BBSRC Health and Safety Policy

"Striving for excellence in Health and Safety management"

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Health and Safety policy statement

BBSRC is fully committed to providing and maintaining a healthy and safe working environment for employees, students, visitors, contractors or any other person who is affected by our activities. BBSRC regards the management of Health and Safety as an integral part of our objectives and a management priority. We require the same commitment from our partners and contractors.

We know that by applying current best practice in Health and Safety management we will reduce potential harm and risk. We regard compliance with current Health and Safety legislation as the absolute minimum standard acceptable.

The BBSRC’s Health and Safety policy and management system is based on continuous improvement of processes.

This policy has been agreed with the BBSRC Health and Safety Advisors and the Trade Union Side and complies with statutory best practice.

The UK Shared Business Services (SBS) provides HR Services across the Research Councils. However some employees are deployed at establishments that do not access services from the SBS. In these cases, references to the SBS or system (Employee Self Service) will not apply and employees should refer to their local HR team for assistance.
1. **Plan: Health and safety principles**

BBSRC and its strategically funded institutes will:

- Promote a safe and healthy environment for staff and visitors to foster a positive health and safety climate
- Provide visible safety leadership and engage with colleagues to instil safe behaviours and create a strong safety culture
- Ensure that its Health and Safety policies and procedures comply with and reflect the legal framework and best practice
- Provide and maintain safe facilities, plant, equipment, systems and working conditions
- Consult with and involve our staff in matters relating to their health, safety and their wellbeing
- Ensure health and safety performance is regularly monitored, reviewed and reported
- Act on what we learn to continually improve our health and safety performance.

2. **Plan: Organisation and responsibility**

2.1 The BBSRC Council, Chief Executive and governing bodies

BBSRC Council is ultimately accountable for the health, safety and welfare of all BBSRC employees and for the health and safety of others who may be directly affected by BBSRC’s activities.

This responsibility is exercised on its behalf by the Chief Executive and is shared with the trustee bodies of individual establishments.

2.2 Establishment Directors

Directors have responsibility to ensure that adequate Health and Safety management is in place at their site for all staff, students and visitors. They are accountable to the Chair of their trustee governing body and for BBSRC deployed staff to the BBSRC Chief Executive.

Directors cannot delegate or devolve this accountability, but in order to discharge their responsibilities effectively, they may delegate duties and authority to senior members of their management team.

The responsibilities of directors include:
• Fostering positive attitudes towards Health and Safety throughout their establishment by leadership and personal example

• Considering the Health and Safety implications to employees and non-employees of decisions made at either a strategic or operational level and acting accordingly

• Ensuring that the management team know, understand, and is held accountable for, their individual Health and Safety responsibilities

• Ensuring that the management team is provided with the appropriate resources in order to fulfil its Health and Safety responsibilities including the provision of information, instruction and training

• Making arrangements to ensure that Health and Safety risk assessments are carried out for all work activities and processes within their establishment, and ensuring that measures identified are implemented, their effectiveness monitored and reviewed at a timely interval

• Establishing and maintaining mechanisms to allow the effective communication and consultation of Health and Safety issues

• Making the necessary arrangements to ensure that Staff Safety representatives can effectively carry out their duties.

2.3 Director of People and Development Group, BBSRC Office

The Director of People and Development is responsible for the functional aspects of Health and Safety for BBSRC staff. Responsibilities include:

• Reporting to the Chief Executive on any matters which require a change in corporate policies because of Health and Safety issues

• Developing the Health and Safety management strategy

• Communicating with senior management and advising on actions needed to improve performance

• Reporting on progress in meeting Health & Safety performance

• Ensuring that the necessary resources for Health and Safety are available corporately

• Arranging for the necessary information, instruction and training to be made available to BBSRC employees to fulfil their roles

• Ensuring that appropriate arrangements are put into effect to consult with BBSRC employees and to encourage their active participation on matters concerned with their Health and Safety at work

• Arranging for the provision of up-to-date information to employees on Health and Safety matters
- Ensuring that statutory records on Health and Safety, including injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences, are maintained
- Monitoring the Health and Safety performance of all BBSRC establishments through the collection of annual accident statistics and regular audits.

2.4 Line managers

The principal duties of Line Managers include:

- Leading by example on good Health and Safety practice
- Producing safe systems of work and procedures
- Applying standards contained in statutory legislation, approved codes of practice and the Health and Safety Policy
- Ensuring that their employees are adequately trained to carry out their work in a safe manner
- Providing adequate supervision of work and maintaining safe standards
- Consulting with employees to improve Health and Safety performance
- Contributing as necessary to accident and incident investigations to establish the root causes and introduce measures to prevent recurrence
- Having Health and Safety objectives in their forward job plans (as appropriate) and to be accountable for Health and Safety issues under their control
- Receiving training on Health and Safety as required by their establishment
- Providing and checking the use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Ensuring any changes in roles are reported to HR. Updating any risk assessments and identifying any possible health surveillance (depending on the role)
- Ensuring risk assessments are completed wherever there are significant hazards and that actions to control the risks are implemented
- Taking part in and facilitating internal and external inspections and audits of the work area and implementing any remedial actions.

2.5 All BBSRC employees

All BBSRC employees are responsible for their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions. Responsibilities and duties include:
• Working safely and considering others
• Cooperating and supporting BBSRC and local policies and procedures on Health and Safety
• Using equipment provided in a safe and responsible way
• Reporting incidents that have led, or may lead, to injury or damage
• Undertaking relevant Health and Safety training
• Maintaining good housekeeping
• Helping to investigate accidents with the aim of introducing measures to avoid a recurrence
• Consulting with management continuously to improve health and safety standards and performance.

2.6 Local Health and Safety advisors

Directors must appoint competent employees at each establishment to advise management on Health and Safety, including specialists where required e.g. biological safety, radiation protection. H&S advisors will have substantial knowledge and experience in Health and Safety matters and hold appropriate qualifications. These are advisory positions with duties agreed, in writing, between the individual and the Director. The responsibilities of a local Health and Safety advisor include:

• Informing and advising senior management about Health and Safety issues
• Preparing local policies, codes of practice and guidance on Health and Safety matters for approval and adoption within their establishment
• Monitoring the application of local policies, codes of practice and guidance notes, updating such policies, codes and guidance as and when appropriate
• Providing support and advice to management and employees on Health and Safety, in particular assisting managers in their duties to carry out risk assessments and manage Health and Safety within their area of responsibility
• Keeping up-to-date on all new UK and EC legislation relating to Health and Safety matters
• Attending meetings of the Joint Health and Safety committee and providing support to both BBSRC office management and employee Health and Safety representatives
• Establishing arrangements for local Joint Health and Safety committee
• Assisting managers in the investigation of accidents and incidents with a view to identifying measures to prevent recurrence and liaise with the enforcing agencies on Health and Safety where necessary

• In consultation with the Training Coordinator, assisting in the identification of training needs and provision of safety training

• Developing and facilitating information flows relating to Health and Safety through the production of briefing notes, bulletins, training and the Health and Safety web page

• Monitoring the effectiveness of arrangements for any external specialist Health and Safety support used by the establishment

• Maintaining data on work related accidents or ill health arising within your establishment and ensuring that statutory duties to report under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR) are carried out

• Assisting in any Health and Safety audits.

2.7 Trade Unions Health and Safety representatives

The Trade Union safety representatives have a key role in creating a positive Health and Safety culture. Responsibilities include:

• Representing employees in discussions on Health and Safety

• Providing Health and Safety information to employees

• Considering and make recommendations for improvements

• Investigating hazards and dangerous occurrences

• Carrying out joint inspections.

3. Do: Risk Profiling

All establishments will produce a Risk Register identifying, analysing and managing risks and Hazards (including Health and Safety) which employees may encounter. Each risk is given a ranking with the highest priority risks clearly identified. Each establishment will consider ways in which each risk can be reduced and this is reviewed on a regular basis. From this document each establishment will be able to develop a contingency plan, which will provide them with the ability to speedily, smoothly and cost effectively respond to significant changes in the environment.

4. Do: Organise your activities to deliver your plans
BBSRC and its strategically funded institutes will provide effective communication and consulting channels in respect of Health and Safety, to promote a collaborative approach.

4.1 Health and Safety committees

Health and Safety advisors and TUS representatives meet regularly to discuss Health and Safety issues. The committee provides a formal annual report to the JNCC. Employees and management discuss and resolve local Health and Safety issues at an establishment forum.

4.2 Local safety and healthy working policies

Each site will make detailed local arrangements, including procedures, policies, handbooks and/or guidance to ensure that this Health and Safety Policy is fully achieved. Copies of these will be made available to you via your Health and Safety advisor.

4.3 Training and information

All employees, students, temporary workers, consultants or agency workers who work on BBSRC premises, will be provided with Health and Safety induction information within a week of starting work. Training, information and instruction to deal with specific risks in the course of the role e.g. lone working, travelling safely and manual handling will be provided. Training needs unique to particular establishments or groups will be identified by the line manager, in conjunction with the Health and Safety Advisor, through the risk assessment process. In addition to this, line managers will receive training in managing Health and Safety and the principles of risk assessment.

Regular refresher training will be provided by each establishment to ensure that all employees are able to carry out their duties safely. Establishments will keep a record of all Health and Safety training and monitor progress. BBSRC/establishments will also provide information about any changes to general Health and Safety rules, policies and practices. Employees with particular Health and Safety responsibilities, such as nominated First Aiders, will receive further regular training.

4.4 Advice and assistance

Information on Health and Safety is available on local notice boards, websites and in local policies. Line Managers are the first point of contact to provide assistance or address concerns regarding Health and Safety matters. Local Health and Safety Advisers are also available to advise on any issues.

5. Do: Implement your Plan

Planning and implementing these plans are key to ensuring that our Health and Safety procedures really work in practice.

5.1 Health and Safety strategy

Each establishment will produce a Health and Safety strategy identifying priorities and setting key objectives. This should be reviewed on a regular basis.
5.2 Fire/Emergency evacuation procedure

All establishments have arrangements in place to ensure safe evacuation in the event of an emergency. A copy of the local procedures will be available on Health and Safety notice boards, websites, induction packs and from the local Health and Safety advisor. Regular training and emergency evacuation drills will be provided.

Trained fire marshals are appointed at each site to ensure safety.

5.3 Risk assessment

Risk assessments will be undertaken by the relevant line manager and be reviewed by the Health and Safety advisor, to identify any hazards and to determine any precautions that need to be taken to safeguard employees at work. A copy of these assessments will be provided to the relevant employee.

5.4 First aid provision

There are fully trained First Aiders at all establishments. The First Aiders’ names and telephone numbers are available on the Health and Safety notice boards, websites, induction packs and other prominent places at each site.

5.5 Occupational health provision

Each establishment will make suitable occupational health arrangements to deal with any health risks faced by employees. Details of the arrangements are available from the local Health and Safety advisor, and are posted on the website, notice boards and are contained within the induction pack. Employees and Line Managers should ensure that any appropriate health surveillance is completed (as appropriate) for any major changes to an individual’s role.

5.6 Planning for contractors

When selecting contractors a method statement or a summary risk assessment must be included as part of the tender process. Contractors must be given clear instructions and information on Health and Safety issues.

5.7 Smoking

Smoking is prohibited within BBSRC premises, except in certain designated outside areas. Local procedures, which provide more information, exist at each site and should be followed.

5.8 Security

The security of employees and BBSRC premises is a high priority. Access to premises will be under the supervision of each establishment. You must cooperate with any local policies and procedures.

5.9 Manual handling

BBSRC will take all reasonable steps to reduce Health and Safety risks to employees from manual handling. We try to ensure that manual handling tasks that involve injury risks are
avoided where reasonably practicable. Where it is not reasonably practicable to avoid these tasks, a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks will be undertaken and identified risks will be reduced to as low as is reasonably practicable. Employees will also be provided with adequate information, instruction, training and supervision regarding manual handling best practice. Employees should ensure proper use of any equipment and systems of work provided for their safety.

5.10 Shared accommodation

For employees who work in accommodation managed by others or share accommodation with other employers, we will:

- Cooperate with the other employers or landlord to help them to meet their Health and Safety obligations
- Take action to coordinate our procedures with those of the other employers or landlord
- Inform other employers of any risks to their employees' Health and Safety arising from the work carried out by our employees
- Ensure that our employees are kept aware of any risks arising from the work carried out by other employers
- Ensure that, wherever appropriate, our risk assessments cover the workplace as a whole and not just the area occupied by our employees.

For BBSRC employees who work in premises shared with another employer where that employer's Health and Safety rules are adopted, we will ensure the Health and Safety of our employees is adequately safeguarded.

5.11 Workplace hazards

A number of workplace hazards have been identified as requiring separate procedures to help us to comply with good practice. These include, COSHH, working with biological agents, radiation protection, stress management, lone working, etc.

5.12 Non-compliance

Any infringement of Health and Safety rules may result in appropriate disciplinary/punitive

6. Check: Measuring and reviewing Health and Safety

It is essential to maintain and improve Health and Safety performance. We need to know where we are, where we want to be and identify the differences and why. We will measure our performance by having both active monitoring (checking before things go wrong) and reactive monitoring (checking when things went wrong and why).
This can be achieved by the following:

6.1 Inspections

Each site carries out routine programmed Health and Safety inspections. They provide a useful check before things go wrong. Among other things inspections consider:

- The working environment (including access and egress routes)
- Plant, equipment and materials
- Who uses the area
- Working methods (including training and housekeeping)
- Maintenance and cleaning standards (and records).

6.2 Accident reporting and investigation

Definitions (source: Health and Safety Executive)

- An occupational disease is an illness or disease caused or aggravated by exposures arising out of or in the course of work
- An accident is any unplanned event that results in injury or ill-health to an individual
- A near miss is an event which could have caused personal injury or damage to equipment or property.

Anyone who is involved in an accident or near-miss incident whilst on BBSRC owned premises or travelling on our behalf must report the matter immediately. They should also notify their own employer where applicable.

The local Health and Safety advisor will review all accidents, near misses and occupational diseases and serious issues will be investigated. This is to find the root causes and introduce management action to prevent the incident recurring. The Health and Safety Advisers will analyse this data on an annual basis to see if there are any trends and consider what further action they could take.

The local Health and Safety Committee should meet regularly to discuss and review the findings of all incidents, along with the potential risk if a similar incident were to occur. All serious accidents and/or those with high risk potential should be reported to senior management.

6.3 RIDDOR Incidents

All organisations in the UK have a duty to report certain accidents and cases of ill health to the Health and Safety Executive under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR). If they involve a BBSRC employee, the local Health and Safety Advisor will send a copy of the form to the Health, Safety, Biosafety and Security team at BBSRC Office.
If a BBSRC employee is injured or contracts a disease during the course of their work, they may qualify for injury benefits under the Research Councils' Pension Scheme. For more information contact the Health, Safety, Biosafety and Security team at BBSRC Office.

7. Act: Reviewing Performance and learning lessons

Health and Safety Management Audits are used to check that BBSRC policy, organisation and systems are effective and relevant. We will use audits and reviews to improve our ability to manage risk, especially by:

- Checking levels of compliance with our Health and Safety performance indicators against legislation and good practice
- Identifying areas of good practice and where performance can be improved.

Health and Safety audits are arranged by the BBSRC Office Health, Safety, Biosafety and Security team. Reports on these audits are sent to the establishment Director and to the Chair of the respective governing body (where appropriate). These reports will be discussed at Joint Health and Safety advisors meetings. Each establishment should use these audits as management tools to find opportunities for improvement and to develop action plans.

Organisational learning is a key aspect of health and safety management. Leaders and managers need to be aware of the people-related, cultural and organisational issues that may help or hinder lessons from being learned effectively in their organisations.

8. Policy review

The implementation of this policy will be monitored through the Joint Health and Safety Committee.

9. Amendment history

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