Promoting Health, Safety and Wellbeing within the University.

The Occupational Health service is independent from Schools or Divisions and is available to all members of staff.

Where, due to the nature of the individual's work, Health Surveillance is required it is the responsibility of the individual's line manager to ensure that this is in place. The University's Safety Office can provide advice as to the circumstances when this may be required.

### 4.5 Insurance

The University's insurers have an active interest in how the University manages Health & Safety; as such they carry out periodic surveys of facilities and may make recommendations for improvements. The Insurers expect serious accidents and incidents to be investigated by the University and that findings are made available to them upon request.

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<sup>1</sup> See appendix 3 for definition

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## 4.6 Collaborations and Contractual Relationships

Collaborators from other institutions operating in the University of Sussex's facilities, or Sussex staff operating in facilities controlled by other institutions, must comply with local safety rules and procedures.

Formal partnerships managed by a contract should include appropriate reference to the safety responsibilities of the relevant parties.

This includes partnerships relating to construction projects, research, and delivery of services or lease agreements.

## 5 LEGISLATION AND GOOD PRACTICE

### 5.1 The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSWA1974)

The HSWA1974 places a duty on an employer to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all employees and others who may be affected by its acts or omissions. This includes the provision and maintenance of safe plant, machinery, equipment and safe systems of work. Although ultimate responsibility for compliance rests with employers, every employee has a responsibility to ensure that no one is harmed as a result of their acts or omissions during the course of their work.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE), with local authorities (and other enforcing authorities), is responsible for enforcing the HSWA1974 and a number of other Acts and Statutory Instruments relevant to the working environment. For information on the HSE's remit and relevant Health and Safety legislation please contact the University Safety Office.

### 5.2 The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

The 1999 Regulations require an employer to suitably assess work-based activities and implement any appropriate controls to manage potential risks to the health, safety and welfare of employees and others.

Breach of the legal duties can constitute a criminal offence and could lead to prosecution, resulting in a fine and/or a term of imprisonment.

For initial advice on the legal obligations under the HSWA1974 and the 1999 Regulations please contact the University Safety Office.

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<b>Review / Contacts / References</b>	
Policy title:	University of Sussex Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy
Date approved:	2018
Approving body:	Health & Safety Committee
Last review date:	July 2021 (AH Interim Head of Health and Safety)
Revision history:	Version 1.1
Next review date:	July 2022
Related internal policies, procedures, guidance:	<i>See appendix 2</i>
Policy owner:	<i>Health and Safety Team</i>
Lead contact / author:	<i>Steven Carter (Head of Health &amp; Safety)</i>
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## **Appendix 1                  Named Safety Roles within the University**

This is not a comprehensive list of all roles associated with safety management at the University. There are other individuals with specialist safety functions appointed by some Heads of School or Professional Service Directors dependent upon the type of work or research undertaken, such as Laser Safety Officers (LSOs) and Radiation Protection Supervisors (RPSs).

**Radiation Protection Officer** is responsible for:

- i) Advising on the observance of the Ionising and non-ionising radiation regulations.
- ii) Advising and assisting members of the University on matters relating to the use of ionising and non-ionising radiation.
- iii) Overseeing compliance with permits issued by the Environment Agency for the use of radioactive material or work carried out under a relevant exemption.

**Fire Safety Officer** is responsible for:

- i) Drafting the Fire Safety Policy for approval by the University.
- ii) Advising on University's Fire Safety strategies.
- iii) Advising members of the University on fire safety matters and compliance with fire safety standards and legislation.

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**Biological Safety Officer** is responsible for:

- i) Drafting the policy for the control of biological agents, pathogens and the use of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs).
- ii) Advising upon all work involving the use of hazardous biological agents or GMOs, and must be consulted when such work is planned.
- iii) Advising and assisting members of the University on matters relating Biological Safety.
- iv) Approving new projects and registering them with relevant external bodies.
- v) Overseeing compliance with relevant legislation governing work with biological agents and GMOs within their appointed areas.

## **Appendix 2                      Health, Safety & Wellbeing: Relevant Policies**

List of relevant Human Resources Policies

- [University of Sussex Statement on Violence](#)
- [University of Sussex Policy on Definitions of Violence](#)
- [University of Sussex Stress Management Policy](#)
- [University of Sussex Policy to prevent Harassment & Bullying at Work](#)
- [University of Sussex Equality & Diversity Policy](#)

List of Relevant Student Experience Policies

- [University of Sussex Safeguarding Policy](#)
- [University of Sussex Fitness to Study Policy](#)
- [University of Sussex Equality and Diversity Policy](#)
- Study Abroad Placement Policy

### List of Health & Safety Policies

- HS P002 Control of Hazardous Substances Policy
- HS P004 Display Screen Equipment Policy
- HS P005 Asbestos Management Policy
- HS P006 Legionella Safety Management Procedure
- HS P007 Management of Contractors policy
- HS P008 Fire Policy
- HS P009 Lone Working Policy
- HS P010 Radiation Policy
- HS P011 Manual Handling Policy
- HS P012 Control of Noise at Work Policy
- HS P017 Control of hand-arm vibration Policy
- HS P018 Artificial Optical Radiation
- HS P021 Hazardous Waste Policy

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## Appendix 3                      Definitions

### **Environment Agency**

The regulatory body responsibly for the protection and enhancement of the environment.

### **Health & Safety**

The laws, rules, and principles that are intended to keep people safe from injury disease at work and in public places.

### **Health & Safety Executive**

The regulatory body overseeing compliance with Health & Safety regulations.

### **Health Surveillance**

A system of ongoing health checks required by law for employees who are exposed to specific hazards at defined levels including; Noise, Vibration, Ionising Radiation, Solvents, Fumes, Dusts, Biological agents or other substances hazardous to health.

### **Occupational Health**

The Branch of Medicine dealing with prevention and treatment of work related injuries or illnesses

### **Risk Assessment**

A systematic process of evaluating the potential risk that may be involved in a specific activity or practice. In this context relating to the health risk as opposed to any risk to the project or completion of the work.

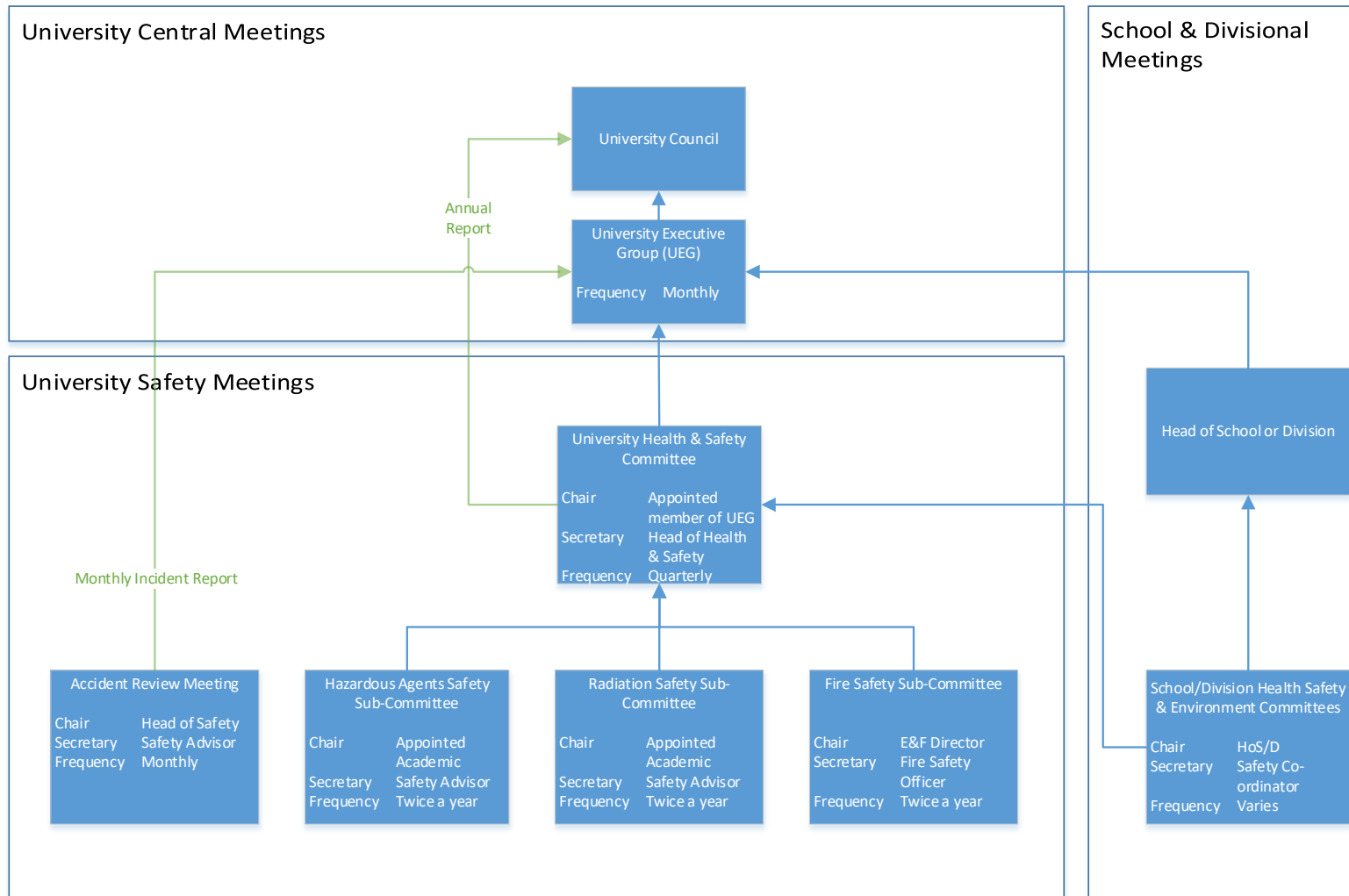
### **Wellbeing**

In this context wellbeing relates to all aspects of working life, including; the safety of the environment, how workers feel about their work and the climate work is carried out in.

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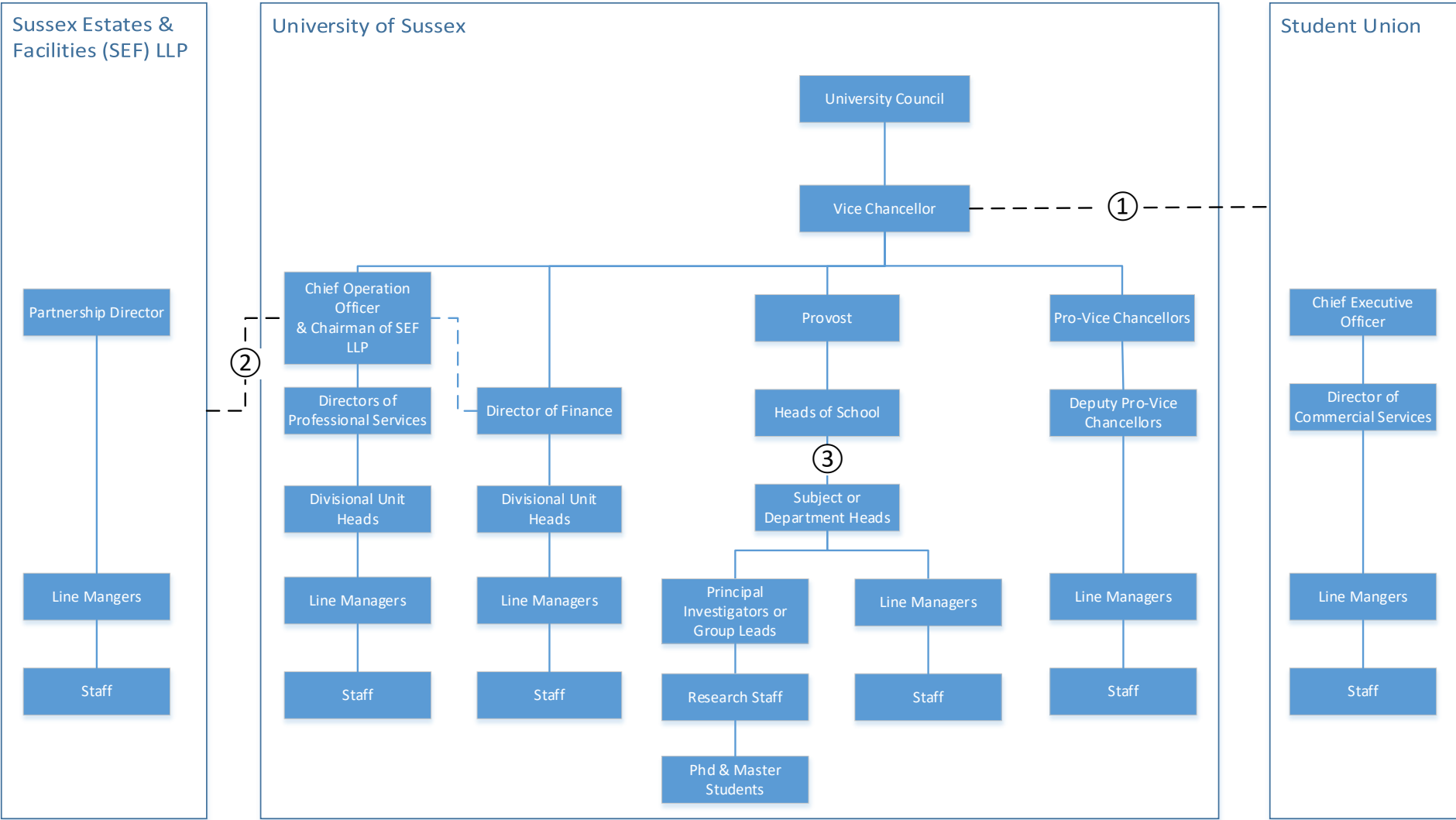
## Appendix 4 Organograms

Figure 1 Meetings



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Figure 2 Line Management Organogram



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Footnotes on Figure 2

- 1 The relationship between the Student Union & the University of Sussex is managed at the Executive Liaison Group terms of reference for which can be found in the document “Organisation of the University”.
- 2 The Chairman of SEF LLP is the University of Sussex Chief Operating Officer. As such they have responsibility for the Health & Safety of SEF staff. Day to Day oversight of estates related functions are delegated to the Director of Estates, Facilities and Commercial Services.
- 3 Full School organisational charts can be found in School Health & Safety Policies.

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