

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

This policy has been produced to enable Keele University to comply with its legal duties and responsibilities under the Health and Safety etc. Act 1974 and relevant statutory provisions.

1.2 Scope

The Policy adheres to the health and safety management system, which are the principles of the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) Managing for Health and Safety (HSG65), and the Universities Safety and Health Association (USHA) Leadership and Management of Health and Safety in Higher Education Institutions guidance. This provides a framework for Keele University to support its Strategic Vision and thereby provides assurance to Council.

1.3 Key Information

This policy is divided into three parts which are:

1. **Statement of Intent** which provides the Policy and general direction for the management and governance of health and safety within Keele University.
2. **Organisation** which sets out how this part of the Policy is organised within Keele University and defines responsibilities and accountabilities for all staff (including line management), students and others (in the University's undertakings);
3. **Arrangements** which sets out the arrangements in place to achieve the health and safety objective of this Policy.

1.4 Who to Contact about this Policy

This Policy is owned by the Head of Health and Safety. Any enquires about this Policy should be directed to the Head of Health and Safety: healthandsafety@keele.ac.uk

2. STATEMENT OF INTENT

2.1 It is the policy of Keele University to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the health, safety and wellbeing of all staff, students and others who may be affected by the undertakings of the University. Therefore, to ensure legal, moral and financial compliance, a safe and healthy working environment is essential for nurturing excellence and the wellbeing of the University staff, students and others.

2.2 Keele University is committed to:

- Continuous improvement in health and safety management and performance leading to standards beyond legal minimum requirements that may match or lead in best practice nationally.
- The development of appropriate local health and safety organisational structures which provides direction for senior managers to lead and encourage a positive health and safety culture. This additionally secures the full participation of all members of the University and supports the management of risk.
- Ensuring that health and safety is integrated into every aspect of the University's business to align and complement Keele University Health and Safety Strategic Action Plan.

- The systematic identification, assessment and control of risks to achieve an effective approach to the prevention of injury, ill-health and loss arising from the activities of the University.
- Ensuring that managers, staff and students are equipped with the knowledge, competence, confidence and capacity to deal effectively with health and safety issues, through the provision of appropriate resources, supervision, information, instruction and training. This includes the provision of access to competent specialist health and safety advice through the Health and Safety Unit and nominated specialist Health and Safety posts in Faculties/Directorates.
- The conduct of valued consultation and communication through relevant committee and other fora with recognised Unions, staff, students and others who may share our facilities or activities, where appropriate, on matters concerning health and safety.

2.3 Keele University requires all staff, students and others involved in the undertakings of the University to take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts and omissions, and to co-operate with the University in the achievement of this policy's objectives. Moreover, they are encouraged to contribute to the continuous improvement of health and safety standards. This also applies to all areas owned or leased by or otherwise under the control of the University.

2.4 The Vice-Chancellor and Council jointly commit to ensuring that this statement is complied with.

Signed:		Signed:	
	Vice-Chancellor		Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council
Date:	18th February 2026	Date:	18th February 2026

3. ORGANISATION

3.1 This section sets out the health and safety structure and general health and safety responsibilities of post holders in Keele University. Details of specific responsibilities are given, where necessary, in topic-specific university health and safety codes of practice and guidance notes which are further described under the Arrangements section of this policy.

3.2 The Health and Safety Management and Faculty/Directorate Organisation charts provide a visual summary (see [Appendix 1 – University H&S Management Structure and Faculty/Directorate H&S Management Structure](#)).

3.3 Council

Council is ultimately responsible for health and safety matters within Keele University. It ensures that its decisions reflect Keele University Health and Safety Strategic Action Plan's objectives, including ensuring that resources for the management of health and safety are adequate. Council receives regular reports from the University Health and Safety Committee, in addition to, an annual report from the Head of Health and Safety on health and safety management issues.

3.4 The Vice-Chancellor

The Vice-Chancellor is the senior executive lead for health and safety to Council and is responsible for ensuring that health and safety issues are properly addressed by Council and throughout the University. The Vice-Chancellor is executively responsible for the success of the health and safety management system, which includes the implementation of this policy, and ensures that senior managers and other personnel adequately discharge their duties in accordance with this policy. The Vice-Chancellor is advised by the Chief Operating Officer (Health and Safety Champion), Director of Legal, Governance and Compliance, the Head of Health and Safety and the University Health and Safety Committee.

3.5 The Chief Operating Officer (Health and Safety Champion)

The Chief Operating Officer is a member of the University Executive Committee with defined responsibilities as the Health and Safety Champion, for:

- Supporting the Vice-Chancellor in the discharge of their responsibilities by promoting the health and safety management system, maintaining a positive health and safety culture throughout the University, providing leadership and promoting debate/awareness of health and safety issues and risks in senior management discussions.
- Directing the University Executive Committee to ensure there are adequate resources to implement this Policy.
- Devolving specific health and safety duties to managers across the University as necessary.
- Chairing the University Health and Safety Committee.

In this role, the Chief Operating Officer will be supported by:

- The Director of Legal, Governance and Compliance.
- University Executive Committee.

3.6 Director of Legal, Governance and Compliance

The Director of Legal, Governance and Compliance is accountable to the Chief Operating Officer for directing the development, implementation, review and audit of the health and safety management system throughout the University. Specific responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that the health and safety management system is applied corporately and consistently across the University.
- Updating and advising the Vice-Chancellor, Chief Operating Officer and Council on health and safety performance, compliance and best practice.
- Directing commitment to achieving a high standard of health and safety performance within the University and developing a positive health and safety culture University wide.
- Ensuring that members of the University Executive Committee direct and support the application of the health and safety management system within their respective areas of responsibility.
- Instructing relevant reviews of health and safety processes to make sure they remain effective and in line with legislation and best practice where appropriate.
- Ensuring the Head of Health and Safety and other related specialist health and safety roles, as required, are appointed.

In this role, the Director of Legal, Governance and Compliance will be supported by:

- The Head of Health and Safety.

3.7 Senior Staff of the University

Senior staff (Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Pro Vice-Chancellors, Chief Operating Officer, Executive Deans, Heads of Faculty Operations and Directors (or equivalent)) are accountable for ensuring that effective local health and safety arrangements are in place with the implementation of the health and safety management system (which includes and supports this policy), procedures with supporting documentation and ownership of health and safety amongst staff, students and

others throughout the University. This should be achieved by individual and collective leadership.

The Executive Deans with the support of the Heads of Faculty Operations and Directors (or equivalent) are additionally responsible for ensuring that:

- An assessment is conducted to determine the level of local health and safety assistance ([see Appendix 1 - Faculty/Directorate Health and Safety Management Structure](#)) and local health and safety committee requirements ([see Appendix 2 – Health and Safety Committee Structure](#)), which should also consider the local health and safety governance framework that includes Schools/Departments, for the Faculty/Directorate. This considers the number of staff and students, the type of and variety of locations and the risk profile of the activities undertaken. The determined level of local health and safety assistance and local health and safety committee requirements, with the defined Terms of Reference, for the Faculty/Directorate should be endorsed by the University Health and Safety Committee.
- Adequate resources are available to ensure the local management of health and safety and to assist in the provision of suitable and sufficient local health and safety arrangements, including the formal delegation (in writing) of Faculty/Directorate key health and safety roles ([see Appendix 1 – Faculty/Directorate Health and Safety Management Structure](#)), to enable competent staff to meet their local health and safety responsibilities and providing appropriate staff development for each staff member concerned;
- All Executive Deans to chair their relevant Faculty Health and Safety Committee meetings. Directors (or equivalent) to chair their relevant Directorate Health and Safety committee meetings ([See Appendix 2 – Health and Safety Committee Structure](#)). In small Offices placing health and safety as a regular standing item on the agenda of an appropriate Office management committee/meeting.
- Necessary information, instruction, training and supervision is provided to their staff, students and others to carry out their responsibilities.
- All management decisions reflect the intentions of this policy.
- All actions and decisions from the University Health and Safety Committee and relevant boards are implemented and communicated in their areas of accountability and establishing clear lines of communications for dealing with health and safety issues locally and University wide.
- Continuous monitoring and revising of local health and safety arrangements which is in line with the health and safety management system.
- Personal action or empowering members of staff to act, suspend or stop any activity that is hazardous and not carried out in line with relevant health and safety arrangements.

3.8 Faculty/Directorate Local Health and Safety Managers

This role is a senior manager appointed by the Executive Dean with the support of the Head of Faculty Operations or Director (or equivalent) to implement effective health and safety arrangements (which includes risk management) and provide information on health and safety performance in the Faculty/Directorate. It typically includes:

- Working with the Health and Safety Business Partners to support the Executive Dean alongside the Head of Faculty Operations or Director (or equivalent) to appoint key health and safety roles, which will enable competent staff to meet their health and safety responsibilities and provide appropriate staff development for everyone concerned.
- The oversight of health and safety within their specified area and ensuring that issues are considered at senior management level, where appropriate.
- The oversight of the consistency of delivery of health and safety matters within their area of responsibility and identify and pursue significant issues.
- Evaluating and monitoring health and safety communication to validate their effectiveness for the level of risk in the area.

- Co-ordinating allocated resources for the management of health and safety.
- To ensure the assessment of risks are conducted prior to any work/protocols/events are introduced.
- The ensure that there is an induction program for new staff and students that includes the necessary health and safety information (including regular refresher updates through communication and training for existing staff and students).
- Working with the appointed local safety teams to achieve the above arrangements.

3.9 Local Safety Advisers and Local Safety Co-ordinators

Local Safety Advisers and Local Safety Co-ordinators are appointed by the Heads of School/Directorate to assist them in health and safety matters. They are accountable to the local Health and Safety Manager(s) for local health and safety activities and assist the local Health and Safety Manager(s) in the allocation of resources for the management of health and safety. They are to work to their defined roles, but typically, they co-ordinate and advise on:

- Risk assessment of academic, research and support activities.
- Drawing up local codes of practice.
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- Keeping of appropriate records.
- Communicating health and safety updates or important development

3.10 Heads of School/Heads of Service/Heads of Department

The Heads of School/Deputy Administrative Director/Heads of Department are responsible for:

- Leadership of health and safety within their areas of control including chairing their local health and safety committees or ensuring health and safety is embedded into senior management meetings
- Ensuring they are aware of health and safety arrangements within their schools / directorates/ departments, including any significant events, defects and issues.
- Ensuring that health and safety risks are assessed before new work/protocols are introduced.
- Ensuring that identified precautions are implemented and regularly reviewed.
- Ensuring that induction of new staff and students includes necessary health and safety information (including regular refreshers for existing staff and students).
- Discussing health and safety issues at appropriate staff/student meetings.
- Including health and safety activities/developmental needs during staff appraisals (where appropriate);
- Working with the local Health and Safety Manager(s) to achieve the above arrangements.

3.11 Designated Health and Safety Posts

The **Head of Health and Safety** is the University's lead competent person for the management of health and safety and is accountable to the Director of Legal, Governance and Compliance for ensuring that the University has appropriate health and safety professional management and advice on health and safety matters and performance and a defined/maintained health and safety management system. This role also acts as the adviser to the Vice-Chancellor and the Chief Operating Officer (Health and Safety Champion), or representatives, on health and safety matters, including relevant new health and safety legislation. In addition, the Head of Health and Safety and their staff are responsible for:

- Providing advice on strategic and operational health and safety issues and developing and recommending policies, procedures and compliance strategies in line with best practice to ensure that the University complies with its obligations under health and safety legislation.

- Supporting the University in the development of the Health and Safety Strategic Action Plan to address significant risks which will be approved by the University Health and Safety Committee.
- Reviewing and updating arrangements for implementing this policy including monitoring compliance.
- Providing professional advice and support to Health and Safety Managers, Health and Safety Local Officers and other health and safety posts on health and safety matters and performance, such as on the development of risk assessments and workplace inspections.
- In consultation, establishing training programs, facilitating improvements and auditing performance in Faculties, Schools, Directorates and Departments.
- Supporting the professional development of staff with health and safety accountability.
- Establishing networks and forums for exchange of good practice and collaborating with Occupational Health, Estates and Campus Services Directorate and other professionals.
- In collaboration with other directorates, managing the University's first aid and fire safety arrangements.
- Administering the accident reporting system and reviewing its data for measuring performance and identifying trends and investigating significant accidents and reports under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) on behalf of the University.
- Seeking the involvement and co-operation of other professionals/specialists within or outside the University in the examination of general or specific problems relating to health and safety.
- Liaising with and being the University's point of contact with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and other relevant organisations on health and safety matters.
- Reporting to the University Health and Safety Committee as an ex-officio member.

The Head of Health and Safety will prepare the annual health and safety report, to Council, via health and safety governance arrangements, covering health and safety and fire safety performance and assurances across the university. The objective of the report is to identify those areas where improvements have been made, where significant hazards are being controlled or areas that need consideration.

The **Fire Safety Manager** supports the Head of Health and Safety in the provision of university specific fire safety information and best practice guidance to staff and students. Full responsibilities on fire safety management can be found in the **University Fire Risk Management Procedure**.

The **Radiation Protection Officer** is appointed by the Chief Operating Officer and is responsible for advising the Vice-Chancellor, Chief Operating Officer and Radiation Protection Supervisors on matters concerned with ionising radiations. The Radiation Protection Officer gives an annual report to the University Health and Safety Committee. See the **Ionising Radiation Code of Practice** for full arrangements, including detailed responsibilities of the Radiation Protection Officer and Radiation Protection Supervisors.

The **Biological Safety Officer** is appointed by the Chief Operating Officer and is responsible for advising the Vice-Chancellor and the Chief Operating Officer on matters of biological safety, including genetic modification. The Biological Safety Officer chairs the Biological Safety Committee, defines its terms of reference that should be endorsed by the University Health and Safety Committee, and gives an annual report to the University Health and Safety Committee. Related topics include:

- **Biological Safety**
- **Control of Substance Hazardous to Health (COSHH)**

- **Genetically Modified Materials/Genetically Modified Organisms**

The above arrangements include detailed responsibilities of the Biological Safety Officer.

The **Laser Safety Officer** is appointed by the Chief Operating Officer and is responsible for advising the Vice-Chancellor, Chief Operating Officer and Laser Safety Supervisors on matters concerned with laser safety. The University Laser Safety Advisor gives an annual report to the University Health and Safety Committee. See the **Laser Safety Code of Practice** for full arrangements, including detailed responsibilities of the Laser Safety Officer and Laser Safety Supervisors.

Occupational Health Service is responsible for:

- Advising management and employees on all matters relating to the impact of work on health and vice versa.
- Working closely with key stakeholders to ensure that health surveillance, employment health assessments, staff wellbeing, fitness to return to work and ill-health retirement are undertaken and reported
- Implementing and managing stress risk management procedures. Promoting staff wellbeing and prevention of illnesses and injuries arising from work activity.
- The University's Occupational Health Service provides an annual report to the University Health and Safety Committee.

3.12 Individuals

All **staff** are required by law, and in this Policy, to:

- Take care that their actions whilst at work and do not put themselves or other people at risk.
- Co-operate with management to enable the University to fulfil its statutory duties by complying with all legal requirements of this policy and arrangements and practices.
- Co-operate with the University in respect to any duty imposed on the University or staff by any health and safety provision.
- Immediately report all accidents, hazardous conditions, dangerous occurrences or near miss events and any inadequacies in any safety procedures to their Local Safety Adviser, Local Safety Co-ordinator or Line Manager and by cooperating with any subsequent investigation with the objective of learning lessons and prevention of a recurrence.
- Undertake any necessary training, as directed by their line manager, to enable them to carry out their work without risk to health and safety.
- Use equipment, chemicals, etc., provided, in accordance with the training and instruction given.
- Be familiar with procedures for emergency evacuation of the building where they work.
- Report any faults or shortcomings in arrangements for health and safety to their manager or Local Safety Team.

Students while on the University premises or field trips have similar responsibilities to staff in this Policy. Students must:

- Take care that their actions do not put themselves or other people at risk.
- Follow health and safety instructions/rules.
- Report any faults or shortcomings in health and safety arrangements to their academic supervisor.

3.13 Contractors

The term Contractors will include agency staff and consultants. Contractors are required to comply with the University's Code of Practice for Appointment and Control of Contractors.

The University requires that contractors ensure their activities will not endanger University staff, students or others.

All contractors will be required to:

- Comply with this policy and arrangements and procedures, as applicable to their operations.
- Comply with the Estates and Campus Services Control of Contractors Policy for all work to University Campus buildings and/or land;
- Comply with the health and safety conditions specified in the contract and with all statutory requirements.
- Employ persons competent to carry out their duties without risk to the health and safety of themselves and others.

Contractors must treat the University's arrangements and procedures as minimum standards to adhere to and they will be expected to always follow appropriate industry guidance and best practice. Failure to comply could prejudice awarding of future contracts by the University.

University staff that appoint contractors are responsible for managing their relevant contractors who provide services and/or work in premises occupied by or on behalf of the University. See Contractors for full arrangements.

3.14 Visitors

All visitors to the University are required to follow health and safety instructions given to them.

3.15 Students' Union

Keele University Students' Union and Keele Postgraduate Association are separate employers and are required as such to have their own health and safety policy. Information and advice provided to the University is also available to Student Union Officers to help them develop and review their own policy. The Health and Safety arrangements between Keele University and the Student Union regarding the buildings occupied can be found in the tenancy agreement.

3.16 Trades Union Safety Representatives

Functions of appointed Safety Representatives are set out in the Safety Representatives and Safety Committee Regulations, as amended by the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations. The University staff are currently represented by UCU, Unison and Unite Trade Unions. These represented roles in particular will:

- Represent their members in matters of health and safety.
- Undergo health and safety training to fulfil their duties.
- Participate and attend relevant university health and safety committees with significant health and safety risk escalations and meetings and relevant other forums as required.

3.17 Local Health and Safety Committees

To support the formal consultation arrangements in place, Health and Safety Sub-Committees have been established throughout the University to raise and discuss health and safety issues affecting all members of staff, students and others. This should include a local Health and Safety Action Plan and Health and Safety Risk Register as a standing item. Each of these health and safety committees will have their own terms of reference, which should be developed locally and endorsed, by the University Health and Safety Committee. There are clear escalation routes in place culminating with the University Health and Safety Committee which meets three times a year. Health and safety matters can be escalated where necessary to the University Executive Committee the Audit and Risk Committee and then to Council. [See Appendix 2 - Health and Safety Committee Structure chart.](#)

4. ARRANGEMENTS

- 4.1 University Health and Safety Codes of Practice, which may be accompanied by guidance, set out the arrangements in place to achieve the health and safety objectives in this Policy. These documents are drawn up in consultation with relevant Faculties and Directorates, taking account of legal requirements and Higher Education sector good practice. They are approved and reviewed by the University Health and Safety Committee.
- 4.2 University Health and Safety Codes of Practice are topic specific and include detailed responsibilities and arrangements expected for the health and safety management of that topic. Faculties and Directorates are expected to draw on these University Codes when carrying out risk assessments of their activities and drawing up local codes of practice setting out their detailed day to day arrangements for the work.

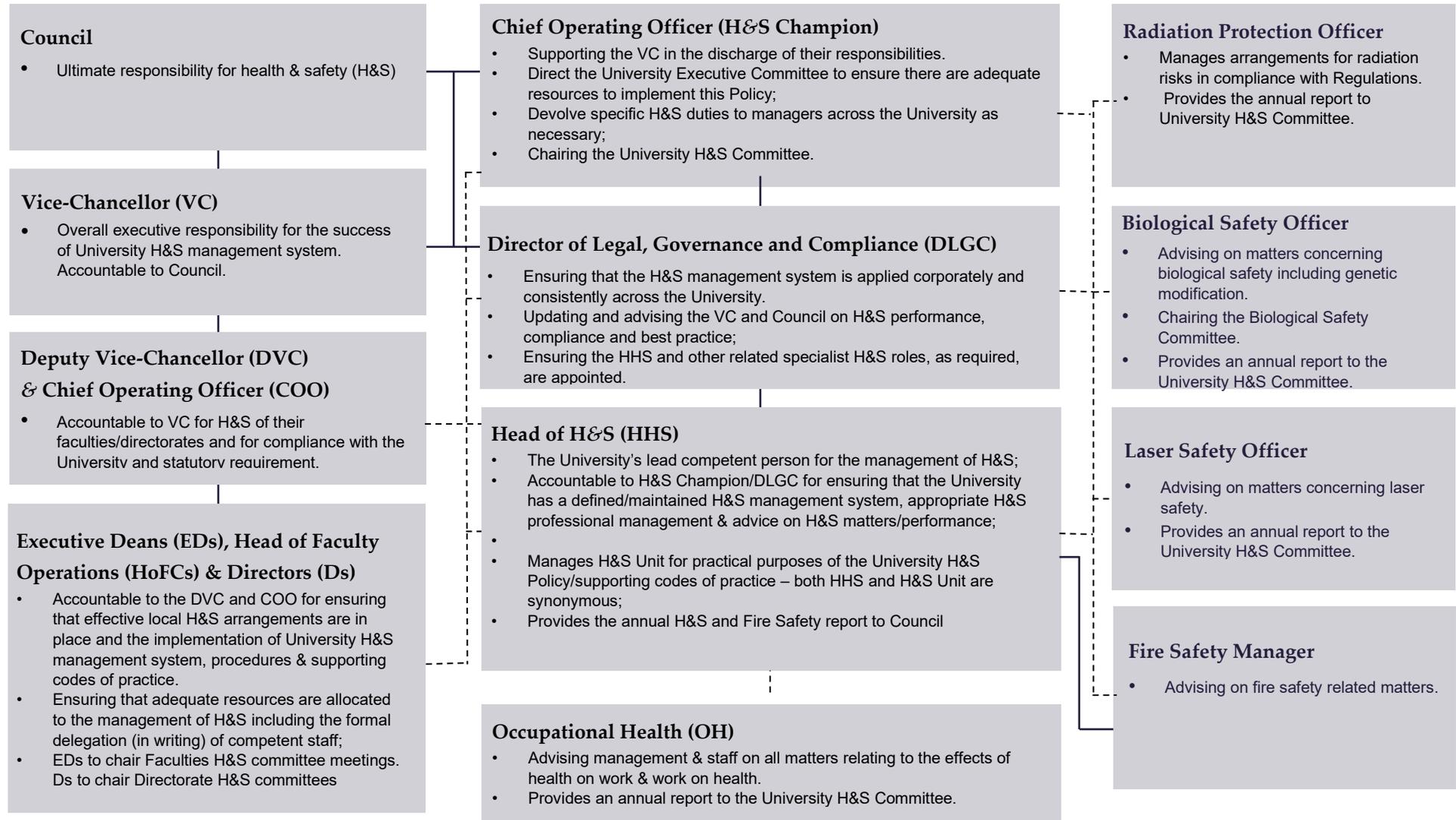
5. REVIEW, APPROVAL AND PUBLICATION

- 5.1 This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Head of Health and Safety on a three yearly basis or in the event of a significant changes to the organisation or arrangements. Effectiveness will be measured by quantitative statistical analysis which is governed by the University Health and Safety Committee. The University Health and Safety Committee and Council will ultimately be responsible for approval of this Policy.
- 5.2 This Policy can be found in **Policy Zone** on Keele University Internet and its arrangements can be found on the health and safety pages on Keele University Staff Intranet.

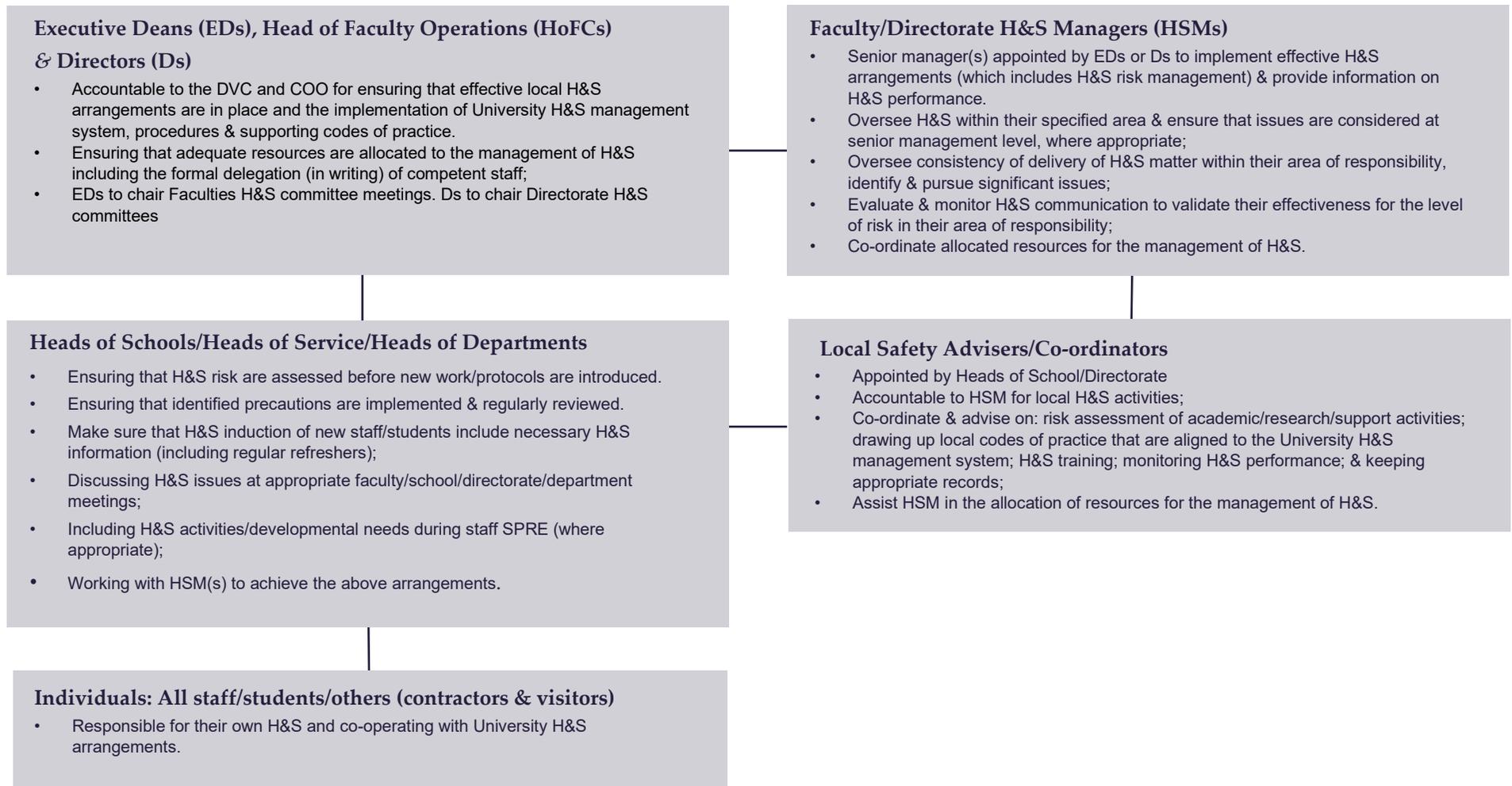
7. DOCUMENT CONTROL INFORMATION

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Appendix 1: University H&S Management Structure



Faculty/Directorate H&S Management Structure



Appendix 2: H&S Committee Structure

