



**University College Cork, Ireland**  
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

## **OVERVIEW OF SAFETY, HEALTH & WELFARE AT WORK AT UCC**

### **GENERAL**

In accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005, it is the policy of the University to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable the health and safety, while at work of all employees and to protect students and other persons entering the precincts of the University from injury and ill health arising from work conducted by employed persons on University property. The successful implementation of this policy requires the full support and co-operation of all employees, contractors and students of the University. Students undertaking a course of study in a University, School or College are not considered to be an employee of the Institution per Regulation 2(5) of the SHWW Act 2005.

The President, Governing Body and University Management Team have overall responsibility for safety. However in line with legislative requirements, the University has devolved safety responsibility to Heads of Colleges \ Schools \ Departments \ Centres \ Units, Department Management, Supervisors and persons who operate at individual levels of responsibility. *(Such responsibility is for the staff/ students/ areas/ activities under their control, within the limitations of the resources available to them and excluding functional activities outside of their control).*

Employees have legal responsibilities for their own safety and must co-operate with and assist their employer in the discharge of his \ her statutory duties. Employees are responsible for the safety of the students which they teach/supervise, for the safety of their invited visitors, for the activities of contractors which they engage and for the impact of the activities of all of the aforementioned on others.

The University has set out all relevant policies in the University Safety Policy Statement *which is available on the University Web site:*

<http://www.ucc.ie/en/occupationalhealthandsafety/policies/>

and within the University's Departmental Safety Statement Work manual, (two formats which have been provided to each College \ School \ Department \ Centre \ Unit and contain detailed Health & Safety policy information and hazard \ risk assessment guidance material). Departments have utilised this material to generate their individual Department Safety Statements. These documents satisfy the wide-ranging statutory Health & Safety requirements in relation to accident \ ill health prevention and risk assessment, which regulate our multi-disciplinary activities and very individual work places. *Department Safety Statements are available in each College \ School \ Department \ Centre \ Unit.* (See web page <http://www.ucc.ie/en/occupationalhealthandsafety/risk-safety-field/workmanual/> ).

The strategic health and safety management policies and best practice which underpins these documents is periodically updated by the University Safety Officer to give effect to changes in Statutory Legislation, Health and Safety Authority guidance, European \ Irish Standards, Health and Safety Executive (UK) guidance. New material is regularly updated on the UCC Health and Safety Webpage.

## **SAFETY CONSULTATION/ INFORMATION, SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES**

Employees have a legal entitlement to be consulted \ informed and are expected to participate in making the workplace safer for all concerned. The primary consultation \ representation mechanism is via the Head of College \ School \ Department \ Centre \ Unit. Staff elected safety representatives also exist to represent the interest of employees and interact regularly with Departmental Management and University Management in this regard. (Being a Safety Representative is a voluntary role with defined statutory entitlements. Safety Representatives have protection from disadvantage and are elected to geographical constituencies within the University for three-year periods). *See Department Safety Statements for further details.* Elections are organised by the staff inter union group and nominations are sought in advance.

Advice, guidance and support on Health and Safety matters is also available from the University Safety Officer and Sessional University Occupational Health Physician (*contact the Health and Safety Office*), the Radiation Protection Officer, the University Fire Officer (*contact the Buildings & Estates Office*), Safety Representatives and Department Safety Committees/ Department Safety Action Teams. Names of current Safety Representatives are given on our web: <http://www.ucc.ie/en/occupationalhealthandsafety/safety-services/>

## **OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND OCCUPATIONAL HYGIENE**

The Health and Safety Office engages on a ***Sessional Basis*** an occupational health physician (*1/2 day every 6 weeks excluding summer recess*), an Occupational Hygienist (a specialist environmental scientist – *3 days per quarter p.a.*) and a manual-handling specialist (*1 day every 6-8 weeks*) that provide advice on staff occupational health issues and assist departments in the prevention of work related ill health. The Occupational Health Physician also undertakes via the Health and Safety Office, any necessary (work related) audiograms, spirometry, allergy tests, blood tests and vaccinations (relevant biological hazards). However the cost of these is payable by the Colleges \ Schools \ Departments \ Centres \ Units (to the providers). *Contact the Health and Safety Office for Occupational Health and Hygiene visits and see Web page for advice on work related vaccines including work related travel vaccines on:* <http://www.ucc.ie/en/occupationalhealthandsafety/occ-training/healthandhygiene/>

Any staff member who is experiencing ill health, which she \ he attributes to his \ her work or is concerned that his \ her health status or special needs is in-compatible with his \ her work or workplace may see the occupational health physician for an assessment. *Contact the Department of Human Resources or The Health and Safety Office.*

NOTE: Under SHWW Pregnant Employees Regulations, a Pregnancy Job Risk Assessment must be conducted at departmental level in relation to the impact of work on the person \ unborn child and retained on Departmental Records. A completed copy should be returned to the Health and Safety Office. Copies of the relevant form are available from the Department of Human Resources and the Health and Safety Office. The Department of Human Resources will automatically issue the relevant form on pregnancy notification.

The Student Health Officer deals with all student health and vaccination requirements associated with their course work.

## SAFETY TRAINING

Colleges \ Schools \ Departments \ Centres \ Units must (a) provide \ arrange relevant on the job training. A core programme of centralised health and safety training courses for staff is available \ accessible via the Health and Safety Office, nominal costs are chargeable to Colleges \ Schools \ Departments \ Centres \ Units for staff training in some instances, (b) identify the training requirements that each member of staff must undertake having regard to the nature of their work and the various hazards \ risks involved in same (c) ensure that staff attend such training courses at commencement of employment \ duties in the College \ School \ Department \ Centre \ Unit.

Staff are legally obliged to attend such training and utilise the information \ skills obtained from same. Please Note that Dept. Management should attend on the Health and Safety Course entitled: Managing Health and Safety for Heads of Function and Department Management. Centralised training courses are advertised widely during the year and are held subject to viability and availability of teaching rooms. Special Courses can also be arranged on demand subject to viability \ College \ School \ Department \ Centre \ Unit funding.

**Please note in connection with the above, an online e-learning Workstation Ergonomics VDSE (VDU) Safety Course has been made available to UCC Staff since March 2007, through the Health and Safety Office. In December 2008 the Health & Safety Office further expanded this facility by launching a UCC bespoke online e-learning Fire Safety Course. These courses can be completed online. For further information on same see web: <http://www.ucc.ie/en/occupationalhealthandsafety/occ-training/overview/>**

**An E-Learning Hazardous Substances Awareness Course is currently under development and should be available shortly.**

*For information on all of the above, contact the Health and Safety Office for details and See web pages <http://www.ucc.ie/en/occupationalhealthandsafety/>*

## ACCIDENTS \ DANGEROUS OCCURENCES

The Health and Safety Authority, the Health and Safety Office, HR Department, Administrative Secretary and the University insurers require the immediate reporting of accidents, dangerous occurrences and property damage incidents. All employees are obliged to immediately report all such events to their supervisor. Colleges \ Schools \ Departments \ Centres \ Units email key details of all injury \ loss incidents to the Administrative Secretary immediately after said incidents occur. In addition, staff are required to complete an accident report or dangerous occurrence report form. These forms are available from each College \ School \ Department \ Centre \ Unit and must be submitted within 24 hours of an accident \ incident. Colleges \ Schools \ Departments \ Centres \ Units must also conduct and submit an investigation report for each incident, identify the corrective measures required \ learn from the incident so as to prevent recurrence and take the necessary actions subsequently. The Health and Safety Office reviews all Accidents \ Dangerous Occurrence forms submitted, reviews the importance of the actions arising, collates statistics and monitors trends. For further information please see web: <http://www.ucc.ie/en/occupationalhealthandsafety/accidents/>

## FIRE AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES, FIRE BRIGADE/AMBULANCE

Fire & Emergency Procedures are contained in the preliminary (red) pages of the internal telephone directory and as set out in the Health and Safety Office web page: <http://www.ucc.ie/en/occupationalhealthandsafety/emergencies/>

All employees have a responsibility to become familiar with the location of fire exits, fire extinguishers, means of activating the fire alarm and assembly points in relation to their place of work see web:

<http://timetable.ucc.ie> for UCC Assembly Points. Employees must co-operate with and assist their departments in relation to (a) fire prevention, (b) evacuating themselves and reasonably assisting with the evacuation of other persons from their building (without endangering themselves) on activation of the fire alarm, (c) operate as a fire evacuation guide \ marshal (voluntary), for their work area if required. Fire Action Notices and Assembly signs are posted on the Campus \ within buildings and on the lecture podiums of the main lecture theatres. The information contained in the latter must be conveyed to students by lecturers at the commencement of lectures.

The Buildings Office deals with fire safety matters. It arranges fire evacuation drills and fire extinguisher training on an annual basis via the University Fire Office. *Contact the Buildings & Estates Office for details.* See web: <http://www.ucc.ie/en/build/> Whilst Building assembly points are visibly outside \ adjacent to each building, overall details are available from the University Fire Officer (email [jvocard@outlook.ie](mailto:jvocard@outlook.ie)) and from Room Bookings for central teaching rooms. See Web: <http://timetable.ucc.ie>

Special needs for impaired persons must be discussed with Room Bookings, the Buildings & Estates Office and host Colleges \ Schools \ Departments \ Centres \ Units.

For further information on above please see web:

## OCCUPATIONAL FIRST AID

A network of trained occupational first aiders and trained AED operators (voluntary), exist at department level and within General Services. Contact the Head of College \ School \ Department \ Centre \ Unit, Department Safety Officer for Departmental First Aider information. The Health and Safety Office maintains an overall list of current Occupational First Aiders (voluntary role) and arranges centralised training to enable staff to attain \ retain required certificates of competence. Both an Occupational First Aid Certificate and A Heartsaver CPR/AED (American Heart Association \ IHF) Certificate are issued by FETAC, to those candidates who attend the full Occupational First Aid (including CPR and AED) Course and are successful in examination [\*in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) – current edition]. **Successful Candidates will be Qualified Occupational First Aiders with a level 5 FETAC Certificate and will be required to operate as an Occupational First Aider for their Department \ Centre etc.**

Occupational First Aid Certificates, newly issued as of September 2008 are valid for two years only and are issued by FETAC. First Aiders therefore are obliged to successfully complete a 1 ½ day Refresher Course before their Occupational First Aid Certificate expiry date in order to keep their Occupational First Aid Certificate valid. Notwithstanding this however, ***it is strongly recommended*** that all Occupational First Aiders complete a 1 ½ day Refresher Course ***on an annual basis*** to keep “up to date” with First Aid practice and procedures but also to ensure their Certificates are continuously valid.

A list of current and proposed AED locations throughout UCC can be found on:

<http://www.ucc.ie/en/occupationalhealthandsafety/emergencies/>

Please revert to Dr Michael Byrne, Student Health Officer on Extn: 2311 for further information on AED’s in UCC.

## VDU EYESIGHT SCREENING TESTS

All staff operating VDUs may avail of the University’s screening test, which is PC based. Referrals to the University’s designated optometrist and provision of special corrective appliances, (at the employers cost) may apply in certain circumstances. ***N.B. In all cases where UCC provides a staff member with VDU Corrective Lenses (either incorporated with their own lenses or in special “stand alone” frames) they must be worn at all times by said staff member while engaged in VDU work in UCC. If a problem occurs which effects the wearing/suitability of the lenses, please contact the Health and Safety Office.***

*Further details are available from the Health and Safety Office and See web page*

<http://www.ucc.ie/en/occupationalhealthandsafety/occ-training/healthandhygiene/vdu/>

## **SPECIAL HAZARDS**

Certain activities, for example laboratory work, can be particularly hazardous if due care is not exercised. Research activity by its very nature may introduce special hazards to the working environment. All safety procedures and instructions must be adhered to at all times when dealing with special hazards or dangerous materials. *Contact the Head of College \ School \ Department \ Centre \ Unit, Department Safety Officer and consult your Department Safety Statement.*

## **NO SMOKING POLICY**

Under public health legislation, smoking is prohibited in all University buildings and enclosed workplaces including University vehicles. This applies to all persons.

The limited exceptions as specified in Section 47 of the Public Health Tobacco Regulations (current edition) also operates. See details in <http://www.ntco.ie> and [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie)

## **EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME & STAFF WELFARE**

The University is committed to assisting, in a confidential manner, any employee who may be experiencing personal problems or difficulties. All staff welfare related matters can be addressed to the Equality & Welfare Officer, Dept of Human Resources. Contact information can be found on:

<http://www.ucc.ie/en/hr/>

The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) readily makes available to all employees, professional services required to help resolve many of their personal problems and situations. EAP is a confidential counselling and referral service designed to give employees a resource to contact in the event of personal problems. Employees voluntarily choose to use the programme. No information regarding an employee's problem or participation in the programme will be released to anyone without his/her written consent.

The programme can help with relationship difficulties, family problems, job stress, alcohol, drug and gambling addiction, psychological and emotional difficulties, bereavement problems, financial worries etc. *Full details of the Employee Assistance Programme are available from the Department of Human Resources, or from the Human Resources Department's website: <http://www.ucc.ie/en/hr/>*

## **FUNCTIONAL AREA ANNUAL SAFETY REPORTS**

Senior Heads of Function within UCC have collective responsibilities under Safety, Health and Welfare at Work legislation and requirement under Section 4.7 (x) of University Safety Policy to submit a Functional Area Annual Safety Report on the implementation of its Safety Statement and University Policy for the past year and to prepare an implementation plan for the current \ coming year.

In connection with the above, a copy of the document entitled "Functional Area Annual Safety Reports", Report headings\issues to address – in brief" – and guidance on effective report writing can be procured through the Health and Safety Office.

The outline headings (contained in above document) for said Annual Report are as follows:

1. Implementation of the Functional Area Safety Statements
2. Maintaining the Safety Statements Up to Date

3. Functional Area Safety Consultation (various headings)
4. Functional Area Health and Safety Training – Staff (Records, Needs Analysis, Training Plan)
5. Functional Area First Aid and Fire Evacuation (including First Aiders & Fire Marshals)
6. Functional Area Safety Action Plan: (Safety Statement Document 4) (Priorities, actions & dates)

(a) Note: the implementation of Functional Area Safety Statements together with staff training, staff consultation and maintaining of Safety Statements “up to date” (for the current work of the Functional Area and constituent schools \ departments \ centres and areas occupied), together with re-evaluation of all hazards and risks on a periodic basis (at least annually), is a statutory requirement of existing \ updated Safety, Health and Welfare at Work legislation.

(b) Functional Area Annual Safety Reports must include a prioritised plan for the entire Functional Area for the year going forward using the headings provided. These headings are matters which are directly pertinent to the recently updated SHWW legislation and the focus of the Health and Safety Authority. For further information see web: <http://www.ucc.ie/en/occupationalhealthandsafety/bm/>

UCC Functional Area Benchmarking performance results and the initiating President’s Memo are also available at the above link.

### **NEW BUILDINGS REFURBISHMENT – PROJECTS, ADAPTATIONS, RESEARCH WORKS:**

The Health and Safety Office works on an ongoing basis with Buildings and Estates Project teams, to incorporate Health, Safety and Welfare features in finished projects and comply with the Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act \ subordinate Regulations and Fire Services Act. To this end the Health and Safety Office reports to the Director of Buildings and Estates. As part of the wider Department of the Buildings and Estates, the University Safety Officer is constantly involved in the safety aspect of evaluating Buildings and Estates projects both Capital and Minor Works or Refurbishment, providing design \ management inputs to projects from all phases of the these projects (design, commencement on site, handover). Regular monthly safety meetings are also held by Buildings and Estates Management involving the University Safety Officer. For further information on Buildings and Estates roles, see web:

<http://www.ucc.ie/en/build/>

### **DEPARTMENTAL SAFETY STATEMENT WORK MANUAL**

The extensive information available in connection with the Departmental Safety Statement is available on the Health and Safety Office website. It incorporates the revisions necessitated by the changes in the Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and new regulations enacted and guidance pertaining to same as available. Staff can also refer to the Departmental Safety Statement as completed in their own Department, or alternatively, for further advice \ information. See web:

<http://www.ucc.ie/en/occupationalhealthandsafety/risk-safety-field/workmanual/>

### **RADIATION PROTECTION OFFICER**

The University Radiation Protection Officer, in addition to the general responsibilities outlined in the safety policy statement advises on compliance as appropriate, with a) the provisions of the licence granted to UCC \ Colleges from the Radiological Protection Institute of Ireland and b)the provisions of the safety legislation as it pertains to ionising and non-ionising radiation, lasers and the magnetic spectrum.

For further information please see web: <http://www.ucc.ie/rpo/>

## CHEMICAL INVENTORY, MSDS SHEETS & CPL REGULATIONS

### **Re: REACH Regulations, Chemical Inventory and 2007 SHWW Code of Practice for Chemical Agents Regulations (Occupational Exposure Levels)**

The Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals (REACH) Regulations came into force across the EU on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2007. All parties in the supply chain have obligations under these regulations. For manufacturers/importers these obligations commence immediately.

The main implications of the legislation apply to Manufacturers or Importers {in the context of REACH only material from outside the EU is considered as an "Import"} of a substance in quantities of >1 tonne \ annum. REACH does however apply to everyone in the supply chain, albeit to varying degrees. There is also a phased introduction depending on the position in the supply chain. Further information is on [www.reachright.hsa.ie](http://www.reachright.hsa.ie) or [www.consultnet.ie/reach.htm](http://www.consultnet.ie/reach.htm)

Given the large level of chemicals now in use on a daily basis, it is vital for each downstream user of chemicals - relevant UCC Departments - to become informed of what is required of them under REACH and prepared for same. This should now be done in line with these new Regulations. Information on same can be found on [www.reachright.hsa.ie](http://www.reachright.hsa.ie) or [www.consultnet.ie/reach.htm](http://www.consultnet.ie/reach.htm).

In certain instances under REACH a downstream user department, may have to supply the manufacturer with Exposure scenarios when requested for non standard uses of chemical supplied so that safety data sheets can be updated.

A key aspect of this for each Department who is a downstream user under REACH is managing their chemical inventory at School \ Department \ Centre \ Unit level and having up to date risk management measures and exposure scenarios. The latter is covered mainly by existing obligations under the Department Safety Statement and SHWW Regulations – i.e. risk assessments and controls. However, the Department needs to keep these regularly updated. It should be noted that some OELs (exposure limits) have been revised under the 2007 Code of Practice for the SHWW Chemical Agents Regulations (see [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie) for further information). New classification, labelling and packaging Regulations have also come into force within the EU (transition arrangements) and can be found at the following link:

<http://www.ucc.ie/en/occupationalhealthandsafety/news-faqs/fullstory-311535-en.html>

All relevant Departments ensure that they have an up to date Departmental Chemical Inventory in electronic and hardcopy format (if not already compiled). This is essential under SHWW Regulations. This must categorize chemicals according to hazard classification, quantity, location, expiry date and compatibility \ incompatibility.

Departments must make an electronic and hard copy of same available within the Department for use by staff \ students \ the University Occupational Hygienist or Occupational Physician and to supply an electronic copy of same to General Services management for Fire Brigade use should they require same for their response to any emergencies that may arise in the future.

### **FIELDWORK**

Updated \ revised Code of Practice on Fieldwork is available at the following link:

<http://www.ucc.ie/en/media/support/healthandsafety/documents/2011USHAUKFieldworkCodeofPractice-finalversion.pdf>

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