

Committee	Human Resources		
Date paper prepared	02/02/2026	Date of committee meeting	25/02/2026
Subject	H&S Periodic Report (Feb) 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	<p>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 October to 30th Jan 25-26. It covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<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 Confidential - The paper must not be circulated beyond the committee members and should not be published online.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.		
Freedom of information	Open		

H&S Periodic Report (Feb) 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 October to January 25–26 academic year.

Fire Safety

Achievements: on track. Establishment of fire warden roles and increased numbers of trained Fire Wardens. Increased numbers of trained staff on their role in our Emergency Fire Action Plan and awareness of UFAPs, the fire warden role and their role in assisting the Fire Warden.

Challenges: Incomplete fire warden training; changing staff perceptions and behaviour towards ownership from fire warden being the only person responsible for action during an evacuation; improving our fire evacuation feedback loop.

Actions: Further development of our central FRA tracker; scheduled evacuation drills; Identification of any fire training gaps/completion of training with further training reminders.

Health & Safety

Working towards completion of the actions from our external safety audit. Focus on building a safety foundation with IOSH safety training. Move to HASMAP and USHA standards.

Achievements:

- Improved management of PPM, implementation of Trackplan Computer Aided Facilities Management (CAFM) software on target.
- Close monitoring of RAs has ensured reminders and support given to closing out RAs and achieving sign off.
- COSHH - Some staff from ERI attended 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.
- Riskex User Interface improvements - now has help prompts at every screen.
- Safety SharePoint has Riskex help for reporting an incident, near miss and for completing a risk assessment on Riskex.
- Contractor Management Policy in place.

Challenges: Resource. Management of COSHH. Unsuccessful attempts to buy in a COSHH management system.

Actions:

- Retain focus on closing out the actions from the safety audit.
- COSHH Procedure or Policy - Feb 26-safety officer
- Manual Handling Procedure - March 26 Safety Officer
- Risk Assessment Procedure - March 26 Safety Officer
- Strategic - Present a safety initiative to move to HASMAP and USHA and an alignment to management of risk by those who create it - April 26 Safety Officer
- Continue early planning for Martyn's Law compliance.

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

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.

192 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.

46 staff have completed our new online Fire Warden course

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 focus on our substantial and high-risk actions.

It's also intended that, due to the high volume of actions, particularly in some remote and rural areas that the responsibility for resolving some actions may be passed to centre staff with adequate oversight from the estates manager.

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.

Scheduled fire drills now accepted as the norm rather than an unusual event.

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.

Findings

In the January drills, the following main themes were identified:

- All buildings were evacuated swiftly.
- 10 of the 10 premises operated using the correct post-merger hybrid evacuation plan.
- 9 of the 10 Fire Wardens felt competent and comfortable in leading the evacuation.
- 9 of the 10 Fire Wardens felt competent and comfortable using the Fire Evacuation Grab Bag provided at each campus.
- It was noted that some fire grab bags did not contain all the necessary content.
 - 4 campuses had no zone plan
 - 1 campus had no building plan

- 10 of the 10 survey respondents noted that their Fire Wardens had completed training.
- 4 of the 10 survey respondents noted that their Fire Warden was not given assistance from other staff members
- 5 of the 10 respondents noted that they were not aware of the UFAS processes and responsibilities.
- At one location a person inside the building did not evacuate.

Remedial Actions

Several remedial actions have been agreed in response to these findings, including:

1. Fire awareness training and fire warden training remain a high priority action.
2. Acting on feedback in January it was determined that 61 people had completed Emergency Fire Action Plan Training, a reminder to complete this training was sent out and a further 131 staff have completed this training since mid-January taking total to 192.
3. Continue to monitor training completion and identify skill gaps and assign training.

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 both the executive tier and the directors/heads of tier of the college aiming to improve understanding, competencies and commitment to sound H&S practices from the top down.

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

Management & Policy Update

Continuation of review of effectiveness of the Senior Responsible Officers (SRO) for each site and ensuring that this information is 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.

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 (HASMAPP) 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

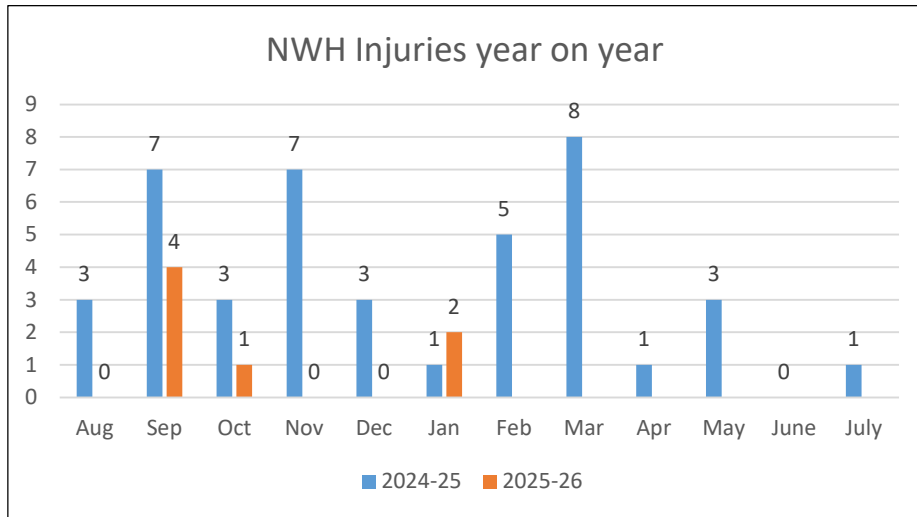
Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 commonly referred to as Martyn's Law will place additional statutory requirements on colleges to develop plans for how they will respond to various major incidents, specifically terrorist threats. Martyn's Law is intended to improve protective security and 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.

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 in Oct to Jan 25-26.

In terms of reportable injuries, the following graph illustrates the monthly injury rate and compares occurrences to the previous reporting period. Whilst it is welcoming to see a reduction in reported injuries to 31st January 2026 compared to the previous period.



Summary of NWH incidents 1.10.25 to 31.10.26

RID	INJ	NM	PD	UC	UA	MED
0	3	2	7	7	3	3

Moderate Injury

- Skin pierced by a needle from a diabetic hypodermic (Thurso)
- Cut finger with stanley blade cutting wood (Thurso)
- Violence -student assaulted by member of public Stornoway

RTA

- Moderate- RTA where a bus driver hit the partially open main gate destroying the gate .(Stornoway)

Near Miss

- Serious- Gas Leak from LPG supply (Dornoch)
- Minor-stumble at kerb in darkness -faulty lighting (Stornoway)

Unsafe Act

- Moderate-Electricity plant room Person using room to store food and drink for an event in ETEC and accessing the plant room (Thurso ETEC)

Property Damage

Storm damage to external lights- Exterior of A Block Stornoway campus
Damage to a radiator with the vent grill pulled off Thurso ETEC
Storm damage-ceiling collapse roof above reception Fort William
Storm damage flooding -Fire Door damage the large workshop (Fort William)
Storm damage flooding -Fire Door damage main hallway at reception (Fort William)
Boisterous behaviour by 2 students lead to them hitting the wall smashing the plasterboard (thurso ETEC)

Unsafe Conditions

Exposed cable tripping hazard in road (Thurso)
Loose carpet (Fort William)
3 damaged chairs (Thurso ETEC)
Water leaking from roof welding bays (Stornoway)
damaged chairs (Thurso ETEC)
damaged chairs (Thurso ETEC)

Alarm Incidents

1 UC Fire Evacuations outwith scheduled drills triggered by faulty sensor (Stornoway)
2 UA Intruder alarm call outs - 1 due to cleaning staff and one due to boxing gym side on landlords side of the building (Fort William Ocean Frontier)

Medical

Minor Cut- inflicted at home (Halkirk)
Minor Feint -member of the public (Fort William)
Pain- Student suffered pain later in the night after havign a treatment in the salon(previous issues with this ailment with no trigger)

Work Related Stress

Rapid Response Group have met regularly together and with leadership to progress plans and actions based on the findings of the HSE Stress Survey. Senior Leadership have begun increasing their visibility by attending Teams meetings to talk about WRS within the teams.

Actions:

- Work Related Stress Policy – Director of People and Culture/Safety Officer March 25/26
- Stress RA to be reviewed – RRG for input. February 25/26

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 executive team and senior management with IOSH Safety of Executives and Directors and IOSH Leading Safely respectively. Executive level training sessions have now been completed. Leading Safely completion is currently being reviewed and Managing Safely is currently being completed by the appropriate managers.

IOSH Working Safely courses in the future will further enhance our safety culture.

Asbestos Management

Review and work on our Asbestos Management Plan continues.