

Role of Embedded Safety Coordinators (Schools, Institutes and Departments)

Introduction

NOTE: The term "Department" in this document is also used to describe academic Schools/Institutes as well as Professional Services functions.

Whilst the Head of Department (HoD) is entirely responsible for safety within College departments, he/she appoints and authorises a Safety Coordinator/s (SC) to assist in the development, implementation, monitoring and review of the department's health and safety management systems. Where safety concerns are identified, the SC is authorised to raise the matter with the appropriate manager (e.g. a departmental supervisor, senior academic or the Head of Department). The SC is also authorised to raise safety concerns directly with the College Health and Safety Department or Health and Safety Advisory Group.

There will normally be one overall primary SC in each College department however more may be appointed where the Head deems this to be necessary in large complex departments. In addition specialist safety coordinators may also be appointed (for example, a department may have additional safety officers covering biological safety, genetic modification, laser safety and/or radiation protection). Assistant or Sectional SC's may also be appointed where deemed necessary. Advice of this can be obtained from the College Health and Safety Department.

The departmental SC is **not** expected to function in any way as a **safety professional**; his/her function is to support their Head and liaise with the College Health and Safety Department to obtain the necessary specialist advice to implement within the department. To discharge their duties adequately, the SC will be required to attend training courses arranged by the Health and Safety Department specifically for these roles.

Role of Safety Coordinators

1. Support the HOD in the discharge of his or her health and safety responsibilities.
2. Advise the HOD on the appropriate arrangements for managing and monitoring health and safety in the department.
3. Understand the department principal hazards, and check that risk assessments are carried out and that the necessary controls for managing the risks are implemented effectively.
4. Advise senior academics, Heads of Section, managers, departmental staff and students on day-to-day operational safety and compliance with College and statutory requirements.
5. Co-ordinate health and safety training across the department including the provision of appropriate information and induction training for staff, students, visiting workers and contractors.
6. Assist the HOD in the preparation of an annual health and safety plan and an index of health and safety arrangements.
7. Coordinate and participate in the carrying out of safety inspections within the department and participate in College audits.

8. Coordinate the investigation of accidents and near misses within the department, referring to the College Health and Safety Department where necessary.
9. Coordinate the dissemination of best practice advice and information across the department and coordinate arrangements for effective co-operation with other departments, including the occupational health service, estates, external contractors and other employers, are maintained.
10. Be a member of the departmental and Faculty Health and Safety Group/Committee.
11. Liaise with and be the key contact with the College Health and Safety Department to optimise the safety advice/information available to the department.
12. Coordinate the retention of departmental health and safety records for the duties noted above (e.g. risk assessments, training records, accident reports)

Competency

13. To carry out their duties effectively SC's must be competent (i.e. appropriately experienced and trained) they must be able to (with full support and guidance from the College Health and Safety Department):
14. Recognise situations with the potential to cause damage or harm.
15. Design and implement effective preventive or protective measures.
16. Communicate effectively with staff, students, contractors and visitors.
17. Advise on compliance with statutory and College requirements and standards.
18. Advise on safe systems of work.
19. Identify areas of weakness in health and safety arrangements and take appropriate action, including recommending the suspension of activities to the HOD where health and safety is being, or is likely to be, compromised or damage caused to the environment.
20. Understand the limits of their own health and safety competence and seek advice from the College's health and safety specialists where necessary.