HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE

DATE:	May 2021
TITLE OF REPORT:	Health and Safety Update
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PURPOSE:	To provide the Committee with a summary of health and safety activity to date.
KEY RECOMMENDATIONS/ DECISIONS:	The Board is asked to note the update including Covid 19 response: changes to Scottish Government guidance, risk mitigations including building modifications; the introduction of lateral flow testing.
RISK	• That there is a significant COVID outbreak at the college as more staff and students return to campus.
RELEVANT STRATEGIC AIMS:	• Sustainable Behaviours • Highest-Quality Education and Support
SUMMARY OF REPORT:	Committee to note: • The College is now able to operate at Covid level 3 (as per SG guidance), but due to careful transition planning, daily student numbers are approximately only 11% of our total cohort. We can increase to 29% and will do this in a managed way. • Much work has been undertaken to modify the campus to create a COVID-secure environment, such as creating larger, partitioned rooms, introducing more touch free door openers and reinforcing existing precautions. • Regular communication has been sent to staff (and students) preparing them for a return to campus as well as additional welcome talks from the Principalship. • Free lateral flow testing is being launched week commencing 10 May, and all staff and students will be encouraged to undertake twice weekly testing. • No accidents have been reported and only one first aid incident. • The College's HSE stress risk assessment survey was launched at the end of April to further gauge how best to support staff.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This paper provides an overview of health and safety activity since the last committee meeting, as outlined in the minutes of the most recent Corporate Health and Safety Committee, as well as an update on our approach to continuing to ensure that our campus remains COVID secure.

2. SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE

2.1 The Scottish Government has confirmed that all colleges were limited to 5% of their total student body on campus from 18 March to 5 April. From 5-26 April, colleges have been permitted to return approximately 29% of students to campus, with a clear focus on priority students. We are now able to work at level 3 restrictions, which should mean being able to have approximately 33% of students on campus. It should be noted that this is still only about 1,650 students on campus daily out of a possible approximate 5,000.

2.2 It should be noted that the college has had a carefully staged and managed return to campus and has been mindful of both staff and students' well-being at all stages of this transition. We did not reach the daily target of 29% as we were gradually building up to this, currently we have approximately 11% of our overall cohort on campus daily, which amounts to approximately half of our students weekly. Sector wide scenario planning is under way for the new academic year, and we are proposing to recommend to the Scottish Government a shift to 1m social distancing, which would allow us to significantly increase our on campus capacity and reduce our deferred student numbers. This may be differentially applied locally to accommodate different class layouts and teaching requirements. Our local scenario planning will take account of 0, 1 and 2m social distancing.

3 BUILDING MODIFICATIONS AND COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS

3.1 There are currently two programmes of internal work (primarily funded by the Scottish Funding Council) that are in train at the moment, one focussing on maintenance and repairs and the other on COVID-related work which includes the conversion of smaller classrooms into larger, more flexible teaching spaces with sliding partitions and reinforcing floors within the construction area to create more practical spaces. In addition, the entrance door will be changed to an automatic sliding one and other hands-free door openers are being introduced.

3.2 As more staff and students have returned to campus we have reinforced our existing COVID precautions which include: adding more physical barriers such as perspex screens in both office and classroom spaces; rooms re-purposed to ensure appropriate social distancing and make the best use of space; increased signage; non-touch door release buttons; automatic sliding doors; and daily enhanced cleaning and fogging of all areas being used. The health and safety team has also ensured that the risk assessments for staff and classrooms have been updated, as well as room capacity signage. The high level COVID risk assessment has also been updated.

3.3 The college was also mindful of how staff, who had not been on campus for some time, would feel about returning, and regular communications such as videos (see link below) were sent out to show what they could expect and to highlight all the mitigations that had been put in place. The Principalship also held some welcome back meetings with teams, which was a great way for staff to ask any questions or feedback on anything that they might wish to know more about. Many staff were excited to be back on campus and to be with their colleagues, though we recognise some instances of anxiety which is being supported. Note, all staff including, curriculum and business support, are in

college on a rota basis due to social distancing and are not expected to be in five days a week, this also allows staff to slowly get used to working on campus and feeling secure.

4   TESTING

4.1 The college, like the rest of the sector, is starting to roll out free lateral flow Covid testing twice a week to all staff and students. This will be available to all staff and students from Tuesday 11 May and communication with details on how this will work, including "How To Guides" and consent forms is being circulated in a separate email from HR on Monday 10 May.

4.2 Whilst testing is voluntary, we are strongly encouraging all staff and students to participate wherever possible, in order to contribute to the wider wellbeing of our college community. This is just one of many measures in place to keep all staff safe on campus, we have also reminded staff that it is still important to follow FACTS and continue to observe our **Health and Safety guidelines**, even if they test negative. We are very aware that we cannot allow for any complacency in the organisation.

5   ACCIDENTS AND FIRST AID

5.1 Due to there being limited students on campus, there have not been any accidents in the period from January to March 2021. The only first aid incident was a member of staff feeling discomfort after their COVID vaccination.

6   FIRE TESTING

6.1 The fire alarm is tested weekly. There has been one unplanned fire alarm activation, and upon investigation was caused by "dust" from a construction staff member's clothing whilst changing. All staff vacated the building within four minutes of the alarm activating, and incident was attended by the fire brigade within five minutes of activation.

7   HSE STRESS RISK ASSESSMENT

7.1 The College launched its Organisational Stress Risk Assessment at the end of April to see what further support is needed to support staff at the college. The impact of lockdown has had a significant impact on staff, and this will enable the college to provide targeted support. Further details can be found in the HR report.

ANNEX A HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES

HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING

19th February 2021 11.00am

Attendees

Present: Stella McManus, Katrina Moses, Craig Ferguson, Mandy Murray, David Auchie, Joanne Warwick, Derek Brown, Gary McIntosh, Yvonne Mitchell

1. **Apologies**
   Aileen McKechnie

2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

   Minutes approved.

3. **Accident Reports**

   There have been no accidents reported this month to date.

4. **Update on general Covid-19 arrangements**

   SMcM updated on the following progress:

   - Additional Signage has been implemented throughout the Campus to increase awareness and reinforcement of the importance and requirement for ventilation in shared spaces and physical distancing measures to mitigate risk.
   - Introduction of fogging on demand for faculties, to request this it must be through the Facilities Helpdesk in advance. CF noted rise in footfall will have impact on provision and equipment.
   - Campus attendance rota in place and collated by HR for visibility, Facilities department advised regarding space utilisation and cleaning provision management.
   - SMcM awaiting further guidance from Scottish Government for scenario planning for student return, restrictions remain in place, SLC awaiting proposal approval for on campus teaching.
   - SMcM reminded the group of the capital spend available for COVID-19 alterations and space planning. CF to review and propose recommendations to SMcM (CF to action)
   - JW ventilation in Nail Technician at nail bar teaching spaces. Confirm installation timeline (YM to action)

5. Facilities Management– Update on Arrangements in Building

- Maximum room occupancy signage updated throughout campus.
- Phased COVID-19 signage refresh throughout the campus.
- Building alterations works in tendering phase to reconfigure teaching spaces to maximise capacity and make teaching spaces more flexible.
- CF to progress Fire Wardens being buddied up to muster points to support physical distancing and that a set of clear instructions and duties be issued (CF to Action)
- Touch-Free access installation on door systems where possible including automated sliding doors on main entrance. Automated corridor door costs presented to finance awaiting decision.
- Helpdesk needs investment and development to provide an end to end reporting and repair tool ideally as part of a CAFM system.
- *CF* obtained quotes and reviewed requirement for CO2 monitor no requirement for additional monitors at present.

6. South Lanarkshire College Risk Assessment update

- High Level Risk Assessments review completed, and room risk assessments have been updated and updated Campus wide. SMcM recognised the work which had been completed to make the high-level risk assessments available campus wide. and noted further work required to publish the RA's on SLC portal. Action: CF
- DB confirmed there has been no further updates on the SG website in terms of guidance.
- GM enquired to Home Working DSE requests, KM advised these are reviewed individually and supported in line with legislative requirements and SLC protocol. SMcM noted any staff members wishing to work from campus will be supported.

7. Stress Risk Assessment Working Group

- GM gave an overview off the working group purpose and the HSE requirement for Stress Risk Assessments to be conducted in the workplace. Vendor has been identified to conduct the survey. Demo session will be arranged. GM confirmed all data collected through the survey will be anonymous and the Vendor will be able to facilitate any additional engagement for support required whilst maintaining confidentiality.
- DB asked if the data will be shared GM confirmed relevant data will be identified and the anticipation is findings shared to encourage open feedback to allow strategies to be deployed to tackle workplace issues and promote Staff wellbeing. DB felt this was encouraging and positive way forward.

8. AOCB

SMcM thanked the Committee Members for their continued support and contributions.

Date and time of next meeting: May 2021