

UNIVERSITY CENTRE SOMERSET COLLEGE GROUP

HEALTH & SAFETY STATEMENT AND POLICY 2025/2026


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1 Health and Safety Policy Statement

- 1.1 This policy meets the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- 1.2 The Governing Body of the University Centre Somerset (UCS) College Group (Group), the UCS College Group Chief Executive, College Principals and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) have issued and endorsed this policy and accept their role in providing health, safety and wellbeing leadership to the Group making up the Group and their duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and other related statutory provision.
- 1.3 University Centre Somerset (UCS) College Group acknowledges its legal responsibilities placed upon it and will encourage the highest possible level of awareness of health, safety and wellbeing amongst our staff, students, visitors and contractors.
- 1.4 University Centre Somerset (UCS) College Group is committed to ensuring that all staff and students have access to competent technical support, instruction and training to ensure that they develop and understand the responsibilities and duties placed upon them with regards to health, safety and wellbeing to sustain positive health and safety attitudes and behaviours to promote a positive safety culture.
- 1.5 University Centre Somerset (UCS) College Group is committed to ensuring continuous improvements by ensuring that monitoring and reporting are in place with actions and responsibilities drawn up to drive the Group's commitment to Health and Safety and wellbeing.
- 1.6 University Centre Somerset (UCS) College Group are complying with the government guidance on infectious diseases.
- 1.7 The Health & Safety Statement and Policy is for both University Centre Somerset (UCS) College Group and its subsidiaries.

SIGNED:  _____

Denys Rayner
Chairman of the Board of Governors

DATE: July 2025 _____

SIGNED:  _____

Andy Berry CBE
UCS College Group Chief Executive

DATE: July 2025 _____

2 Responsibilities

- 2.1 The Governing Body of the University Centre Somerset College Group has overall responsibility for health and safety. The Finance Personnel and General Purposes Committee will provide oversight and scrutiny of health and safety matters.
- 2.2 The Group Chief Executive is designated the health and safety leader and will ensure that health and safety culture is an integral part of the ethos and strategic aims of the University Centre Somerset College Group.
- 2.3 Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring the Health and Safety Policy is followed is delegated to the College Principals, Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Senior Management Team (SMT).
- 2.4 Responsibilities for assisting the College Principals and Senior Leadership Team with the day-to-day responsibilities within their areas and ensure that health and safety standards are maintained, carried out, checked and acted upon, is delegated to the College Management Team (CMT).
- 2.5 Health and safety advice is available from the UCS College Group Health and Safety Team comprising Health and Safety Managers and Head of Estates
- 2.6 All Staff, Students and Visitors have a responsibility to:
 - Co-operate with SMT/SLT and CMT on health and safety matters
 - Follow procedures provided to safeguard health, safety and wellbeing
 - Use equipment and/or personal protective equipment appropriately and undertake training to support this
 - Take reasonable care of their own health, safety and wellbeing and others that are affected by their actions or omissions
 - Report all health, safety and wellbeing concerns to an appropriate person (as detailed in this Health and Safety Policy).
- 2.7 All contractors **MUST** follow the College Contractors Management Procedure and be familiar with it prior to starting work.
- 2.8 Partners, subcontractors and subsidiaries are accountable to the University Centre Somerset College Group for the Health and safety of all persons under their control.

3 The Management of Health and Safety Risks Arising from University Centre College Group Activities

- 3.1 Current Health and Safety guidelines define Risk Assessment as the careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have enough control measures or whether you should do more.
- 3.2 Responsibility for identifying and recording of the risk assessment may be delegated by the SMT, SLT, CMT to their designated deputies/competent person, who is suitably trained to undertake risk assessments.
- 3.3 Risk Assessments will be the responsibility of the SMT/SLT, CMT for final approval and signature.

- 3.4 The findings of all risk assessments will be made available to relevant staff, Students, Contractors and Visitors (*Risk Assessments should be easily accessible in Areas/departments for all affected by the risk*).
- 3.5 The Group Chief Executive, SMT/SLT and CMT are responsible for ensuring that health and safety controls are appropriately approved and implemented based on current advice below:
- Eliminate the risk where possible
 - Reduce the potential for harm or substitute with a less risky option
 - Preventing access/contact with the hazard
 - Use a Safe System of Work (written set of instruction)
 - Appropriate induction, supervision, instruction and training
 - Provide and if necessary, enforce the use of Personal Protective Equipment.
- 3.6 Where College Managers are not able to resolve specific health and safety issues, or expenditure is in excess of their budgets then the SMT/SLT and/or Health and Safety Committee will be involved in the process.
- 3.7 Risk Assessments will be reviewed every year by areas, or when other significant changes, such as a change in College activity/processes, legislation or following an incident.
- 3.8 The UCS College Group Health and Safety Team are responsible for monitoring a sample of risk assessments across all areas of the college to ensure that they are suitable and that the standard of risk assessment is consistent across all areas.
- 3.9 Where necessary, individual risk assessments /personal emergency evacuation plans of staff or student will be carried out to ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of the individual, so that they can carry out their role or study within the College.
- 3.10 Individual risk assessments / personal emergency evacuation plans will be carried out by the line manager or member of staff with responsibility for the individual concerned. This may be a member of SLT, Curriculum Managers, Line Manager, Tutor, Health and Safety Team and members of Wellbeing and Learning Support Teams.

4 Consultation with Employees

- 4.1 Consultation with employees to ensure that health, safety and wellbeing standards are maintained, carried out, checked and acted upon is achieved through various groups to discuss/highlight issues affecting their areas.
- Health and Safety Committee
 - Joint Consultative Committees (JCCs)
 - Staff Voice
 - Student forum
 - Managers' meetings
 - AMT meetings
 - Department meetings
 - Team meetings
 - Work Placement/Apprenticeship/T Level group meetings
 - Staff and Wellbeing Group

- 4.2 Consultation with students is achieved through student surveys and group meetings, including the student forum, student representatives and student union.
- 4.3 Consultation is available from the UCS College Group Health and Safety Team.
- 4.4 Matters arising from the above are reported to the Health and Safety Committee and SMT/SLT and University Centre Somerset College Group Governing body.

5 Safe Plant, Equipment and Workplace

- 5.1 Senior Managers are responsible for the safe operation of all plant, equipment and buildings within their area of responsibility.
- 5.2 The Chief Finance & Operating Officer and/or SMT/SLT, Head of Estates and/or their Deputies are responsible for ensuring that this policy is put into practice and for ensuring that effective maintenance procedures are drawn up and implemented.
- 5.3 Any problems found should be reported to the Assistant Principal/Director, Deputies of Department, Curriculum Manager, Line Manager and/or SMT/SLT.
- 5.4 Where a problem cannot be resolved this will be referred to the Chief Finance & Operating Officer and/or SMT/SLT.

6 Safe Handling and Use of Substances

- 6.1 College managers will be responsible for ensuring that Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) risk assessments associated with the safe handling and use of substances are undertaken by competent staff in accordance with College and other associated codes of practice.
- 6.2 College managers will be responsible for ensuring that there are adequate resources available to undertake COSHH risk assessments and that appropriate recommended controls are identified and implemented.
- 6.3 Staff will be responsible for ensuring that they and their students do not use any material that has not been assessed or that they are not familiar with the procedures for controlling the risks, as far as is reasonably practicable. Any new materials will be assessed before use.
- 6.4 College managers will be responsible for ensuring that all COSHH risk assessments are reviewed at least every 12 months or when the work activity/process changes, changes in legislation or following an incident.
- 6.5 The University Centre Somerset College Group have an appointed Radiation Protection Supervisor (RPS) within the Science Department, and an external Radiation Protection Adviser (RPA) for advice and guidance, as required by the Ionising Radiation Regulations 2017.
- 6.6 Bridgwater College and Strode College have registered their working practices under the Ionising Radiations Regulations 2017 with the HSE.

7 Information, Instruction and Supervision

- 7.1 The UCS College Group Chief Executive has overall and final responsibility for ensuring that staff and students are adequately informed, instructed and supervised in health, safety and wellbeing.
- 7.2 All College managers, People and Culture and the UCS College Group Health and Safety Team have day to day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice.
- 7.3 All College Staff are responsible for their own safety and the safety of others that are affected by their acts or omissions. Staff will ensure that appropriate health, safety and wellbeing standards are maintained, carried out, checked and acted upon. This will include the appropriate supervision of young or vulnerable persons.
- 7.4 Health and safety information is available from the health and safety law posters situated in the Reception areas around the various College Campuses.
- 7.5 Health, safety and wellbeing advice is available from Union Representatives, Student Experience Team, People & Culture department and the UCS College Group Health and Safety Team.

8 Competency for Tasks and Training

- 8.1 College managers and the People & Culture Department induction training for all staff and students.
- 8.2 All Senior Managers, Assistant Principals/Directors and Deputies of Department will be required to complete IOSH Managing Safety or an equivalent/higher level of Safety Management Training.
- 8.3 Designated /competent person will be required to complete IOSH Managing Safety or equivalent level safety training.
- 8.4 Induction of staff is undertaken at the start of employment and/or change of role/campus to include fire evacuations, first aid, accident reporting and departmental safety requirements. All new starters are required to complete the Health and Safety Essentials on-line course within their induction period.
- 8.5 All students will receive an appropriate level of induction, for example fire evacuations, first aid, accident reporting and departmental safety requirements.
- 8.6 All Contractors will receive an appropriate level of induction, for example fire evacuations, first aid, accident reporting and departmental safety requirements.
- 8.7 College managers are responsible for ensuring that all staff including agency staff and volunteers under their control, are provided with appropriate training for the activities they are required to undertake, in line with their job description. This will include any specialist training and assessment.
- 8.8 The Executive Director of People & Culture is responsible for ensuring that:
 - An appropriate range of Health and Safety training is available for staff
 - Personal training records are kept up to date and that reports are available for college managers

- Staff health and safety training is monitored and evaluated for effectiveness and informs future training.

9 Accidents, First Aid and Work-Related Illness Monitoring

- 9.1 The University Centre Somerset College Group strives to reduce accidents to a minimum and requires that all health, safety and wellbeing incidents, accidents and near misses are reported and appropriately investigated so that lessons can be learnt and action taken to prevent incidents and accidents from reoccurring.
- 9.2 People & Culture department are responsible, in conjunction with the UCS College Group Health and Safety Team, for health checks and health surveillance of staff, and also responsible for the safe keeping of all confidential documents.
- 9.3 Health checks and health surveillance will be carried out where required by law and on an individual basis as issues arise.
- 9.4 The Head of Estates is responsible for the co-ordination of College First Aiders and for ensuring that appropriate cover is maintained across all areas of the College by maintaining the College Duty First Aid rota. Campus reception staff will be able to contact the duty first aider when required.
- 9.5 All high-risk areas will have a named first aider who will have access to a fully stocked and up to date first aid kit.
- 9.6 College first aiders and appointed persons are responsible for ensuring that first aid equipment in their areas or in their possession is kept up to date and in good order.
- 9.7 All accidents/incidents will be reported to the UCS College Group Health and Safety Team via the Accident/Incident Reporting form.
- 9.8 The UCS College Group Health and Safety Team are responsible for reviewing all accidents and incidents and where appropriate liaising with Assistant Principal/Director and Deputies of Department to ensure appropriate actions are taken and lessons learnt shared.
- 9.9 The University Centre Somerset College Group Health and Safety Team are responsible for reporting all RIDDOR accidents and incidents in line with current legislation.
- 9.10 The University Centre Somerset College Group Health & Safety Team will undertake any necessary investigations following a clear defined process.

10 Dangerous Occurrences and Near Miss Incidents

- 10.1 The University Centre Somerset College Group is committed to identifying all incidents and near miss incidents that have the potential to cause harm, ensuring that these are investigated and recorded, and lessons learnt to prevent similar incidents from causing injury in future.
- 10.2 All staff, students, visitors and contractors have a responsibility to ensure that action has been taken to ensure the safety of anyone affected by an accident or incident, including any dangerous occurrence or near miss incident.

- 10.3 Individuals are to ensure their own safety as well as far as reasonably practical the safety of others affected by the incident, to prevent any reoccurrence.
- 10.4 In the event of a dangerous occurrence, individuals should contact the Campus Reception as soon as possible who will inform the Duty Manager, Facilities Maintenance Team and the UCS College Group Health & Safety Team.
- 10.5 All dangerous occurrences and near misses will be reported to the UCS College Group Health and Safety Team via the Accident/Incident Reporting form.
- 10.6 The UCS College Group Health and Safety Team are responsible for reviewing all dangerous occurrences and near miss incidents, liaising as appropriate with the Assistant Principal/Director and Deputies of Department to ensure appropriate actions are taken and lessons learnt shared.
- 10.7 The UCS College Group Health and Safety Team are responsible for the investigation of all dangerous occurrences or near miss incidents.

11 Health and Safety Performance Measurement, Monitoring and Reviewing

- 11.1 SMT/SLT, Assistant Principal/Director and Deputies of Department are responsible for monitoring and reviewing the departments health, safety and wellbeing practices in line with statutory compliance.
- 11.2 UCS College Group Health and Safety Team undertake Safety Inspection to monitor compliance and suitability of college activities across all Departments, in line with the University Somerset College Group Health and Safety Policy.
- 11.3 UCS College Group Health and Safety Team provide guidance and support, following legislation, HSE or industrial standards.
- 11.4 Any breaches identified with a serious or potential risk of harm to persons or property may initiate a spontaneous review and/or be investigated by the Health and Safety Team. Immediate action will be taken through an Enforcement Notice (Prohibition, Improvement, Warning) being served.
- 11.5 The Department/area may be issued with an action for improvement where remedial action has been identified through monitoring accident, incident reports, inspections and observations.

12 Emergency Procedures - Fire Evacuation

- 12.1 The Chief Finance & Operating Officer is responsible for ensuring that emergency action plans are implemented and reviewed.
- 12.2 Escape routes and firefighting equipment are regularly checked by college fire wardens and the Facilities Maintenance Team.
- 12.3 Fire alarm systems and emergency lighting is tested on a rolling weekly/monthly programme by the Facilities Maintenance Team and the Compliance Officer.
- 12.4 The Facilities Maintenance Team and the UCS College Group Health and Safety Team are responsible for ensuring that the servicing, maintenance, testing and inspection of all college fire alarm systems and firefighting equipment is carried out by competent persons including external contractors as required.

- 12.5 The Facilities Maintenance Team and UCS College Group Health and Safety Team are responsible for ensuring that evacuation drills are conducted for all areas at least once every term (when safe to do so). Bitesize information is shared with all staff and students.
- 12.6 SMT/SLT, Assistant Principal/Director and Deputies of Department are responsible for reviewing all evacuations under their control with all relevant staff and will liaise with UCS College Group Health and Safety Team to ensure that appropriate actions are taken where necessary to ensure the safe and effective evacuation of staff, students and others.
- 12.7 The Facilities Maintenance Team member on call, Residential team, Night Wardens and or other designated members of staff on call are responsible for ensuring that all out of hours emergencies are covered.

13. Emergency Procedures – Run Hide Tell / Lockdown

- 13.1 The University Centre Somerset College Group will follow guidelines issued by the National Counter Terrorism Policing Team in the event of a terrorist firearms and weapons attack.
- 13.2 The Chief Finance & Operating Officer is responsible for ensuring that plans and procedures are implemented and reviewed.
- 13.3
- 13.4 The designated nominated person(s) will be responsible for initiating the alarm in the event of a terrorist firearms and weapons attack in College, or on the instruction of the Emergency Services.
- 13.5 The alert system will be tested with Staff and students during an academic year.
- 13.6 Staff complete mandatory Safeguarding and Prevent training and an annual update “Keeping Children Safe in Education, Safeguarding & Prevent”. Tutorials, bitesize information and video are shared with all staff and students.

In the unlikely event of an attack Staff, student, contractors and visitors will follow the approved guidance.

14 Health Protection

- 14.1 University Centre Somerset College Group are following all Government guidelines relating to infectious diseases and when necessary, in consultation with Governors, staff, Unions and students will implement procedures to ensure the University Centre College Group remains a safe environment where all persons feel safe and secure.

To achieve this the University Centre Somerset College Group will adopt high-level principles, these being:

- Staff and student safety and wellbeing
- Supporting students to continue learning and make progress

- Ensuring the college remains solvent and viable
- Meeting civic and wider community responsibilities

14.2 Governance, leadership and communication

The University Centre Somerset College Group will produce clear and well communicated documentation to support the staff, students, visitors and contractors attending college.

- Collegewide Risk Assessment
- Department Risk Assessment
- Operating Procedure
- Principal updates
- Online meetings
- College website
- Social Media

14.3 A Safe Environment

The University Centre Somerset College Group has effective arrangements in place, when necessary for monitoring and reviewing their compliance with Government and industry guidance.

The University Centre Somerset College Group has and will undertake a risk assessment process for all activities to ensure staff and students have a safe environment to undertake teaching and learning.

The University Centre Somerset College Group will ensure protective measures will be implemented and will continue to be monitored and enhanced wherever necessary, following updated guidance from the government. These may include:

- Enhanced hygiene and cleaning schedules
- Regular cleaning of toilets
- Corridor management / one way systems
- Staggered start / end times and break times
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Social distancing signage
- Reconfigured classrooms / practical areas / workshops
- Communal areas
- Outside campus areas

The health and safety requirement of any activity will not be compromised. If an activity cannot be undertaken safely, it should not take place.

All individuals have a responsibility to ensure safety measures are adhered to protect themselves and others.

All individuals attending any of the College campuses must follow the guidance and advice set out by the University Centre Somerset College Group.

14.4 Health and Wellbeing

- The health and wellbeing of staff and students is paramount, the University Centre Somerset College Group will continue to offer counselling advice and guidance, when requested through phone / video link.
- Aim to ensure that no member of staff or others associated with the University Centre Somerset College Group, so far as is reasonably practical, are subjected to a level of stress due to work or environment that is detrimental to their health.
- Continue to implement and communicate a mental health at work plan that promotes good mental health of all employees and students and outlines the support available for those who may need it.
- Encourage development of mental health awareness among employees and students by making information, tools and support accessible.
- Encourage open conversations about mental health and the support available during recruitment and enrolment and at regular intervals throughout employment/training, offering appropriate adjustments to those who require them.
- Provide employees and students with good working conditions and ensure they have a healthy work-life balance between work and learning.
- Promote effective people management to ensure all employees and students have a regular conversation about their health and wellbeing with their line manager/Personal Tutor.
- Provide line managers/Personal Tutors with training and support in effective health and wellbeing management practices.
- Routinely monitor employee and student health and wellbeing by understanding available data, talking to employees and students, and understanding risk factors

15 Statutory and College Policies and Information

15.1 Other policies that should be read in conjunction with this policy statement include:

- The Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and Procedure
- Keeping Children Safe in Education ([Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/626212/Keeping_Children_Safe_in_Education.pdf))
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

15.2 Other more detailed information on health and safety policies, procedures and information can be found in the following documents, available from the UCS College Group Health and Safety Team:

Policies
 CCTV Policy
 Driving Policy (College Vehicles)
 IT Security Policy
 Lone Working Policy

Health and Welfare Policy
McMillan Theatre health and safety policy and procedure
Management of Stress Policy
Mobile Phone Policy and Procedure
UCS Safeguarding and Prevent Policy
Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedure
Online safety policy
Portable Appliance Testing Policy
Risk Management Policy
Student off site trips and residential policy and procedure
Visiting speaker's organisation and event policy
Work Experience Policy

Procedures

Accident /incident reporting
Asbestos management procedure
Bomb Warning Procedure
Business Continuity Procedure
COSHH Procedure (HSE) COSHH Essential
DSE Workstation Assessment
Evacuation Procedure
Enforcement Notice Procedure
Extreme Weather Procedure
First Aid / Defibrillator procedure
Hazardous waste management
Ladder Safety
Pest Control Procedure and control measures
Radiation (Radiation protection Supervisor (RPS) and Radiation Protection Advisor (RPA)
Risk Assessment Procedure
Student Social Emotional and Mental Health Procedure
Vehicle Banksman Reversing Assistant Procedure
Working with Animals

Information

Blackboard e-learning Courses
Getting to grips with health and safety.
Reporting incidents.
Meeting the threat of fire.
Lifting and carrying safely.
Dealing with hazardous substances.
Avoiding violence.
Stress management.
Working safely with computer.
Safeguarding including prevent

All of the above courses for staff can be used as a teaching resource.

The LRC's across the College campuses also have a number of on-line health and safety related resources as well as books.

Health and Wellbeing group. This group continues to look at ways of helping both students and staff with information and guidance on keeping healthy and well, and the best way of dealing with emerging issues that affect both staff and students.

Smoking and vaping information available from the Staff Handbook and will be shared to the Student Handbook.

The University Centre Somerset College Group Health and Safety Team throughout the year, routinely share best practice guidance and advice on health, wellbeing and safety via AMT's, Bitesize information sheets and the Collegewide TV information screens.

16 Review of Policy

16.1 The Health and Safety Statement and Policy will be reviewed annually.