

## **HEALTH & SAFETY WORKPLACE INSPECTIONS CODE OF PRACTICE**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Safety inspections form an important part of the University's policy for ensuring a safe workplace. It is expected that responsibility for planning and implementing the inspection programme will be taken by a senior member of the School or Directorate (this may be a Dean, Head of School, Director, Head of Department, Health & Safety Local Manager, or Local Safety Teams). It is recommended that each area of work is to be inspected at least once a year locally and once a year by a member of the Health and Safety Team in attendance. Disciplines having high hazard areas or work activity may be inspected more frequently (taking a risk-based approach).

It should be noted that trade union appointed safety representatives have a right to conduct independent safety inspections of the workplace. At the discretion of the Head of School or Director, it is acceptable to invite trade union health and safety representatives to participate actively in the programme.

### **2. SCOPE**

There is a management expectation that this Code of Practice will be followed unless there are alternative safety systems that can give equal management to a specified risk or set of risks and that this has been agreed with Health & Safety beforehand.

### **3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **Health & Safety**

Health and Safety will support the inspection process with training, document templates, attendance, advice, and support for the implementation of any agreed recommendations. We will also formally undertake an annual inspection with the Head of School/Director of the agreed area.

#### **Executive Deans and Directors**

- Ensure that a prioritised program of inspections is in place for each School & directorate
- Ensure suitable inspections are undertaken and in accordance with the plan and actions are closed
- Attend some of the inspections to ensure leadership is given. This will also give a better picture of risks in the areas.
- Report on the success of the program or otherwise to University Executive Committee.

#### **Heads of Schools & Departments**

- Ensure a documented prioritised program of inspections is developed annually for all areas under their control.
- Ensuring the program is suitably implemented and adequately resourced
- Monitoring the performance of the program
- Gaining assurance that recommendations are closed out in a timely manor
- Attend some of the inspections to ensure leadership is given
- Ensure, where appropriate, inspection findings inform the departmental risk register

## Local Safety Advisers & Coordinators

- Organise and facilitate the safety inspections
- Collate the findings including any photographs/evidence
- Draft the report and assign actions, advise on recommendations and timescales
- Present the report directly to the Dean & Heads of Department and give assurance on completion of recommendations.
- Send a copy of the report to the Health and Safety Team

## 4. DEVELOPING THE INSPECTION PROGRAMME

The Keele University Health and Safety Management System follows the Plan, Do, Check, Act principal creating a continuous improvement management cycle. Each element of the cycle is an essential part of our health and safety management system (put very simply):

<b>Plan</b>	To Set out the arrangements for managing health and safety
<b>Do</b>	Implementing your plan, training, and communicating
<b>Check</b>	Inspections and Monitoring with feed back to your committee/forum or group
<b>Act</b>	Reviewing your management system to create continuous improvement

An annual inspection programme should be devised. This should include how often an inspection will be undertaken throughout the course of the year. This will be dependent on risk profiles of the areas. By taking a risk-based approach you may find that areas such as offices do not need inspecting as regularly as laboratories or workshops. The inspection programme should be planned on an annual cycle and published in advance. A copy of the annual program should be provided to Health and Safety central team.

The programme organiser (staff responsible locally) will need to consider whether to conduct inspections of the whole School or Department at once or whether, depending on the size, complexity, and geography, to keep individual inspections to a manageable scale. In determining the size of the inspection, care must be taken to ensure that shared facilities are not overlooked.

Once the program is drawn up you will have a detailed plan in place which identifies the areas and frequencies at which inspections will be undertaken. The plan can be presented to your Health and Safety Committee/management group for agreement. Having the prioritised program of inspections makes it more likely that inspections will be undertaken in a planned manner. A flowchart of the inspection programme can be found in **Annex A** of this document.

## 5. COMPOSITION OF THE INSPECTION TEAM

Ensure you have the right people at the inspection. Inspection Teams could be made up of the following:

- The Local safety team from the Department
- One or more individuals with knowledge of the type of work and area to be inspected
- A representative from the Central Health and Safety team (once annually)
- A trade union safety representative if they wish to attend
- The Head of School/Director and Dean of Faculty to take a lead on some of these inspections (this will show visible health and safety leadership)

## 6. CONDUCTING THE INSPECTION

- Notify the most appropriate person for health and safety and ask for copies of any significant codes of practice or local rules specific to the department. Emphasise the importance of staff being present when the inspection takes place.
- Ask the Dean/Head of School/Director to accompany the inspection team or to nominate a representative to do so.
- Ensure you have the right documents & templates to conduct the inspection. Templates are provided for your use on the H&S intranet pages.

It is useful to have a pre-inspection meeting to: -

- Consider any previous reports and highlight potential areas of concern
- Decide whether there are areas that need particular attention or where specialist knowledge might be helpful
- Allocate key issues to team members for detailed attention

## 7. INSPECTION REPORTS

In your final report you should:

- Record your findings on a room-by-room basis using the template provided on the H&S intranet pages
- Draw conclusions and set action priorities relating to the degree of risk
- Summarise key findings and put these into the front of the report
- Include positive findings and commend where appropriate
- Make sure that management issues are addressed
- Make sure that the key areas/issues identified before the inspection is addressed
- Send report to Dean or Head of department/Directorate

## 8. AGREEING RESPONSES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Invite heads of groups to comment on actions
- Discuss at the Departmental Safety Committee/management meetings

## 9. REVIEWING THE INSPECTION PROGRAMME

At intervals and when an annual inspection programme has been completed, the process and outcome of the programme should be reviewed. Any outcomes of this review should be sent to the University's Health and Safety office. The review should be an opportunity to consider the effectiveness of the inspection programme and whether any changes need to be made in it for the following year. It should also have the function of analysing the findings of the reports to determine whether some failures are more commonly recurring than others or whether there are systematic failures that should be addressed by improving controls such as documentation and/or training.

The findings of the review should be discussed with the Deans or Heads of department/Directorates and considered when management or training objectives are determined in the following year.

## 10. DOCUMENT CONTROL INFORMATION

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