

CONFIRMED

LIVERPOOL HOPE UNIVERSITY

HEALTH & SAFETY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE: 8th OCTOBER 2021

PRESENT: Ms S Beecroft (in the Chair), Mr M Beecroft, Dr W Bignold, Ms C Campbell, Mr A Catterall, Dr R Cousins, Mr J Ellison, Mr B Grice, Dr P Johnston, Mr J Jones, Mr D Kerry, Ms G Mair, Ms D Mann, Ms R McManniman, Dr S Mercer, Mr J Ryan, Ms S Trujillo, Mr M Wells,

Apologies: Mr D Owen

Secretariat: Mr M Jones

1. Terms of Reference

Members had received the updated Terms of Reference (CHS 227).

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Members had received unconfirmed minutes of the meeting on 20th May 2021 (CHS 228). The minutes were **APPROVED** as a correct record.

3. Matters Arising

Re Dr Lux's request that management share figures relating to numbers of students attending face to face sessions at the end of the 2020/21 academic year, the Chair informed members that she had been unable to obtain this data as Schools had recorded attendance in a variety of different ways.

4. COVID 19 Update

The Chair informed members that as of the date of the meeting case rates in Liverpool are 265.8 per 100,000 (Childwall 454, Everton 202, Aigburth 368). The Chair added that the majority of cases are from the school age population (0 - 17 year olds). Among 18 to 24 year olds the rate is 149.6 per 100,000; 43% of this age group in Liverpool have been double vaccinated.

The Chair informed members that data from the University's Covid team shows two members of support staff currently positive, and two members of academic staff. Five non-residential students are currently positive. No residential students are currently positive.

CONFIRMED

The Chair informed members that since the last meeting of Health & Safety Consultative Committee, the Covid 19 Sub-Group has continued to meet on a regular basis, consulting with unions and other staff about arrangements for the 2021/22 academic year. The Chair acknowledged receipt of written questions from UCU and undertook to provide answers to these in the coming days.

ACTION: Chair to provide answers to UCU questions, as above.

Members had received the updated Overarching Risk Assessment (CHS 230). Ms Trujillo asked how many students at the University have been vaccinated. The Chair responded that this University does not have this information, and is not permitted to request it from students. The Chair added that the University is considering the possibility of conducting a voluntary survey of students in relation to this matter. Dr Mercer asked for further detail as to the basis on which risks are determined to be low, medium or high. Ms McManniman responded that this is done in accordance with the University's risk matrix, which is available on the website.

Members had received the Ventilation Guidance document (CHS 231). Mr Ellison informed members that in mechanically ventilated buildings the Building Management Systems have been adjusted to remove air re-circulation and monitor CO₂. Mr Ellison added that in such buildings the systems are now set to purge ventilation for two hours before the start and after the end of each day. Mr Ellison added that CO₂ monitors have been installed in all naturally ventilated teaching rooms, adding that information re what to do in the event of the monitor going red has been circulated to staff. Mr Ellison informed members that during the summer work was undertaken to improve ventilation flow rates, including replacing filters where necessary. Mr Ellison informed members that as part of this work air flow in 54 teaching spaces was assessed.

Members had received the updated Face Coverings Policy (CHS 232). The Chair reminded members that while the University is not legally able to mandate mask use among students, it strongly recommends such use. The Chair added that Student Ambassadors have been posted around campus to remind students re face coverings. Mr Catterall added that Student Ambassadors will also be distributing face coverings to students in need of them. The Chair informed members that academic staff are permitted to eject any student refusing to wear a face covering from class (unless they have a valid exemption).

Mr Kerry raised the issue of academics who rely on lip-reading, noting that they would need transparent face coverings for their students. The Chair undertook to follow this up with Mr Kerry after the meeting.

ACTION: Chair to liaise with Mr Kerry, as above.

5. Health & Safety Policy

CONFIRMED

Members had received the updated Health & Safety Policy (CHS 233). Ms McManniman advised that no major changes have been made to the policy.

6. Health & Safety Annual Report

Members had received the Health & Safety Annual Report (CHS 234). Ms McManniman informed members that three accidents had occurred on University property during the previous year, adding that none of these was RIDDOR reportable. Ms McManniman attributed the sizable reduction in number of accidents to the greatly reduced campus occupancy during the pandemic.

7. Drinking Water Access

Ms McManniman informed members that the University is in the process of replacing the water coolers, as these can become a source of infection if not cleaned. Ms McManniman added that the coolers are being replaced by drinking water taps.

8. Stress Indicator Progress Update

Ms McManniman informed members that she has recommended to USET that the University adopts the HSE Stress Indicator tool. Ms McManniman added that she would bring the documentation for this to the Feb 2022 meeting of the committee. Mr Catterall undertook to circulate the questions used in the tool to members.

ACTION: Mr Catterall to circulate questions, as above.

9. Infectious Disease Policy

Members had received the updated Infectious Disease Policy (CHS 235). Ms McManniman informed members that the policy has been updated in light of the pandemic. Mr Ellison noted that the policy mentions students and members of staff but does not mention conference attendees. The Chair requested that this element be added to the updated policy.

ACTION: Ms McManniman to update policy, as above.

10. Legal Update

There was no legal update.

11. Student Safety Issues

CONFIRMED

Dr Bignold informed members that SRTs have received training in fire safety, health & safety, risk assessments, mental health, self harm, suicide and sexual assault. Dr Bignold added that attendance at the student welcome talks, at which safety information was disseminated to students, was good. Dr Bignold informed members that fire drills in halls of residence would be starting the following week. Dr Bignold informed members that consent training for students will begin in the coming weeks and will be conducted online. Ms Trujillo asked that tutors be informed of the safety information being disseminated to students so they can reinforce it. Dr Bignold added that External Relations could also reinforce the message to students, via the bulletin and social media. The Chair suggested that Dr Haughan's weekly email to students also contain this information. Ms Trujillo undertook to contact Dr Haughan re this.

ACTION: Ms Trujillo to contact Dr Haughan, as above.

Mr Ryan informed members that during 2021 Counselling has seen a 12% increase in users, while Mental Health Support has seen a 19% increase in the same period. Mr Ryan added that the waiting time for Counselling has gone up by one day, to seven days, but added that this is substantially shorter than the waiting time to access counselling via a GP. Mr Ryan informed members that the average waiting time for Mental Health Support is three days. Mr Ryan informed members that anxiety and stress are the most common causes of students seeking support. Mr Ryan informed members that during the 2020/21 academic year the use of remote meetings drastically reduced the number of appointments at which students did not attend. The Chair asked Mr Ryan to prepare a report containing this information for Council Standing Committee on Health & Safety.

ACTION: Mr Ryan to prepare report, as above.

12. Departmental Updates

Dr Bignold informed members that there are currently no students studying abroad this semester, adding that some students hope to undertake overseas study next semester, pending a change in policy.

Dr Mercer cited potential instances of members of academic staff undergoing Occupational Health reviews but being expected to return to work. The Chair assured members that every case is considered individually. Mr Catterall added that all staff members in this category receive an individual risk assessment.

13. AOB

Ms Trujillo informed members that Freshers' Fair was a success, adding that compliance with the pre-entry lateral flow test was good.

CONFIRMED

Dr Johnston informed members that student compliance with one-way systems is in need of improvement. The Chair informed members that Student Ambassador numbers are being increased across campus in reaction to this.