Royal Holloway University of London

Minutes of Health & Safety Assurance Committee held on Monday 24th June 2013 at 11.00 am in Meeting Room E139

Present: Mrs Margaret Jack (Chair), Mrs Chris Shoukry, Mr Mark Newlands (via conference call)

In attendance: Professor Paul Layzell, Mr Simon Higman, Professor Paul Hogg, Professor Katie Normington, Professor Bob O’Keefe, Mr Matt Purcell

With: Mrs Hilary Baker

1. MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

It was AGREED that point 1 should include reference to health and safety compliance. Also that point 4 bullet point 2 should include details of incidents that could pose significant risk. 13/9

It was DISCUSSED whether the Health & Safety Assurance committee was the appropriate forum for sustainability issues to be raised. 13/10

The Committee AGREED that Revised Terms of Reference should be considered by Council Executive 13/11

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee APPROVED the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16th April 2013. 13/12

The Committee AGREED that an actions list should be provided with future minutes. 13/13

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

It was NOTED that the Registrar and College Secretary hoped to have the name of a contact from a local company who could offer advice to the Committee for the next meeting. 13/14

4. MINUTES OF HEALTH & SAFETY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

The Committee RECEIVED the minutes of the meeting held on 6th June 2013. 13/15

It was NOTED that the role of the consultative committee was to consult with staff in departments and keep them up dated on Health & Safety issues. The minutes of the Health & Safety Consultative Committee were written for the benefit of that committee to reference their decisions and would not necessarily provide assurance to this Committee. 13/16

5. TARGETS & ACTION PLANS

The Committee RECEIVED a paper outlining suggested information sets to be provided to inform the Committee’s annual review of Health & Safety performance at the June meeting of the committee. 13/17

The Committee reviewed the suggested scoring system for levels of health and safety compliance within departments. It was noted that as there was already a similar system used for risk management issues it would be beneficial for health & safety reporting to be aligned with this. 13/18
The Committee REVIEWED the information provided and noted that the number of accidents appeared low considering the size of the institution. It was important that staff and students realised the significance of reporting even minor incidents. The Committee discussed the importance of health and safety awareness and how people could be encouraged to engage with issues and the training provided. It was noted that health and safety issues could be covered under the more general topic of health and wellbeing. The Equality & Diversity Steering Group was looking at introducing themed days or weeks and health and wellbeing would be included in this. The Health & Safety Director confirmed that there was no reason to believe that incidents had not been reported and that staff in departments were clear about the procedures for reporting incidents.

The Committee noted that for major building projects the responsibility for health & safety lay principally with the third party contractors carrying out the work although potentially the College could be drawn into a prosecution. The procurement selection process for contractors should provide reassurance that adequate health & safety safeguards were in place. It was noted that the College also had no formal jurisdiction over health and safety issues in the Students’ Union which could also carry a reputational risk for the institution.

6. STUDENT HEALTH & SAFETY ISSUES

The Committee RECEIVED a verbal report on student health & safety issues.

Placements

It was reported that due to the increase in availability of work/study placements a significant amount of work had been carried out with RHI looking at health & safety issues in international placements. Similar work was now ongoing with the Careers Service in relation to UK based work placements.

Driving Policy

The new driving policy had raised issues about the College’s duty of care to students who drove under College instruction. A scoping exercise was being carried out to assess the scale and nature of these activities. Driving requirements could range from transport to theatre trips to driving abroad for field trips.

7. FIRE AT WETTONS TERRACE

The Committee RECEIVED a verbal update on the fire at Wettons Terrace. It was noted that the building had been in use by the International Study Group at the time of the fire and that the fire had raised issues about the way the building was managed. Action was now being taken to address lessons learnt.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Committee noted that this was Margaret Jack’s last meeting. Thanks were recorded for her work in chairing the Committee.

It was NOTED that Chris Shoukry had been asked to take on the role of Chairing the Committee.

It was NOTED that a further lay member would be required.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

20th February 2014 in the Principal’s Meeting Room.