



# UWE Bristol - Safe Places, People and Practice Strategy

2013 - 2020



University of the  
West of England

**better**together

# UWE Bristol - Safe Places, People and Practice Strategy

## 2013-2020

### Foreword - Professor Steve West Vice-chancellor, UWE Bristol

UWE Bristol is a creative and confident university.

Our 2020 strategy sets out our ambitious path for the future, based on our core purpose: advancing knowledge, inspiring people and transforming futures.

We are increasingly known for how we connect with our regional economy and communities and how we work in partnership with organisations across the globe. In particular, we are recognised for our commitment to inclusivity, social justice and equality of opportunity.

We are entering a period of sustained investment, which includes a £200m planned investment in our estate and infrastructure, to create a truly innovative learning environment and community resource.

As we invest to support academic excellence at UWE Bristol, it is essential that we also achieve excellence in the management and operations of the University.

This strategy sets out how we will achieve excellence in health and safety, through 'Safe Places, People and Practice'.

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# Section 1

## Introduction

### Purpose

- To provide the strategic direction with regards to the management of health and safety at the University.
- To ensure health and safety is integral to all aspects of the management of the University.
- To sustain the reputation of the University which is fundamental to its success and to ensure there are strategies to manage all risks and opportunities that have a bearing on its reputation.
- To take a pro-active approach to the management of health and safety and of a positive environment promoting the well-being of staff and students.
- To ensure compliance with statutory requirements and responsibilities.

### Governance

In line with the University's overall Strategy towards 2020, this Safe Places, People and Practice Strategy extends over seven years, 2013-2020. Overall responsibility for its strategic priorities rests with the Vice-Chancellor and the Board of Governors.

It will be reviewed annually by the University's Health and Safety Committee, and the Vice Chancellors Executive. There will be an annual progress report to the Board of Governors in September each academic year.

Day to day oversight of the Strategy lies with the Deputy Vice Chancellor Operations, Director of Facilities and the Health and Safety Manager and it will be monitored regularly at their monthly Health and Safety Review Meetings. The Vice Chancellor will also remain operationally appraised at his quarterly meetings with the Health and Safety Manager.

The team that will support the delivery of the strategic priorities of this Strategy will be the University's Health and Safety Team, led by the Health and Safety Manager.

### Planning and Communication

This Strategy provides a general framework for health and safety through which specific activities are then organised. It is underpinned by the University's Health and Safety Policy and its associated Management System. **Health and Safety Management - Health and Safety: UWE Bristol**

The Strategy's strategic priorities seek to inform the University's overall Health and Safety Action Plans for the period 2013 – 2020, actions plans that will form the foundation for health and safety actions across UWE Bristol. Faculties and Professional Services will be required to incorporate appropriate actions at a local level, through their specific operational health and safety plans. The implementation of these local action plans will be monitored by the Health and Safety Team through the Audit process.

The Strategy will be readily available and accessible to all University staff and students on the UWE Bristol WebPages.

## Section 2

### UWE Bristol Strategy to 2020

#### Purpose

The **new strategy** looks to 2020 and is based on our core purpose of '**advancing knowledge, inspiring people, transforming futures**'.

Our ambition for 2020 is to be known nationally and internationally as the best University for:

- Professionally recognised and practice-oriented programmes, which contribute to an outstanding learning experience and generate excellent graduate employment opportunities and outcomes for all students
- Connecting and working with our local and regional economy, businesses and communities and international partners to advance knowledge, and to advance the health, sustainability and prosperity of our locality and region
- Being digitally advanced, agile and responsive in the way we work, embracing and leading change to create new sustainable opportunities
- Being inclusive and global in outlook and approach

To achieve this we are focusing our activities on the following four priority areas::

1. **Outstanding learning** - all our students experiencing engaging and outstanding learning, teaching and support services throughout their student journey, fully utilising advances in technology to support their academic, professional and social growth and development
2. **Ready and able graduates** - graduates ready and able to realise their full potential, make a positive contribution to society and their chosen field of employment or further study and play their full part in the development of a sustainable global society and knowledge economy
3. **Research with impact** – world-class performance in selected areas of research that meets the needs of our community, a sustainable economy and society and feeds the scholarship and enquiry that underpins our learning and teaching
4. **Strategic partnerships, connections and networks** – that differentiate our academic activity and enhance the global reputation, health, sustainability and prosperity of the University, Bristol and its city-region

These will be underpinned by two enablers:

- People: performance and development
- Place: resources, estate and infrastructure

This Safe Places, People and Practice Strategy will directly support the University's overall ambition and priorities, as detailed in the following sections.

## Section 3

### Safe Places, People and Practice: Purpose and Ambition

#### **Purpose**

*To ensure that all aspects of health and safety are fully integrated into the management of the University so 'enabling' the work of the University through the principles of sensible risk management.*

#### **Ambition**

*That UWE Bristol is inherently a 'safe and healthy working and learning environment' that engages its staff, students, partners and visitors. An ambition which leads to UWE Bristol being respected and recognised as one of the UK's leading Universities with firmly embedded health and safety.*

## Section 4

### Progress in Health and Safety at UWE Bristol to 2013

#### Where We Were

The *Evaluation of Health and Safety Management* undertaken by Marsh Ltd in 2009 provided an excellent basis for an improved approach to health and safety and its management at UWE Bristol.

The main themes for the University to address were:

- Ensuring *Leadership* and clear lines of *Responsibility*
- Setting *Standards* and establishing *Authority*
- Introducing *Accountability* and ensuring the monitoring of performance through *Audit*

#### What We've Achieved

The University introduced a Revitalised Health and Safety Approach. Fundamental to the implementation of this approach was a review of the University's *Health and Safety Strategy*, a strategy that set out the strategic aims for health and safety and the mechanisms through which they are to be enabled.

To ensure the implementation of the commitments made in the University's *Health and Safety Strategy* a priority focus was the development of a three year *Health and Safety Action Plan* with clear accountabilities and timescales. The Plan provided alignment to the Strategy and importantly was prioritised so as to ensure achievement as follows:

- **2010/11** - *Embedding behaviours, processes and accountabilities;*
- **2011/12** - *Continued establishment of health and safety organisational arrangements within Faculties and Professional Services, supported by full audit;*
- **2012/13** – *Focusing on risk management and best practices.*

Key milestones achieved to date have been:

- The development and introduction of the University's *Health and Safety Management System*. A system that ensures clear accountabilities and responsibilities.
- The introduction of *Health and Safety Standards* that form the foundation of the University's Safety Management System. These are based on legislative requirements, externally agreed good practice and also reflect the University's specific requirements. Each Standard contains the minimum key performance requirements of the University in each specific area.
- The improved resourcing of the University's *central Health and Safety Team* (HST). There is now a 'lead' Health and Safety Adviser aligned to each Faculty and Professional Service.
- The introduction of a central *Health and Safety Training Programme*. With focus on improvement in health and safety leadership and competence and mandatory fire training for all UWE Bristol staff.
- The implementation of an *Audit Programme in 2011-2012* for the University, which is a 3 year cycle that encompasses all UWE Bristol Faculties and Professional Services and its Health and Safety Standards.
- The continued focus on fire safety and significantly to further enhance and ensure the implementation of the University's Fire Safety Management System the increased HST resource includes a Health and Safety Adviser with fire specialism. Work has included:-
  - The further development of training to ensure the continued reminding of staff as to their role in fire evacuation.
  - Completion of fire risk assessments at all Satellite Sites, along with a review of the Frenchay Campus that has provided the University with a comprehensive position with regards overall compliance with its Fire Safety Standard – *Fire Alarm System (FSS 10)*. A position that has provided Facilities (Estates) with the information to prepare a project bid (FIN 10) to complete the work and thus ensure 100% compliance.

Finally the University's internal Auditors, KPMG in December 2011 undertook a second status update. Given the significant progress that had been made and many of the recommendations implemented, the audit score improved from *partial* to *substantial assurance*.

## Section 5

### Drivers and Risks

#### Drivers

- *The wellbeing of the University's staff, students and visitors.*
- *The provision and perpetuation of a safe place to work and to study.*
- *The prerequisite that health and safety is included within the overall UWE Bristol Strategy towards 2020 – 'advancing knowledge, inspiring people, transforming futures'.*
- *The on-going compliance with legislative and sector requirements.*
- *The recognition as one of the Sector leaders in health and safety performance.*
- *The engagement with students at the early stage of their career pathways to ensure an embedded understanding of health and safety.*
- *The increase in construction-based activity as a result of the MasterPlanning process.*
- *To ensure the continued benchmarking of accident and fire data with the Sector and to strive to be continually in the lower percentile for incidence rates.*

#### Risks

- *That the implementation of organisational structures do not ensure and sustain the devolvement of health and safety.*
- *Given the recent review by central Government and the instigation of actions from the Lofstedt report the need for rapid implementation of legislative changes that may significantly change University Health and Safety Standards.*
- *That there is a lack of ownership and commitment from managers and staff.*
- *That the University implements processes that do not ensure the engagement of both staff and students.*
- *That we experience increased financial and associated funding pressures.*
- *A more disparate appreciation and awareness of health and safety risk in light of an increase in the number of international students.*

## Section 6

### Safe Places, People and Practice - the Strategic Priorities

#### Introduction

The Safe Places, People and Practice Strategy has four priorities, each with associated aims:-

1. **Leadership, Commitment and Competence**
2. **Good Management Practice**
3. **Monitoring and Measuring Performance**
4. **Staff and Student Engagement**

The embedding and subsequent implementation of these aims will ensure that health and safety is sustained as an integral part of the management of the University, and its work towards its 2020 ambition.

#### Fundamentals

Classically health and safety management has tended to focus upon the 'safety' aspects i.e. mechanical, electrical, fire etc, a focus largely due to such risks being more tangible and hence easier to assess and manage. 'Health' aspects on the other hand e.g. exposure to substances, biological agents, stress etc. have often been perceived to be more complex and so have not always been so well evaluated and controlled.

Fundamental to this Strategy and its associated priorities is the University's commitment to ensure the equal focus on health aspects. Indeed this Strategy is aligned with the aspirations and activities of other related UWE Bristol health and well-being strategies for both staff and students e.g. the *Healthy University Strategy* and the *Human Resources and Organisational Development Strategy*. This alignment will ensure appropriate direction and coordination, with clear responsibilities for health-related actions.

Finally, it is the 2020 aspiration that UWE Bristol gain accreditation to an externally recognised health and safety standard, e.g. OHSAS 18001. However the University is resolute that pursuit of such accreditation will not avert it from its underlying principle of being a safe and healthy environment that engages all.

#### Resources

The introduction of the University's *Revitalised Health and Safety Approach* in 2010-2011 has seen a considerable amount of work by Faculties and Professional Services to enshrine health and safety through line management structures. Furthermore there has also been an increase in resource in the University's central Health and Safety Team to support this embedding.

With this now well established foundation of health and safety management at UWE Bristol it is not anticipated that the implementation of this Strategy will require extensive investment in resource. Indeed this Strategy is seen to be the natural progression for health and safety at UWE Bristol. The strategic priorities and associated action plans seek to ensure that this progress is managed and paced accordingly.

## **1. LEADERSHIP, COMMITMENT AND COMPETENCE**

### **Introduction**

***A UNIVERSITY THAT EXPECTS AND EXEMPLIFIES STRONG LEADERSHIP AND COMPETENCE IN HEALTH AND SAFETY.***

### **Aims**

- To maintain the health and safety competencies of staff through the provision of training and development appropriate to all roles and levels of responsibility.
- To ensure that all managers promote a climate in which a positive health and safety culture is continually encouraged, enhanced and sustained.
- To ensure the suitable and sufficient devolvement of responsibility within all Faculties and Professional Services so as to enable local implementation of health and safety arrangements.

## **2. GOOD MANAGEMENT PRACTICE**

### **Introduction**

***A UNIVERSITY THAT REQUIRES GOOD HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT PRACTICE IN ALL ASPECTS OF ITS ACTIVITIES SO AS TO ENABLE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SENSIBLE APPROACHES IN HEALTH AND SAFETY.***

### **Aims**

- To provide and implement policies in the fields of health and safety that promotes a safe, healthy and positive teaching, research and working environment.
- To ensure that standards of health and safety best practice are continually developed, implemented, shared and maintained.
- To ensure that health and safety is always an integral part of the planning and review processes at University and also at Faculty / Professional Service level.
- To embed construction safety in the overall management of health and safety at the University, with the underlying commitment that all who visit UWE Bristol will know what is expected of them
- To ensure the implementation of the University's Fire Safety Management System and associated Fire Safety Standards

### **3. MONITORING AND MEASURING PERFORMANCE**

#### **Introduction**

***A UNIVERSITY THAT PLANS FOR CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT IN HEALTH AND SAFETY AND REGULARLY REVIEWS ITS HEALTH AND SAFETY PERFORMANCE.***

#### **Aims**

- To ensure the evaluation of health and safety performance across all the University's Faculties and Professional Services through the implementation of a programme of audit.
- To identify University-wide accident and incident trends to further inform the University's risk profile.
- To ensure the on-going embedding of health and safety awareness through the evaluation of staff knowledge and understanding at University health and safety training and development sessions.

### **4. STAFF AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT**

#### **Introduction**

***A UNIVERSITY THAT ENCOURAGES AND ENSURES HEALTH AND SAFETY BEHAVIOURS AND VALUES IN ITS STAFF AND STUDENTS.***

#### **Aims**

- To implement processes that seeks to appraise staff and student opinion on health and safety so as to sustain the University's ambition to be and feel a safe and healthy environment.
- To embed the basic understanding of risk as a life skill in the curriculum so students have an appreciation of risk and are more risk aware.
- To identify and implement opportunities to raise students' awareness of health and safety through safety initiatives and campaigns.

## Section 7

### Quality Assurance

The Strategy will be reviewed annually by the University's Health and Safety Team in conjunction with the University's Health and Safety Committee. Progress on the Strategy, its associated action plans and KPIs will be reported upon in the Health and Safety Annual Report.

There will also be a more formal review of the Strategy and its implementation in 2016-2017.

## Section 8

### Health and Safety Action Plan – 2013 – 2020

To implement the strategic priorities there will be associated action plans and KPIs developed at organisational level. It is the intention that these action plans and KPIs will be set out over three distinct periods, each with a particular focus, as detailed below:

Action Plan Period	Academic Year(s)	Focus
Period one (one year cycle)	2013 - 2014	<p><i>'Embedding and Targeting risk'</i></p> <p>This will include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of current three-year audit cycle – to include the evaluation of staff and student understanding and attitudes to health and safety.</li> <li>• Introduction of on-line health and safety training. Training that is appropriately targeted and delivered, ensuring full utilisation of IT technologies and processes.</li> <li>• Review of current Health and Safety Standards and associated Guidance.</li> <li>• Implementation and monitoring of Construction Safety objectives.</li> <li>• Investigative work to evaluate external health and safety accredited standards and their implementation.</li> <li>• Health and Safety Theme for year</li> </ul>
Period two (three year cycle)	2014 - 2017	<p><i>'Intrinsic Engagement of All'</i></p> <p>This will include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commencement of new 'internal Health and Safety Team (HST) lead' audit programme – an audit that starts to include external accredited standard principles.</li> <li>• Further development of processes that engage staff and students.</li> <li>• Health and Safety Standards to be continually reviewed and updated to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Include 'best practice' requirements for Faculties and Services to aspire to and so achieve exemplar performance and</li> <li>- Be fit for purpose in terms of external accredited standard requirements.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Period two (three year cycle)	2017 - 2020	<p><i>'Foundations for the attainment of a recognised Health and Safety standard'</i></p> <p>This will include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A programme for delivering and attaining OHSAS would be developed and implemented.</li> </ul>

It is also the aim that for each academic year the University, through its Health and Safety Committee will identify a health and safety theme / risk topic so as to further augment this Strategy but more importantly to ensure the continual embedding of health and safety at UWE Bristol.

The specific details and overall timescales for actions in each of these periods are to be further developed as the Strategy progresses and moves towards 2020. Clearly the action plans are recognised to be dynamic and so will need to be constantly reviewed and updated.

For the first of these periods 'period one – 2013 – 2014' the Action Plan and associated KPIs can be found on the [Health and Safety web pages](#).