

Committee	Audit and Risk Management		
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Author	Jim Hutton – H&S Officer		
Action requested	For discussion		
Purpose of the paper	To report on developments and key issues across 2024.25 related to Health and Safety.		
Summary of the paper	This End of Year Health & Safety report provides an overview of key developments in the performance of the College in 2024-25 in relation to both Fire Safety and Health and Safety.		
Consultation	Senior Management Team (SMT), Managers and relevant team members		
Resource implications	Implications are outlined within the report.		
Risk implications	Discussed within paper		
Link with strategy	This report has a direct link to the College's Health and Safety strategy alongside relevant legislation.		
<u>Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion</u>	This document covers high level health and safety information and is not directly impactful for individual groups.		
Island Community Impact	Not required in this instance.		
Paper status	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open – The paper may be circulated to non-members of the committee and published online without restriction. <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted – The paper must not be circulated to non-members or published online until after the committee meeting. <input type="checkbox"/> Confidential - The paper must not be circulated beyond the committee members and should not be published online. Some information is considered commercially sensitive. [Please note papers may still be subject to Freedom of Information requests – see below].		
<u>Freedom of information</u>	Open		

Health and Safety End of Year Report 2024_2025

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Introduction

This End of Year Health & Safety report provides an overview of key developments in the performance of the College in 2024-25 in relation to both Fire Safety and Health and Safety.

With regards to Fire Safety, the report provides an update on the progress made in ensuring that all of our campuses have a recent Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) and how the College plans to manage the recommended actions highlighted in those assessments. The report also highlights some important issues with regards to Fire Safety that the College should prioritise in 2025-26.

With regards to Health and Safety, the report will summarise key metrics across the period and highlight some important changes or developments in this area.

Fire Safety

Overview

The College has made good progress on fire safety compliance in 2024-25, with improvements made in areas including FRA coverage, fire warden duties amongst key staff and contracting fire safety consultant services.

In 2025-26, priority matters will be ensuring that all campuses have adequate fire warden coverage, that staff are trained both in fire awareness and in any duties that they hold and ensuring fire evacuations are consistently and regularly drilled across our campuses.

Developments in 2024-25

In 2024-25 the College continued to procure fire safety consultant services and in May 2025 established a compliantly procured contract for the provision of Fire Safety Consultancy services to the College covering all sites.

Upon review of our Hybrid Emergency Fire Action plans and Fire Grab Bag process, the new Fire Safety Consultant has noted that these plans and processes are suitable and fit-for-purpose. The Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) process has also undergone revision and will be going live in Aug 2025.

Throughout the year, the College continued to undertake Fire Risk Assessments across our campuses, prioritising those campuses that held no or old FRAs requiring renewal. All campuses have now been assessed by a qualified fire safety consultant with a number of improvements and actions identified to be completed.

In fire warden provision, the responsibility to undertake fire warden duties is now included in all Engagement staff job descriptions alongside those of Facilities staff, who already held these duties. A fire awareness training course along with a fire warden training course have also been identified to ensure that all staff holding these duties are offered suitable training and support.

Priority Areas for 2025-26

The following areas have been identified as Fire Safety matters requiring further work in 2025-26

- **Onboarding Fire Safety Consultant** – the new Fire Safety Consultant will require to familiarise themselves with our sites and processes in order to provide us with useful and informed consultancy services. It's anticipated that this will include visiting several sites, meeting with key staff and reviewing existing FRAs or process documents. Additional spend requirements are anticipated in this area, particularly in year 01 of the new contract.
- **Management of FRA Actions** - an appropriate means for recording, tracking and managing FRA actions across all sites is required to provide confidence that high priority actions are completed in a timely manner and fire risk is appropriately managed.
- **Training** – Fire awareness training and fire warden training to be rolled out to all staff and to key staff who hold particular duties.

- **Fire Drilling** – there is a requirement to improve the frequency of fire drills (including the use of observed drills) to ensure that our Hybrid Fire Action Plans are fully functional

Health and Safety

Overview

Lagging indicators of increased injuries, poor internal safety audit results and scores below the lower 25th percentile of our peer group in the HSE work related stress survey support the direction we are taking with our refreshed focus on a safety strategy to improve the management of safety and health.

The College has continued to focus on establishing the strong foundations for good safety management, making improvements in emergency measures, first aid provision, improving our understanding of work-related stress, undertaking risk assessments and reporting & investigating of incidents.

Building upon these foundations will require further work in increasing competencies with implementation of IOSH training to key groups of staff, understanding changes to legislation and improving our performance on work related stress.

At a strategic level, the College has made the decision to become a member of the University Health and Safety Association (USHA).

Management & Policy Update

In 2024-25 UHI NWH implemented a process of identifying Senior Responsible Officers (SRO) for each site and making this information available at front desks / reception areas for use in case of emergencies. This process requires to be reviewed ensuring that all persons know who to contact in cases of emergency and all SRO contacts have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The SRO will be an essential function of the College as it develops incident response plans (see Martyn's Law), and so it is essential to ensure that this function is fit for purpose.

UHI NWH has recently decided to join University Health and Safety Association (USHA), an industry recognised management standard used by institutions including various leading universities in the UK. This scheme provides us with a management standard on Leadership and Management of Health and Safety in Higher Education Institutions and also allows us access to the Health and Safety Management Profile (HSMAP) safety audit tool. Implementation of this management standard will improve how UHI NWH manages risk by bringing risk management in line with best practices, placing the responsibility for ownership of risk onto the those who create the risk. Implementing this standard will mean that risk ownership and management is embedded into the working duties of all members of College staff.

Changes to Legislation & Guidance

A new legislation, Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 commonly referred to as Martyn's Law is a new act that will place additional statutory requirements on colleges to develop plans for how they will respond to various major incidents, specifically terrorist threats. Martyn's Law is intended to improve protective security and organisational preparedness across the UK, as it introduces a tiered framework, categorising premises and events based on the number of individuals to be present at any one

time. The larger UHI NWH premises will be in scope and will be captured in the Standard Tier of Martyn's law. Those premises hosting less than 200 people will formally be out-of-scope, however, it is likely that these campuses will be included in implementing new incident management practices.

Various staff members within the Compliance, H&S and Infrastructure teams have started engaging with Police Scotland and Protect UK to better understand the implications of this new legislation. Planning for the introduction of Martyn's Law is in its infancy, but key staff members have attended various Q&A and

information sessions and have started to draft new internal plans which will later form the basis of our incident response plans.

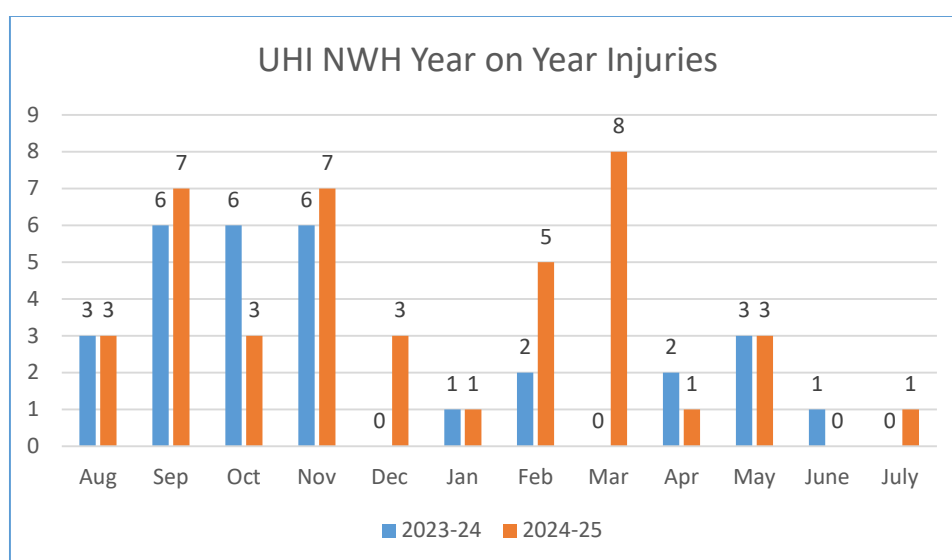
Further work will be required in this area as the legislation comes into force, which is currently anticipated for not earlier than April 2027.

Incident and Injury Occurrence Statistics

The following sections provide an overview and discussion on the reportable incidents and injury occurrences across our sites between August 2024 and July 2025.

A detailed breakdown of all occurrence statistics, including categorisation and severity rating, is provided in the 'Riskex 24 to 25 full year run 4.8.25.xlsm' file available in the reading room.

In terms of reportable injuries, the following graph illustrates the monthly injury rate and compares occurrences in 2024-25 to the previous reporting period.



INJ	NM	UA	UC	MED	RID	DO
42	5	30	37	15	3	1

The total number of reportable injuries in 2024-25 is 42, a 17.1% increase on the 35 reported in 2023-24.

Improvements in overall UHI NWH staff compliance in reporting of injuries may account for an element of this as we have also had an increase in reporting of near misses, unsafe acts and unsafe conditions. A focus on post-merger transition as teams formed and alignment to new ways of working may have resulted in some decline in our safety focus.

In terms of RIDDOR, 5 investigations were started in 2024-25 with 3 investigations deemed to be reportable:

- Major RIDDOR-In August 2024 a construction student tripped over her own feet and fractured their ankle. They stood up and fainted falling backwards onto a concrete floor, The subsequent fall resulted in serious mild fracture to jaw, mild fracture to skull and a bleed to the brain.
- Major RIDDOR-In September 2024 a delivery driver (Non-UHI staff member) fell from the tailgate of their vehicle injuring their chest, back and ribs.
- Major RIDDOR -In January 2025 an NHS employee who works on a UHI premises (Ocean Frontier building) slipped and fell suffering an arm fracture.

- In December 2024 a UHI student fell from their mountain bike during a coached session but not whilst receiving instruction. The student suffered a broken elbow from the fall.
- In May 2025 a member of the public fell after reporting to feel lightheaded whilst walking on a set of stairs. These stairs are not on college premises. The person suffered a fractured shoulder.

Work Related Stress

The College undertook the HSE Workplace Stress and Wellbeing survey in May/June 2025. The survey was available to all staff, and the College received 238 responses, representing 45% of employees.

The full survey results are provided in the '*HSE Workplace Stress and Wellbeing Report*' file available in the reading room.

The survey measures staff perceptions of demand, control, support (both Manager Support and Peer Support), relationships, role and change.

The survey results indicated that in six out of the seven areas the College was performing below the HSE lower 25th percentile benchmark established for this survey.

In terms of mental health, the survey indicates there is a likelihood of harm being caused currently, with 15.6% of staff reporting severe levels of anxiety or depression and 19.9% reporting moderate levels.

40.4% of staff reported harassment and 23.4% reported bullying in the workplace.

Following on from this survey, the College has committed to various further actions including:

- Sharing the full survey results with staff and trade unions.
- Reviewing the 'Dignity at Work'; policy and arrange mandatory training for all managers.
- To form a working group in coalition with staff and trade union representatives to co-design an updated action plan and monitoring arrangements.
- Undertake a follow up survey at approximately the same time of year in 2026 in order to benchmark progress.

First Aid

The requirement to hold first aider duties is now included in all Engagement and Facilities staff job descriptions. Agreeing this change to staff duties establishes a core group of staff, with coverage across UHI NWH, who are able to be called upon to support these functions as required.

First aiders have been identified and trained at all sites. Prior to this period, the salary uplift for staff holding these duties varied across sites. This issue has been resolved with all First Aider trained staff receiving equitable payment in accordance with the agreed terms. Further work is required to ensure that for all sites, adequate First Aider provision is in place, giving due consideration to flexible working arrangements and the move to hybrid working.

Training Update

Leadership and provision of training and instruction on Health and Safety are key to our provision of safe people, safe buildings and safe equipment.

IOSH (Institution of Occupational Safety and Health) offers a multi-tiered training system with different levels of H&S qualification to suit various roles within an organisation. UHI NWH have prioritised implementing training of the executive team and senior management with IOSH Safety of Executives and Directors and IOSH Leading Safely respectively. Further expansion of IOSH Managing Safely and targeted roll out of IOSH Working Safely courses in the future will further enhance our safety culture.

Internal Safety Audit

The Health and Safety internal audit was conducted in April 2025 and concluded that the College had a weak level of assurance for health and safety arrangements.

The Audit provided a number of recommendations with 2 graded as High Priority, 4 graded as Medium Priority and 1 graded as Low Priority.

An action plan was agreed in the Management Response to the internal audit. Work continues to implement these actions in order to drive improved performance in future audits.

The root causes of poor performance need to be further understood and addressed as part of our safety strategy, which will focus on improving the management