

Department of Earth & Environmental Sciences Health and Safety Committee Meeting Minutes

31st August 2022 12.30pm

Zoom meeting ID: 443-449-7565

Chairs Notes

1. Apologies & introductions

Catherine Davidge, Claire Robinson, Rhodri Jerrett, Julia Cheung

2. Minutes of the meeting held May 2022

The minutes from the previous meeting were confirmed.

Actions from last meeting

- Carl/Rhodri to send out a questionnaire to staff to identify which level of first aid or mental health training they need and book the training informed by the responses. COMPLETED
- Carl to look into mental health first aid, with a view to making it available for staff, particularly those undertaking fieldwork. COMPLETED, to be done at Faculty-level
- Mike B to make a further call for UG/PG student representatives to sit on the H&S Committee. ROLLED OVER
- Carl to circulate the new faculty COSHH template once reviewed by Mike. COMPLETED
- Mike B and Carl to discuss admin provision to arrange and minute future committee meetings. COMPLETED

3. Accident/incident reports

Accident/Incident/Near Misses
<p>Lyme Disease - During a field trip to Kinlochleven, Scotland (19th April 2022 and May 2nd 2022) two students were bitten by Ticks and subsequently contracted Lyme Disease.</p> <p>In both instances the students were fully aware of the signs of Lyme Disease following multiple briefings prior to and during the trip. Both students received bullseye type rashes around single bites on their legs. There was a similar incident following the last field trip to this area in 2019. Significant improvements were made in terms of control measures and awareness following the previous incident. Although significant improvements have been made and students were fully aware of the risk and how to react tick bites - the requirement to report incidents of this nature needed reminding. Contracting Lyme Disease during University activities must be reported as an accident / incident and Occupational Health should be informed so staff and students can be supported if necessary. Template risk assessments have been amended to highlight this.</p> <p>Staff and students are regularly briefed and advised regarding Tick bites. This is completed during the generic HS Induction and more detail is given in field trip briefing sessions by field trip leads leading fieldtrips where ticks are identified as a risk. Both students remained on clear paths and wore suitable clothing / covering their body but unfortunately were still bitten. It is understood that there has been an increase in tick bites throughout the UK in the past 12 months which has made the likelihood of being bitten higher.</p> <p>Both students made a fully recovery following quick identification and quickly receiving antibiotic treatment from their GP. No significant compliance gaps were identified but this is a reminder to staff to strongly consider this risk and ensure adequate control measures are implemented when arranging trips to locations where there is a risk of tick bites.</p>

Also, please ensure that students are aware that if they do contract Lyme Disease during university activities they must report it via the following link - [Accident Notification Form \(The University of Manchester\)](#)

Laser Dye Leak – There was a small chemical spill in Williamson G61 research lab overnight on 1st August 2022 / 2nd August 2022. The tubing on a dye circulator cracked overnight and approximately 2.5 litres of the laser dye mixture leaked onto the floor. There was no injury, significant risk, exposure or significant damage to equipment. The faulty equipment has been taken out of service whilst awaiting repair and all other circulator systems in Williamson G61 have been checked for defects/damage. Other systems are considered fit for use. The cracked tubing on the system is awaiting replacement and the tubing on all other systems of a similar age will be replaced at the same time as a precautionary measure.

Suitable and sufficient risk assessments are in place and manufacturers guidelines were adhered to. This incident was not foreseeable and it remains unclear what caused this pipe to split. A small clean up was required where adequate PPE was used and the waste is awaiting disposal by Lab Waste. No significant concerns or compliance gaps identified.

Thanks to John Cowpe for reporting and leading the investigation into this incident.

Burn / Scalding – On 1st August 2022 at 12:30pm a student was undertaking lab work in B26. During preparation of an experiment (COSHH MR13), a full 250ml schott borosilicate glass bottle containing Sodium Selenate (160 mM concentration) opened prematurely after autoclaving. This resulted in the rubber top popping out when loosened and hot liquid being expelled from the bottle, scolding the students right forearm. Whilst this was the first time of preparing an SeO₄ spike, the student has done effectively identical protocols (autoclaving bottles of media) regularly and is experienced in this task. The incident occurred when the student didn't allow proper cooling time and underestimated temperature of bottle, in combination with using a different type of lid to usual. With a regular solid lid, this would be loosened prior to autoclave process to prevent excessive pressure build up inside bottle. With large rubber bungs this isn't possible due to air-tight fit, so such lids should be installed following autoclave process. Alternative lid was used with the intention of subsequent de-gassing of media.

All PPE (tightly fitting gloves, safety goggles, and lab coat) were worn as per the risk assessment. Arm was scolded through lab coat and first aid was provided immediately by nearby staff. Student then attended A+E. The student now has slight marks on his arm from the burn which will hopefully recover quickly.

The risk assessment is currently being reviewed / updated and the student has been reminded of the requirements of this task and received refresher training.

Asbestos Samples – Samples containing natural asbestos were found in G16 on 18th August. The samples were appropriately stored and labelled. This was reported to Facilities who removed the samples immediately, undertook air monitoring and cleaned the area. No risk or exposure identified. Thanks to Facilities for a rapid response to this. This is a reminder to staff that we have a procedure in place for removal of Asbestos / suspected asbestos.

Any other Business

Signage

There has been a good response to the signage updates throughout DEES. This is a reminder to PI's / responsible persons for labs and workshops. The door signage should be updated to ensure that all contact details are up to date with lab rules, control measures and hazards identified – [Template Attached](#)

HF Use

Due to staff role changes there is potentially less support for the use of HF within the department. This appears to be a suitable time to review the use of HF. For general discussion / consideration in the meeting - Are there alternative / safer ways to complete the HF tasks? Can this work be completed externally or in other areas of Faculty? If not, we should consider training of new staff and possibly refresher training for staff who currently use HF.

First Aid and Eye wash

During inspections it was noted that several first aid kits and eye wash were past their expiry dates. These have now been replaced. We are awaiting further eye wash bottles from the supplier.

5. Estates

Alison reported that PAT testing has been completed for all labs in Williamson, offices are still outstanding. Statutory inspections are all up to date.

6. COSHH

There have been discussions about Abby Ragazzon-Smith moving on from this role and it being done on a lab by lab basis, by all PIs.

ACTION: Send reminder email to staff about COSHH awareness training (CJ)

7. Biological safety

Clare submitted the following report:

The FSE / MIB Genetic Modification and Biohazard Safety Committee meeting has been in limbo awaiting replacement of staff. Applications are being dealt with by e-mail by the remaining committee. There will be two applications from Jon Lloyd's laboratory by this process.

8. Radiological safety

No incidents to report. The University is still under the ONR Prohibition Notice which limits the transport of radioactive materials.

9. Display screen equipment (DSE)

Carl sent an email about monthly training courses on DSE and will continue to provide the links/assessments if needed.

10. Wellbeing, stress and anxiety

No updates.

11. Any other business

The Cat A defects (fumehoods) in John Cowpe's lab are still outstanding. Any issues to be reported to Alison to progress further.

Actions:

- Mike B to make a further call for UG/PG student representatives to sit on the H&S Committee. (Rolled over, MB to deliver in Oct)
- Send reminder email to staff about COSHH awareness training (CJ)

The next Health and Safety Committee meeting is to be held at TBC on TBC November 2022 via Zoom.