APPROVED minutes

The University of Manchester

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee

24 March 2026

Present: Patrick Hackett (Registrar, Secretary and Chief Operating Officer) (Chair), Dr David Barker (Chair of the Safeguarding Advisory Group), Helen Brewis (Co-Chair of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Advisory Group), Kevin Gaskell-Clow (UNISON Safety Representative), Dr Chris Goodwin (Unite Safety Representative), Dr Robert Jones (Chair of the Radiation Safety Advisory Group), Hayley Markham (UCU Safety Representative), Dr David Stewart (UCU), and Professor Simon Turner (Chair of the Genetic Modification and Biohazards Safety Advisory Group).

In attendance for all items: Dr Hamza Al Al-Qasmi (Head of Radiation Safety Unit), Martin Blake (Chief Property Officer's nominee), Sylvester Boon (Compliance and Risk Manager (Faculty of Science and Engineering)), Julia Cheung (Deputy Director of Safety Services), Peter Connolly (Interim Director of Campus Life), Matt Crofts (Head of Planning, Compliance and Governance (Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health), Dr Sarah Dyball (Research Fellow, Centre for Musculoskeletal Research) (observing), Russell James (Head of Fire Safety), Osen Kilic-Yildirim (Compliance, Safety and Estates Manager (Faculty of Humanities)), Sonal Patel (Executive Director of People's nominee), Attia Ramzan (Director of Health and Safety), Dr James Schofield (Secretary to the Rose Safety, Environment and Security Committee), Julie Walker (Secretary to the Resilience Advisory Group), and Jane Holland (Governance Manager) (minutes).

Apologies: Ken Drury (Unite Safety Representative), Nicola Hutchings (UCU Safety Representative), Anneessa Mahmood (Member nominated by the Students' Union Council), Dr Elizabeth Micakovic (Chair of Resilience Advisory Group), Sarah Sharples (Chair of ROSE Safety, Environment and Security Committee), Professor Nalin Thakkar (Vice-President for Social Responsibility and Chair of the Occupational Health, Safety and Training Advisory Group), and Dr Sergey Utyuzhnikov (Chair of Fire Safety Advisory Group).

1 Welcome and Introductions

Noted: The Chair welcomed members and the additional attendees to the meeting.

2 Minutes of the previous meeting

Agreed: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2025.

3 Matters Arising

Received: the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee actions update.

Noted:

a) The matters arising update.
b) That the action arising from minute 11 of the 7 October meeting had been superseded. The trade unions had recently met and a plan had been developed relating to the concerns raised about tracking purchases of chemicals and other sources.

c) The format of the actions table would be reviewed. **Action: Governance Manager/UCU Safety Representative**

4 HSW Committee Forward Agenda 2025-26
Received: the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee Forward Agenda 2025-26.

5 HSW Performance Monitoring – Q2 Report (1 August – 31 October 2025)

Received and Endorsed: the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Monitoring - Q1 Report (1 November 2025 – 31 January 2026) to the Audit and Risk Committee.

Noted:

a) Specifics of an alleged bullying and harassment case were raised by a UCU member, and the Chair confirmed it was not appropriate to discuss this at Committee.
b) Trade Union representatives welcomed the availability of the sickness absence data. The data highlighted that Professional Services staff were sometimes disproportionately affected by sickness absence, as a number of roles could not be performed from home. This raised concerns about perceived inequities.
c) Potential drivers of sickness absence were addressed at a local level, where the context was better understood and early, preventative action could be taken. This data had been shared with Faculties and Directorates to enable local interpretation and targeted action.
d) Centrally, there was a focus on enabling tools and support, including training and development. Work was being undertaken with People Partners to review the data and actions in the People Plans, and to develop and engage People Leaders. Staff were being encouraged to complete the Colleague Survey, which included questions on bullying and harassment. Enhanced data was available to the Mental Health and Wellbeing Advisory Group, which now also received DASS and occupational health data.
e) Consideration would be given to providing train the trainer sessions focussing on bullying. **Action: Executive Director of People's nominee** An item would be presented to a future meeting of the Committee, detailing how the University was responding to the data, and would include a deep dive. **Action: Co-Chair of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Advisory Group/Interim Director of Campus Life/Deputy Director of Safety Services**
f) A significant event had been reported in the Nancy Rothwell Building involving a leak within a sprinkler zone. The sprinkler system section was repaired and reinstated within 7 working days. Fire detection and alarm systems remained fully operational throughout. Thresholds had been agreed for escalation and reporting to the Insurance Team where safety systems were taken offline. It was clarified that this related to property protection, as sprinkler systems were designed to activate following evacuation. Agreed thresholds included early engagement with insurers to confirm interim arrangements, along with improved and timely communication with local users. While the response had been effective, it was noted that there were opportunities to learn from a slight time lag, and to further strengthen communication processes.
g) The Environment Agency had undertaken an inspection at Dalton Cumbria Facility in December 2025. It was confirmed that all Year 1 actions had been completed, and one Year 5 action required updating. The report would be updated to reflect the wording in the Rose Safety, Environment and Security Committee report. **Action: Deputy Director of Safety Services/Governance Manager**
h) Page 6 of the report would be updated to refer to 'biological agent', to aid consistency. **Action: Governance Manager**
i) 100% of fire risk assessments had been completed. The UCU Safety Representative raised concerns about the fire doors inspections and compartmentalisation. It was confirmed fire door surveys were being undertaken for residential buildings initially,

followed by non-residential buildings. . A summary of issues would be provided to the Committee members. **Action: Head of Fire Safety** It was acknowledged that remediation of issues faced a time lag. The KPI would be reviewed to clarify the number of inspections with no remedial action required. **Action: Director of Safety Services**

6 Protection of Premises

Noted: A PowerPoint presentation on Protection of Premises.

a) The Committee was assured that the University was well advanced in its preparations for compliance with the Protection of Premises Act (Martyn's Law), having established a Protect Planning Group over 12 months ago and commenced work ahead of the formal guidance being issued.
b) An initial threat and risk assessment had been approved, with structured workstreams in place covering lockdown and evacuation procedures, building threat assessments, communications, hostile vehicle mitigation and staff training. Enhanced mass-communication capabilities were being implemented, and building-level risk assessment processes had been piloted.
c) External assurance had confirmed that the University's approach was robust and that it was well positioned relative to sector peers, with continued work planned ahead of the April 2027 implementation deadline.
d) The voluntary use of Safe Zone was acknowledged. The Martyn's Law legislation did not change requirements in relation to understanding the location of individuals; however, the importance of being able to communicate effectively with staff and students was emphasised.
e) An observation was made regarding the emphasis on lockdown arrangements, which was a challenge due to the size of the estate, and further consideration would be given to this. **Action: Chief Property Officer's nominee/Secretary to the Resilience Advisory Group/Chair of the Safeguarding Advisory Group**

7 Occupational Stress Risk Assessments

Received and Noted: A PowerPoint presentation on Occupational Stress Risk Assessments

a) Context was provided on the University's approach to managing work-related stress, noting that risks had previously been captured through the risk register aligned to the HSE's framework, and that work was underway to make this more explicit through an organisational-level stress risk assessment.
a) It was explained that the organisational stress risk assessment evaluated structural and systemic factors contributing to work-related stress across the University, with the aim of preventing stress-related ill health, supporting wellbeing, strengthening leadership capability and culture, and ensuring legislative compliance.
b) The six HSE Management Standards were outlined, with reassurance that existing activity already aligned to these areas, including themes identified through the Colleague Engagement Survey. Risks, existing controls and proposed actions had been mapped against each of the six standards, with recognition that a number of ongoing institutional programmes (e.g. Oracle, Connect) would contribute to risk mitigation.
c) Colleagues were thanked for their contributions to this work. A separate meeting would be held to update the new trade union members. **Action: Action: Co-Chair of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Advisory Group**
d) Consideration would be given to how the Occupational Stress Risk Assessments would be communicated University-wide. **Action: Co-Chair of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Advisory Group**

8 Report from the Occupational Health, Safety and Training Advisory Group (OHSTAG)

Received: The Occupational Health, Safety and Training Advisory Group Compliance Report and the Training Needs Analysis Report.

Noted:

f) The Training Needs Analysis Report had been presented to OHSTAG and reflected extensive collaborative work between Health and Safety colleagues, Support Services, and the central training team. A 2019 review had led to the decentralisation of health and safety training, with some provision remaining central and other elements managed locally. A review was proposed, to determine whether a more centralised or "One University" approach to health and safety training remained appropriate.

g) The Training Needs Analysis had been undertaken to map all existing health and safety training, including audiences, refresh cycles and ownership.

h) Training data had been transitioned from Blackboard to Canvas to ensure continuity of access, with plans to enhance clarity for staff and managers on required training. It was proposed that a formal course framework be agreed, covering ownership, review cycles and update processes, along with development of a training needs analysis tool for managers.

i) In the medium term, all training would transition to Oracle as part of the Future Foundations programme, enabling role-based mandatory training assignment, improved reporting and more accurate compliance monitoring. This would allow granular alignment of mandatory training to roles and departments, while addressing current system limitations. Improved data was expected to support better resource planning and consideration of future training facilities where specialist spaces were required.

j) A review of the University-wide approach to health and safety training for both staff and students would be undertaken, recognising current overlap and inconsistencies.

k) The University had a significant number of external users accessing its facilities each year, and access to mandatory training for external users remained unresolved. Concerns were raised that a fully centralised approach to training would need to accommodate external users, noting that reliance on IT or Canvas accounts was not practical for individuals attending for short periods.

l) Some training (e.g. radiation safety) was administered centrally due to external users being unable to access certification through existing systems.

m) There was support for the development of a central training facility, with a reminder that non-campus-based University operations (including Cumbria and other remote locations) would need to be considered in any centralised model. The importance of ensuring that future training arrangements were inclusive, flexible and proportionate for both internal and external users was emphasised.

9 Report from the Mental Health and Wellbeing Advisory Group

Received and Noted: the Mental Health and Wellbeing Advisory Group Report.

10 Report from the Safeguarding Advisory Group

Received and Noted: the Safeguarding Advisory Group Report.

11 Report from the Radiation Safety Advisory Group

Received and Noted: the Radiation Safety Advisory Group Compliance Report.

12 Report from the Rose Safety, Environment and Security Committee

Received and Noted: the Rose Safety, Environment and Security Committee Compliance Report.

13 Report from the Fire Safety Advisory Group

Received and Noted: the Fire Safety Advisory Group Compliance Report.

14 Report from the Genetic Modification and Biohazards Safety Advisory Group

Received and Noted: the Genetic Modification and Biohazards Safety Advisory Group Compliance Report.

15 Report from the Resilience Advisory Group

Received and Noted: the Resilience Advisory Group Report.

16 Date of next meeting

Noted: The next meeting would be held on 30 June 2026 at 2-3.30pm, in-person.