

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT:

East Kent Colleges Group (the Group) recognises and accepts its responsibilities and obligations both as an employer and as an institution of further education and training to provide a safe working and learning environment for its employees, and for other users of its premises including students, visitors, contractors and members of the public.

This policy sets out the responsibilities and how they will be met by the Group in greater detail in order to comply with statutory regulations and to ensure, as far as is practicable, that a healthy and safe working environment is in place.

The Group takes the following stance on health, safety and welfare matters:

- Health, safety and welfare is everyone's responsibility;
- The personal health, safety and welfare of everyone who uses our sites is our highest priority. We also focus on continuously improving the work and study environment;
- Health, safety and welfare can, and will be, effectively managed at every level;
- All incidents can be prevented. We strive continuously for zero harm to staff, students, contractors and visitors, material and non-material assets;
- We choose to conduct our operations through efficient use of materials and energy, with minimum waste and damage to the environment.

To live up to the above, we:

- Require every employee, student and Governor to take personal responsibility for health, safety and welfare by focusing on their own behaviour;
- Apply a systematic and measurable approach to continually improve our health, safety and welfare culture and performance;
- Bring with us our high health, safety and welfare standards wherever we do business. Complying with applicable laws and regulations is only the minimum;
- Provide a suitable and specific grounding in health, safety and welfare matters for all our students;
- Openly communicate health, safety and welfare issues and performance, and share and learn from best practice, internally and externally;
- Integrate health, safety and welfare considerations into all business processes;
- Require line management to provide health, safety and welfare leadership and implement this policy.

Owner: Director of Estates

Approving Body: Full Governing Body

Date of approval: November 2023

The policy is applicable to all staff, casual workers, volunteers, Governors, students, contractors and other stakeholders whether they utilise the Group's resources and premises, work remotely/on a mobile basis or at outreach sites. The person with overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy is the Chief Executive Officer.

This policy will be reviewed, added to or modified on at least a bi-annual basis or when legislative and process changes are implemented.

DETAILS:

HEALTH AND SAFETY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Governing Body

The Governing Body accepts its role both collectively and individually to provide health, safety and welfare leadership within the Group. The Governing Body will take account of the health, safety and welfare implications of all decisions taken and provide the same positive attitude towards risk management and mitigation that is expected from all staff. The Governing Body receives and approves an annual report on the Group's health and safety performance.

2. Chief Executive Officer

- 2.1 Ensure at Group level that health, safety and welfare matters are an integral part of all strategic decision making
- 2.2 Promote a positive and pro-active health and safety culture across the Group.
- 2.3 Ensure that the principles of the health, safety and welfare policy are embedded within the Group and that its principles are supported at the highest level.
- 2.4 Ensure that adequate funds are included in all financial planning to support the successful implementation of the policy.

3. Deputy Director of Estates (Group Head of Health and Safety)

- 3.1 Under the guidance of the Director of Estates, advising on the strategic direction of health and safety; acting as the nominee on behalf of the Director of Estates to ensure that the Group has an appropriate and up to date health, safety and welfare policy and associated procedures in place and that they are applied.

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- 3.2 Advising, supporting and guiding the Group Leadership Team and other staff in performing their duties under health and safety legislation.
- 3.3 Reporting annually to the Board of Governors on the record of health, safety and welfare in the Group and advising the Board of any necessary changes in the situation for the future. Reporting on health and safety performance to the termly Risk, Audit and Compliance committee.
- 3.4 Reporting RIDDOR accidents and incidents (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences) to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and ensuring that follow up investigations are undertaken.
- 3.5 Liaising with the Group Director of Estates to ensure that appropriate control measures are in place for the statutory compliance programme.
- 3.6 Ensuring consistent processes and procedures are in place for all operational health and safety matters e.g. internal inspections, risk assessments, fire procedures, accident reporting and monitoring etc.
- 3.7 Creating the annual internal inspection programme and monitoring progress
- 3.8 Devising and implementing health and safety training programmes including mandatory training. Ensuring that tool box talks are delivered and having oversight of the Group's health and safety training matrix.
- 3.9 Commissioning external health and safety expertise to enable a balanced perspective and scrutiny and challenge on health and safety matters.
- 3.10 Managing and supporting the College Health and Safety Officers and ensuring that they are promoting consistent practices across the Group.
- 3.11 Ensuring that mechanisms are in place for consultation on health and safety matters. Supporting Principals/Managing Director with the effective operation of health and safety committees (where they are in place), in collaboration with union reps and other colleagues.
- 3.12 Collaborating with Corporate Services on the implementation of the Group's business continuity plans and emergency response procedures and delivering associated training to staff .
- 3.13 Collaborating with Corporate Services on the Group's insurance portfolio and coordinating of risk improvement reviews.

4. Principals/Managing Director

- 4.1 Ensure at College/business unit level that health, safety and welfare matters are an integral part of all decision making.
- 4.2 Promote a positive and pro-active health and safety culture across the College/business unit and ensure that Managers and leaders act as role models for good health and safety practice.
- 4.3 Ensure that the principles of the health, safety and welfare policy are embedded within the College/business unit and that procedures are adhered to.
- 4.4 Ensure that adequate funds are included in all financial planning to support the successful implementation of the policy.
- 4.5 Manage any breaches of health and safety policy and procedure.
- 4.6 Chair local health and safety committees where they are in place and ensure that actions are followed up in a timely manner.
- 4.7 Ensure the effective delivery of operational safety and security measures and compliance with Group procedures. This includes, but is not limited to, participation in the internal inspection programme, delivery of fire procedures, delivery of planned preventative maintenance and statutory compliance programmes, adherence to risk assessments and delivery of all responsibilities under the remit for Estates Head/Estates Managers.
- 4.8 Ensure that staff members acting as duty managers are competent and sufficiently trained to deal with incidents.

5. Directors, Managers and Heads of Area/Service

Directors, Managers and Heads of Area/Service have a range of responsibilities for their designated areas. In particular, they are responsible for modelling good health and safety practice and fostering a positive health and safety culture. Managers and Heads are expected to take reasonable steps, within their authority, to:

- 5.1 ensure that all staff and students in their respective areas are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and that all staff and students work in a safe manner;
- 5.2 adhere to the Group's health and safety policy, and clarify the responsibilities of managers, staff, students and visitors using their area/s of

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the College/business unit, including off-site work, i.e. educational trips and visits, work experience and social action programmes;

- 5.3 disseminate relevant information about health, safety and welfare matters to members of their staff, and to make arrangements for appropriate training and retraining using specialist personnel/resources; to ensure that all new staff receive appropriate health and safety induction training.
- 5.4 ensure that all accidents, incidents and near misses are reported and for following up on any actions identified in accident/incident investigations;
- 5.5 ensure that staff and students are aware of fire and emergency evacuation procedures and that they co-operate fully with fire and emergency drills;
- 5.6 ensure that their areas of the group are kept in a clean, tidy, orderly and safe condition, and that their teaching staff and support staff are active in maintaining all teaching areas, workshops, laboratories and equipment in a safe condition and ensuring that all persons using them behave in a safe and proper manner at all times;
- 5.7 manage any breaches of health and safety in accordance with the staff and student disciplinary procedures;
- 5.8 ensure arrangements are in place for the safe use, storage, transfer and disposal of hazardous materials and waste;
- 5.9 where applicable, ensure that all safety instructions outlined in programmes of study are implemented by teaching staff and that safety instructions and precautions specified for certain departments or sections or practical work carried out in workshops and laboratories are heeded and adhered to;
- 5.10 ensure that appropriate risk assessments are conducted for working areas/equipment, hazardous substances ([Control of Substances Hazardous to Health](#)), pregnancy, stress etc., that risk assessments are actively used and that they are updated when changes are needed;
- 5.11 support and lead on health, safety and welfare inspections/audits . To take appropriate and timely action to address any remedial measures;
- 5.12 ensure that whenever any specific action is required to comply with any Safety Regulation, Directive, or Code of Practice pertinent to their area, it is implemented;

- 5.13 where appropriate, ensure all students receive guidance on general health, safety and welfare as part of their induction programme and on-going support and guidance during their programme of study.
- 5.14 ensure that staff occupational health and welfare is promoted (Display Screen Equipment (DSE) assessments, health checks, eyesight tests, health surveillance etc) and that any issues are investigated and resolved as soon as possible.
- 5.15 ensure that staff are supported appropriately with their wellbeing, that staff know where to get help on particular issues and that as a minimum, wellbeing is discussed and reviewed at the monthly MyProgress meetings. To carry out stress risk assessments when required with support from People Services.

6. Group Director of Estates

- 6.1 Has overall responsibility for the Health, Safety and Welfare policy and liaises with the nominee, the Deputy Director of Estates (Group Head of Health and Safety), to ensure that it is up to date and implemented appropriately.
- 6.2 Ensure the engagement of competent contractors to undertake servicing, maintenance and testing under the Group Estates statutory compliance programme. Ensure adequate resources to support the programme and manage the programme budget.
- 6.3 In collaboration with the Deputy Director of Estates (Group Head of Health and Safety), manage the statutory compliance programme for all Colleges and business units. Report on progress and flag any issues via the Risk, Audit and Compliance Committee.
- 6.4 Support the embedding of good health and safety practices within local Estates teams.

7. Group Director of Capital Programmes

Ensure that appropriate control measures are in place for the health and safety arrangements on capital programmes. This includes ensuring that regulations under construction design and management (CDM) are adhered to and that monitoring officers are fulfilling their obligations.

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8. Estates – Head and Managers and College Principals, Deputy or Assistant Principals who manage Estates Team Leaders

- 8.1 Responsible for maintenance systems (including defect reporting) to ensure that Group buildings and grounds are kept in a condition that is, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe, clean and without risk to health and safety.
- 8.2 Provide safe access and egress for all users of the Group's property.
- 8.3 Ensure that essential services and equipment are provided and maintained in a safe, serviceable condition and as appropriate to ensure that statutory inspections and tests on various items of equipment are carried out and recorded under an agreed planned preventative maintenance schedule.
- 8.4 Ensure the health, safety and welfare of all Estates staff as regards their working environment, practices and competence.
- 8.5 Act as the responsible person under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order to ensure the effectiveness of fire safety and evacuation arrangements, including the scheduling of fire and emergency drills, the monitoring of fire risk assessments, firefighting equipment servicing, emergency light testing and maintenance of the College's procedure and plan.
- 8.6 Arrange for the recording and monitoring of accident reports and notification to the appropriate authority of the injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences; to ensure that any incidents that require follow up are learnt from and that measures are put in place to prevent further accidents or incidents*.
- 8.7 Control and co-ordination of, and co-operation with contractors employed by the Group on estates contracts to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable that their conduct does not present a risk to health and safety. This includes the permit to work system and provision of required plans and information to enable such contractor to complete their work safely via risk assessments and method statements (RAMS).
- 8.8 Ensure that any unsafe machine, tool or structure is properly immobilised and then made safe when notified.
- 8.9 Advise on the suitability and siting of any new items of machinery that is proposed to be purchased by the College.

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- 8.10 Control and co-ordination of the College's portable appliance testing programme.
- 8.11 Give advice when requested on machinery and equipment purchased by the Group both prior to usage and when problems have been identified.
- 8.12 Resolve/prohibit activities, which contravene legislation or involve a risk of injury found during monitoring duties.
- 8.13 Maintain accident records and statistics, ensure accident reports are prepared, analysed and where appropriate, investigated and reported to the Deputy Director of Estates for onward reporting to the HSE*.
- 8.14 Carrying out first aid risk assessments to determine appropriate levels of first aid resource. Provision of qualified first aid cover and ensure first aid supplies are stocked appropriately*.
- 8.15 Oversee the effective operation of security services (where they are in place) and the Safe EKC Group policy (stop and search).

Items marked * may be delegated to College Health and Safety Officers but overall responsibility lies with the Estates Manager/Team Leader or the College Principal, Deputy or Assistant Principal where they manage Estates Team Leaders.

8. College Health and Safety Officers

- 8.1 Supporting the Head of Health and Safety in the consistent implementation of the Group's health and safety policies & procedures.
- 8.2 Acting as a point of contact to provide support, guidance and advice on any health and safety related issues that arise.
- 8.3 Monitoring via audit/inspection the implementation of the Group's health & safety policies & procedures to ensure that all areas are encouraging a strong ethos, culture and accountability for health & safety within the workplace.
- 8.4 Providing support, advice and guidance to the leadership, management team & staff on health & safety, oversight of area risk assessments, safe systems of work etc.
- 8.5 Maintaining a schedule of fire risk assessments and conducting annual audits of compliance. Liaise with the competent person designated for fire safety (Estates Head/Managers or Principals) on the operational delivery of the Group's fire safety policy at site level.
- 8.6 Ensuring that first aid risk assessments and first aid rotas are in place.

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- 8.7 Checking of accident/incident/near miss forms and leading on any follow up investigations. Reporting RIDDOR incidents to the Deputy Director of Estates (Head of Health and Safety) for onward reporting to the HSE.
- 8.8 To provide reports and updates to the leadership and management teams via health & safety meetings and committees.

9. Director of Business Support

- 9.1 Ensure that all staff job descriptions contain adequate information that relate to the health, safety and welfare responsibilities of the post.
- 9.2 Ensure that every member of staff receives and signs for a copy of the Group Health Safety and Welfare Policy at induction.
- 9.3 Liaise with the Deputy Director of Estates (Head of Health and Safety) regarding any staff RIDDOR or occupational health matters which require a review of policy and procedure. Provide staff absence data for review when requested.
- 9.4 Have ownership of relevant HR policies in relation to health safety and welfare e.g. absence, staff wellbeing etc.
- 9.5 To ensure that a suitable and sufficient occupational health, counselling and welfare service is in place for staff.
- 9.6 To ensure where a need is identified that new and existing staff in particular departments receive regular health surveillance by a competent third party.

10. Members of Staff

All employees have a duty under Section 7 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to co-operate with management in the implementation of the health, safety and welfare policy, and to take reasonable care of their own health, safety and welfare and that of others who may be affected by what they do or fail to do whilst at work. In particular, all staff will ensure that they:

- 10.1 Observe safety rules at all times and make themselves familiar with the Group health, safety and welfare policy, procedures, risk assessments or other instructions that may from time to time be issued.
- 10.2 Make full and proper use of protective safety clothing, equipment and devices and report any damage or defect to line management without delay. Ensuring where necessary that students use all appropriate safety clothing and equipment required where identified through risk assessment.

- 10.3 Report all accidents, injuries, near misses work related ill health and damage, to their line manager, whether persons are injured or not, using correct Group reporting procedures.
- 10.4 Report all hazards to their line manager.
- 10.5 Do not recklessly interfere with, or misuse, anything provided to comply with any regulation made under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
- 10.6 Report anyone interfering with, or misusing, anything provided to comply with health, safety and welfare legislation to their Manager.
- 19.7 Co-operate with the Group to enable the Group to comply with statutory duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- 10.8 Report any work situation, which might present a serious and imminent danger to their line manager without delay. This danger may be to themselves or to others.
- 10.9 Report any shortcomings in the health, safety and welfare arrangements that are outside their remit to correct, even when no immediate danger exists, to their line manager so that remedial action can be taken as needed. Where the corrective action is within the remit of the member of staff action must be taken promptly to correct the situation; where this is the case, they should report their actions to their line manager.
- 10.10 Attend for health surveillance where risks to their health, safety and welfare have been identified to enable the Group to discharge its responsibility for providing appropriate health surveillance.
- 10.11 Only work within their own competence, training and authorisation.
- 10.12 Make themselves familiar with the emergency procedures in place in their area(s) of work
- 10.13 Only use tools, equipment and resources that are provided by the Group. Do not bring any equipment, tools and resources onto site without prior authorisation/approval and testing.
- 10.14 Academic staff are responsible for the students under their control and must ensure that the students receive:
 - Timely instruction, training information and supervision to ensure that all teaching, learning and assessment is carried out safely. Document such instruction/training given to students.

- Instruction in the fire and emergency procedures including those for disabled students to be followed as soon after enrolment as is reasonably practicable.
- Information on the use, handling and storage of potentially hazardous substances, materials or plant.
- Use correctly, and without fail, such Personal Protective Equipment as is required by statute or risk assessment.
- Demonstrate the safe use of equipment and machinery and ensure that machinery is only used with appropriate supervision and in accordance with safe systems of work.

11. Students

- 11.1 Comply with instructions and not take actions that put themselves and others at risk.
- 11.2 To wear all PPE as advised by the Group, risk assessment or course requirements
- 11.3 Report any concerns with health and safety to their Tutor immediately.

MONITORING OF HEALTH AND SAFETY

Reporting on health and safety compliance and developments will take the following format:

- Health and safety matters, issues and performance are reported to the Group's termly Risk, Audit and Compliance committee.
- College/business unit health and safety committees (where requested) will meet termly. The agenda focuses on legislative updates and any associated implications, results of internal inspections, accident statistics and any other matters relating to health, safety and welfare.
- An internal inspection schedule is in place for all areas. Areas considered higher risk are audited annually and lower risk areas are inspected every two years. Each inspection has an action plan which is followed up on.
- College/business unit accident/incident and near miss monitoring is in place.
- An annual report on health and safety performance is provided to the Governing Body.

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- The Group retains the services of an external health and safety consultant.

PROCEDURES FOR RAISING COMPLAINTS ON MATTERS OF HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Any person (employee, casual workers, student or visitor) who is concerned about a particular health or safety problem shall first raise the matter with the relevant Manager/Head of area who shall consider the matter and take action as appropriate. If the complaint is about a matter which is not within the Head of Area/Service's authority to remedy, the Manager/Head of area will consult with the Deputy Director of Estates (Head of Health and Safety) before responding.
- If a complaint or concern is not dealt with satisfactorily by this approach, the complainant shall escalate the matter via the Group's Complaints Procedure for external complaints (from students, visitors etc) or via the College's Grievance Procedure for complaints from staff, casual workers or volunteers.