

Appointment of a Health and Safety Champion at UHI North, West and Hebrides

Rationale

The appointment of a Non-Executive Director as a Health and Safety Champion for UHI North, West and Hebrides is a strategic move to reinforce the college's commitment to creating a safe and secure environment for its students, staff, and visitors.

Health and safety considerations are paramount in any educational institution, and having a dedicated champion at the board level demonstrates the seriousness with which UHI North, West and Hebrides approaches this crucial aspect of its operations, ensuring the Board's focus on its role in creating a safety culture for the college, and providing an additional layer of assurance on safety for the Board.

In appointing a non-executive Health and Safety Champion, the UHI North, West and Hebrides Board follows best practice as set out by HSE. HSE in its guidance for Leading health and safety at work [Leading health and safety at work Actions for directors, board members, business owners and organisations of all sizes \(hse.gov.uk\)](https://www.hse.gov.uk/leadinghealthandsafety/actionsforboards.htm) and [Resources: Leading health and safety at work \(hse.gov.uk\)](https://www.hse.gov.uk/leadinghealthandsafety/resources.htm) emphasises the crucial role and legal responsibilities that a Board collectively and as individual Board members has to assure health and safety at work

With this appointment the Board implements an important aspect of the college's Health and Safety Policy adopted in August 2023:

"Promoting a strong signal of the strategic importance of health and safety, the College has a nominated Board member acting in the role of health and safety champion; helping to ensure that robust risk management processes support the board of management who have both collective and individual responsibility for health and safety."

Role Descriptor for the Health and Safety Champion

Role Purpose:

The Health and Safety Champion at UHI North, West and Hebrides will play a pivotal role in assisting the Board in undertaking its legal and moral duties in ensuring that the college maintains the highest standards of health and safety across all its campuses and activities.

The Health and Safety Champion will work collaboratively with the executive team, contributing valuable insights, oversight, and guidance to enhance the overall health and safety culture within the institution.

Key Responsibilities

The role of a Board Health and Safety Champion is to work with the Board and the college to ensure that

1. Health and safety performance is reviewed regularly by the Board, and relevant subcommittees, including health and safety initiatives, compliance levels, and incident management
2. Health and safety policy reflects Board priorities

3. Health and Safety management systems provide effective monitoring and reporting procedures, including reporting to relevant stakeholders.
4. There is adequate information about significant health and safety issues, including causal investigations and actions plans where required
5. Health and safety considerations underpin all college decisions
6. Risk management systems for health and safety are in place and effective, including relevant staff training, staff engagement and communication.
7. Health and safety arrangements are adequately resourced to support the college's health and safety culture

Qualifications and Competencies

The Board's Health and Safety Champion will bring valuable expertise and a strategic perspective to UHI North, West and Hebrides, ensuring that the college remains a safe and secure environment for all its members.

Whilst a strong interest in Health and Safety is a key pre-requisite for the role of the Health and Safety Champion, ideally the nominated non-executive Board Director will bring the following attributes with them:

- Proven experience in health and safety management, preferably within the education sector.
- Knowledge of relevant health and safety legislation, regulations, and best practices.
- Strong communication and advocacy skills.
- Ability to collaborate effectively with diverse stakeholders.
- Ability to assess and address complex health and safety issues.

Time Commitment

To be agreed, but ideally attendance at the colleges Health and Safety Steering Group meetings, plus quarterly engagement with the college's Health and Safety Manager and executive lead or Principal as required.

Recommendations

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Committee endorses the recommendation to appoint a Health and Safety champion nominated from its non-executive directors2. The Committee endorses the proposed role descriptor for the Health and Safety Champion3. The Committee makes its recommendation on the Health and Safety Champion to the Board |
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Lydia Rohmer, 30 January 2024