Committee	Board		
Date paper prepared	30/04/2026	**Date of committee meeting**	17/06/2026
Subject	H&S Periodic Report (May) 2025-26		
Author	Jim Hutton – H&S Officer		
Action requested	For discussion		
Purpose of the paper	To report on developments and key issues related to Health and Safety.		
Summary of the paper	The report, authored by Jim Hutton (H&S Officer), provides a periodic update on Health & Safety and Fire Safety performance across UHI NWH for the period 1st Feb to 29th April 25, 2026. It covers: • **Fire Safety**: Progress on fire evacuation drills, training, and fire risk assessments. A new tracker for fire actions is being developed. • **Health & Safety**: Updates on policy, training, incident statistics, asbestos management, and work-related stress.		
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.		
Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion	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	☒ **Open – The paper may be circulated to non-members of the committee and published online without restriction.** ☐ **Restricted** – The paper must not be circulated to non-members or published online until after the committee meeting. ☐ **Confidential** - The paper must not be circulated beyond the committee members and should not be published online. Some information is considered commercially sensitive.		
Freedom of information	Open		

H&S Periodic Report (Apr) 2025-26

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Introduction

This Health & Safety Report outlines key developments and strategic actions taken by UHI NWH in the areas of Fire Safety and Health & Safety for the period February to April 25-26 academic year.

Fire Safety

Achievements: Increase in numbers of trained Fire Wardens. Increased numbers of trained staff on their role in our Emergency Fire Action Plan and awareness of UFAS, the fire warden role and their role in assisting the Fire Warden.

Challenges: Changing staff perceptions and behaviour towards ownership from fire warden being the only person responsible for action during an evacuation.

Actions:

- Increasing use of our central FRA tracker to manage, track and drive closure of FRA actions to improve fire compliance across our estate.
- Increase awareness of the FRA tracker as an indicator of remaining fire safety risk by incorporating into safety and board meetings.
- Continuation with scheduled evacuation drills incorporating Plan, Do, Check, Act for continuous improvement.
- Continuation of fire training where a need is identified.
- Completion of the next round of due FRAs.

Health & Safety

Working towards completion of the actions from our external safety audit. Focus on building a safety foundation with IOSH safety training and role specific safety training. Move to HASMAP and USHA standards. Management of COSHH. Preparation for introduction of Martyn's Law.

Achievements:

- COSHH - Some staff from ERI are booked into external COSHH training.
- First Aid Policy in draft form for board approval.
- Accident reporting and Investigation processes: Improved completion of incidents/investigation in Riskex. Incidents monitored to completion and sign off.
- Counter Terrorism (CT) training for staff in lead roles for implementation of Martyn's Law requirements. Walk round by CT Police and CT training for some staff at Stornoway in preparation.

Challenges: Resource. Management of COSHH. Unsuccessful attempts to buy in a COSHH management system. Updating completion of Risk Assessment Actions on Riskex. Completion of IOSH safety training

Actions:

- Retain focus on closing out the actions from the safety audit. Produce COSHH Procedure, Manual Handling Procedure, Risk Assessment Procedure. Close out of Risk Assessment Actions and Signs Offs.
- Strategic - Present a safety initiative to move to HASMAP and USHA and an alignment to management of risk by those who create it.
- Continue early planning and staff training for Martyn's Law compliance. UK Gov guidance only released on 16th April.
- Counter Terrorism (CT) police walk round, and staff training arranged for Thurso in May.

Fire Safety

Overview

The college continues with improvements in fire safety performance using our fire safety consultant to provide SME guidance. Priority matters for 2025-26 were identified as provision of suitable staff training, management of fire risk assessment actions and normalisation of regular fire drills across all campuses.

We now have a large group of staff within our college structure (principally in facilities and engagement teams) who hold fire warden duties within their job descriptions and who have completed fire warden and EFAP training. Our focus on fire training has resulted in a large increase of staff completing our hybrid fire training.

We are in position to better manage the actions from Fire Risk Assessments for all campuses.

In the following sections, this report will provide updates on each of those priority items.

Fire Warden and Fire Awareness Training

Fire awareness training and fire warden training remain a high priority action.

315 staff have completed and passed our online Emergency Fire Action Plan training increasing competency in supporting the implementation of our Hybrid Emergency Fire Action Plan, in which all staff have an active role.

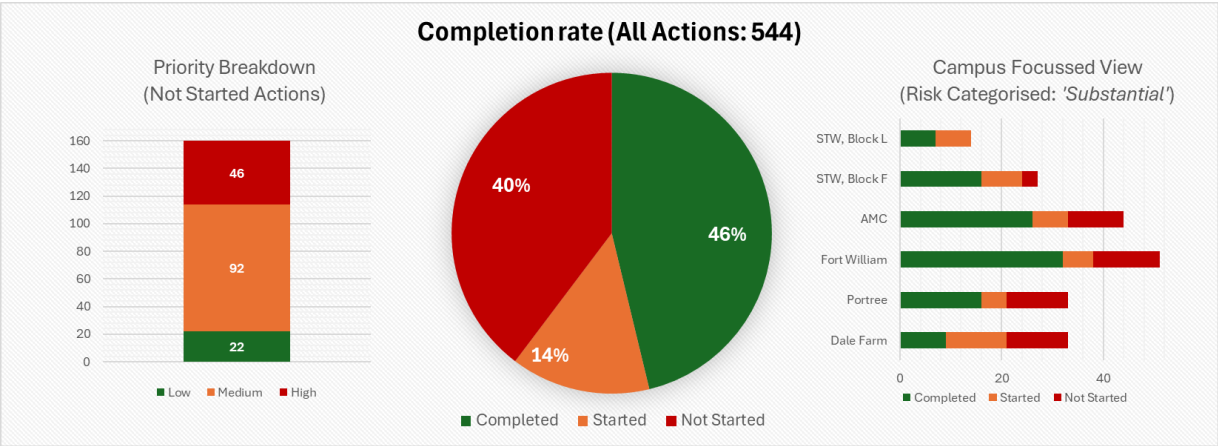
54 staff have completed our new online Fire Warden course.

Completion of both the Fire Warden Course plus the EFAP course is required for Fire Wardens. Completion of the EFAP course is required for staff who attend a campus.

Management of Fire Actions

A single source tracker that contains all FRA actions broken down by priority, location and completion status is now active. This provides clarity of FRA action status and a provides a focus on our substantial and high-risk actions.

The overall responsibility for assuring the timely completion fire risk assessment actions rests with the Estates Manager, who may delegate responsibility for actioning particular issues to local centre engagement staff.



Fire Evacuation Drills

The college is continuing in our undertaking of 4 planned evacuation drills in 2025-26. These drills are an important element of fire evacuation training, allowing practical implementation of the training and providing feedback of the event to ensure continual improvement.

In our recent April drill in Alness, Board Members participated in a planned fire drill evacuating the building alongside all staff in response to an actuated alarm. It is important to provide visual demonstrations of board and executive buy-in to Fire and H&S related training and processes in order to strengthen the organisational-wide culture of safety that is being built.

Scheduled fire drills now accepted as the norm rather than an unusual event with our most recent drills taking place end of April into first week in May.

After each drill a survey is sent out to each centre to capture useful learning. The findings of these surveys are reviewed by the Safety Officer, Facilities Manager and Head of Infrastructure. These surveys form an important component of continuous improvement and are intended to highlight gaps and direct future improvement.

The final drills of the year are currently underway across all of our centres. An early review of findings generally show a continued improvement with building occupants responding well in evacuating the buildings and trained staff demonstrating a greater level of confidence and competence. A training gap has been identified for Fire Warden staff operating out of our main campus in Thurso, illustrating the continued usefulness of regular drilling.

Health and Safety

Overview

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.

Roll out of IOSH Training at the executive tier and the directors/heads of tier of the college continues, aiming to improve understanding, competencies and commitment to sound H&S practices from the top down. Roll out of Working Safely is soon to commence.

In work-related stress, a dignity at work policy has been completed and a work-related stress working group is operational.

Management & Policy Update

USHA membership provides us with a management standard on Leadership and Management of Health and Safety in Higher Education Institutions and allows us access to the Health and Safety Management Profile (HASMAP) 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. It should be noted that implementation of these potential benefits will be determined by the level of resource that can be assigned to working on the enabling strategy and actions.

Changes to Legislation & Guidance

Following review of the Barbour EHS Legislation Update (April 2026), the only safety-relevant change currently in force applicable to the College is the establishment of the Building Safety Regulator as a standalone body. This does not introduce new duties but reinforces existing expectations for fire safety governance and competence. All other safety-related items remain at consultation, draft stage, or have future commencement dates. No immediate changes to college safety policies or arrangements are required, however the update contains numerous consultations which in the near future are likely to result in changes which will directly impact the college. See links below for information.

April 2026 Legislation Update Summary.docx

EHS-Legislation-Update-April-2026.pdf

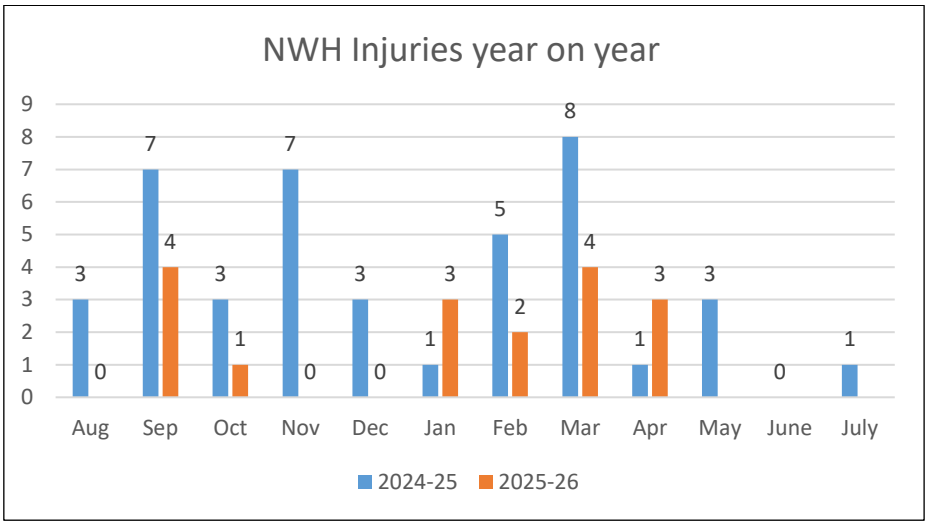
Uk Gov released guidance on 16th April for the implementation of Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 commonly referred to as Martyn's Law. This places additional statutory requirements on colleges to develop plans for how they will respond to various major incidents, specifically terrorist threats. 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.

Incident and Injury Occurrence Statistics

The following sections provide an overview and discussion on the reportable incidents and injury occurrences across our sites from 1 Feb to April 29th 25/26.

In terms of reportable injuries, the following graph illustrates the monthly injury rate and compares occurrences to the previous reporting period. Trend of a reduction in reported injuries to 29th April 2026 compared to the previous period. Reporting of very minor injuries in conjunction with an increase in reporting of near misses and unsafe conditions and reporting by staff other than facilities/estates staff is encouraging and may be indicative

that recent communications encouraging reporting and recent IOSH training is having an impact. However, it should be noted that the recorded near-miss to injury (major) ratio is approximately 1-1 (*actual: 6-5*), which is indicative of a safety culture that is still in development. A healthy near-miss to injury ratio > 10-1 would indicate a mature culture in which strong and proactive management of risk is embedded across the organisation.



Summary of incidents 1.2.26 to 29.4.26

INJ	PD	NM	UC	ME	YIO	RID
9	3	6	7	2	0	0

Injuries

Student struck by reversing car in Fort William Car park -Slow speed event with only slight bruising..
Wood dust (known carcinogenic) inhaled when emptying an overfilled bin. Construction Thurso.
Sprained ankle-Misplaced foot on walkign path. Fort William SOAS.
Sprained ankle Students fooling around off campus at nearby garage .Thurso
Sprained ankle where student slipped at the smoking area .Fort William

Minor injuries
1 splinter construction Portree
Graze to wrist bumping against table - Art room-Portree
Impact injury to hand dropped a concrete block onto hand -construction Thurso
Impact injury to finger- hit finger with mallet-construction Thurso

Property Damage

Damage to college van -driver not aware of how it was caused (Stornoway)
Golf ball hit TV screen- Indoor golf room - Golf Burghfield
Moveable Mortice machine damaged when it fell over whilst being moved due to a damaged floor. Construction Thurso

Near Miss
High-Rear Fire Door locked - AMC Fort William (staff reported)
High - Wood dust high level of contamination following pellet delivery-Thurso. (facilities reported)
High- Third party driver on wrong side of road- (staff reported)
High- Plug and socket on dryer signs of burning/melting- Thurso (staff reported)
Moderate- Loose glass panel on staircase-Thurso- (facilities reported)
Moderate- Extension lead trailing across fire exit path-Construction Thurrso (facilities reported)

Unsafe Condition
Lift alarm- response from call centre very slow- Thurso (facilities reported)
Temp below 16c in CFEE Thurso (staff reported)
Dog Excrement Fort William (staff reported)
Damaged Chair ETEC Thurso (facilities reported)
Window open overnight Mallaig (staff reported)
New housing development access road presents limited vision on entry from college with increased traffic (facilities reported)
Flashing damage on Tower windows following high winds Thurso (facilities reported)

Medical
Feeling feint /anxiety attack Fort William
Insulin levels Thurso Hair and Beauty

Work Related Stress

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has stepped up its enforcement on workplace stress, issuing a Notification of Contravention to the University of Birmingham for its failure to manage the risks. This is one of the first high-profile enforcement actions targeting workplace related stress in the UK, thus **demonstrating the start of a shift from guidance to enforcement.**

The HSE found that the university did not have appropriate arrangements in place for managing workplace stre ss and could not demonstrate that it was controlling risks associated with excessive workloads. The university's stress management policy, risk assessments, and controls were found to be inadequate, and there was a lack of effective monitoring for workplace stress.

The HSE's findings highlight the importance of employers in managing psychosocial risks, which are now the primary cause of workrelated illness. This enforcement action signals that mental health is now being treated with the same seriousness as physical safety, setting a clear precedent for employers.

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.

UHI NWH have prioritised implementation of training of the senior management team with IOSH Leading Safely. IOSH Managing is progressing well. IOSH Safety for Executives and IOSH Working Safely is due to be rolled out to the appropriate staff.

Asbestos Management

Review and work on our Asbestos Management Plan continues.

COSHH

Our control of COSHH needs to be improved in order to meet compliance.

Purchase of a Chemical Manager System is currently under consideration and development of a COSHH Framework is currently being undertaken.

MiDAS Training

The provision of MiDAS training is not a direct legislative requirement for Colleges, Schools or most organisations in the UK. What is required legally is that organisations can demonstrate that staff driving a minibus have the appropriate licence category entitlements and insurance conditions. However, should an accident occur, the College could be challenged on the basis that staff were insufficiently trained in the duties that the College was asking them to perform as part of their role.

The College has therefore opted proactively to mandate in policy that all minibus drivers will be asked to undertake MiDAS training and this training is currently in the process of being organised.