Committee	Human Resources		
Date paper prepared	05/08/2026	**Date of committee meeting**	10/09/2026
Subject	H&S Periodic Report (Sept) 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 30th April to 31st July 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 ☐ **Confidential** - The paper must not be circulated beyond the committee members and should not be published online.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 (Sept) 2025-26

Table of contents

Introduction 3
Fire Safety 3
Health & Safety 3
Fire Safety 4
Overview 4
Fire Warden and Fire Awareness Training 4
Management of Fire Actions 4
Fire Evacuation Drills 5
Health and Safety 5
Overview 5
Management & Policy Update 5
Changes to Legislation & Guidance 6
Incident and Injury Occurrence Statistics 7
Work Related Stress 8
Training Update 8
Asbestos 8
COSHH 8

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 1st May to 31st July 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. Significant reduction in number of open FRA actions.

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

Increased focus on completion of the actions from our external safety audit has resulted in the development and acceptance of four new procedures; Risk Assessment, Incident Management and COSHH Procedures are now published, with First Aid Policy being published following board review.

Our Safety SharePoint is currently being recreated with the intention of providing a one stop Safety Management Hub providing, guidance, information, support and advice on all aspects of safety. This knowledge base will be fundamental for managers as we move to USHAs Leadership and Management of Health and Safety in Higher Education Institutions Management Standard, where those who create the risk own and manage the risk.

Achievements:

- Safety SharePoint area improved to provide extensive knowledge base, across several topics available to all staff.
- COSHH – Procedure in place. Some ERI staff are booked into external COSHH training. Chemicals SharePoint created.
- External Safety Audit -Procedures now in place for COSHH, Risk Assessment, Manual Handling, and Accident and Investigation, satisfying these external audit actions. SharePoint sections created for each of these.
- External Safety Audit – Riskex up to date and compliant for Risk Assessment and Incident Management.
- First Aid Policy in draft form for board approval.
- Counter Terrorism (CT) training for additional staff in lead roles for Thurso, Alness and Dornoch in readiness for implementation of Martyn's Law requirements. Walk round by CT Police and CT training for some staff at Thurso in preparation.

Actions:

- Riskex contract ends in February, and we must have a replacement in place by end of December.
- We continue to focus on the completion of IOSH safety training and role specific safety training.
- Implementation of Safety Hub – a low cost, easy access, online, role specific, training platform.
- Preparation of the foundation elements to move our SMS in line with USHA Management Standard.
- Management of COSHH. Finalise purchase of COSHH Management Tool.
- Preparation for introduction of Martyn's Law.
- 77 Risk Assessments with review dates due soon. (Now in line with academic year)

Challenges:

- Resource, only 1 person in safety team.
- Completion of IOSH safety training.
- Change Management as we move to an SMS in line with USHA Management Standard.

Actions:

- Continue to build the Safety SharePoint (Safety Management Hub)
- Manage Change to the new USHA Safety Management Standard via effective communications and manageable timescales with effective toolkits and resources.
- Continue early planning and staff training for Martyn's Law compliance.
- Begin the actions required to replace Riskex with a Microsoft based system like the one UHI Inverness has developed for Incident Reporting and Investigation and for Risk Assessment.

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 (largely 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

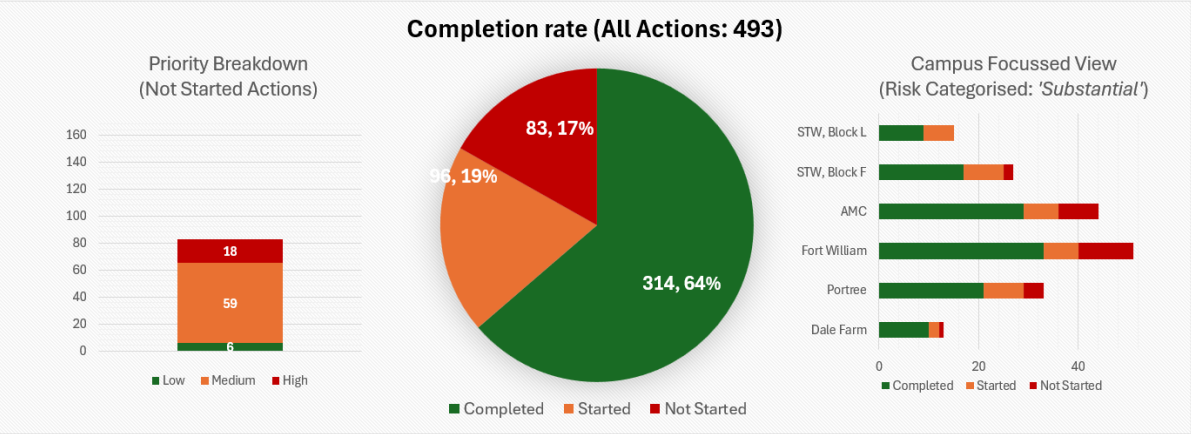
Fire awareness training and fire warden training remain a high-priority action.

335 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.

60 staff have completed our new online Fire Warden course.

Management of Fire Actions

Our FRA tracker provides clarity of FRA action status and a provides a focus on our substantial and high-risk actions. Responsibility for managing the resolution of FRA actions is held by our Estates Manager, with actions delegated to other teams or local staff for completion where suitable to do so.



Since our previous report updated FRAs have been undertaken at our Dornoch, Thurso, ETEC, ERI Castle Street, Dale Farm, Mallaig and our new centre at Nigg. Additional updates to our FRAs are planned for Stornoway, Alness, Fort William and the Ocean Frontier building before the end of 2026 in accordance with our periodic FRA strategy.

Fire Evacuation Drills

Scheduled fire drills are now accepted as the norm rather than an unusual event. 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. We continue to apply the Plan, Do, Check, Act model. Feedback from latest evacuations indicates that our hybrid system has become established across our centres.

We remain committed to carrying out 4 planned evacuations across all our locations in 26/27. This number is greater than is strictly recommended (2 evacuations) as we seek to strengthen Fire Safety across our estate.

Health and Safety

Overview

The College focus is on establishing a strong foundation for safety management, increasing competencies through training, improving our emergency measures for fire and first aid, better management of work-related stress, undertaking of risk assessments and reporting & investigating of incidents.

IOSH Training from the top down, ensuring safety competence in those leading safety. IOSH training completion rates are in the table below:

Tier 1		Tier 2		Tier 3		Tier 4	
Executives + Directors		Leading Safely		Managing Safely		Working Safely	
Registered	Completed	Registered	Completed	Registered	Completed	Registered	Completed
8	4	9	9	39	30	50	18

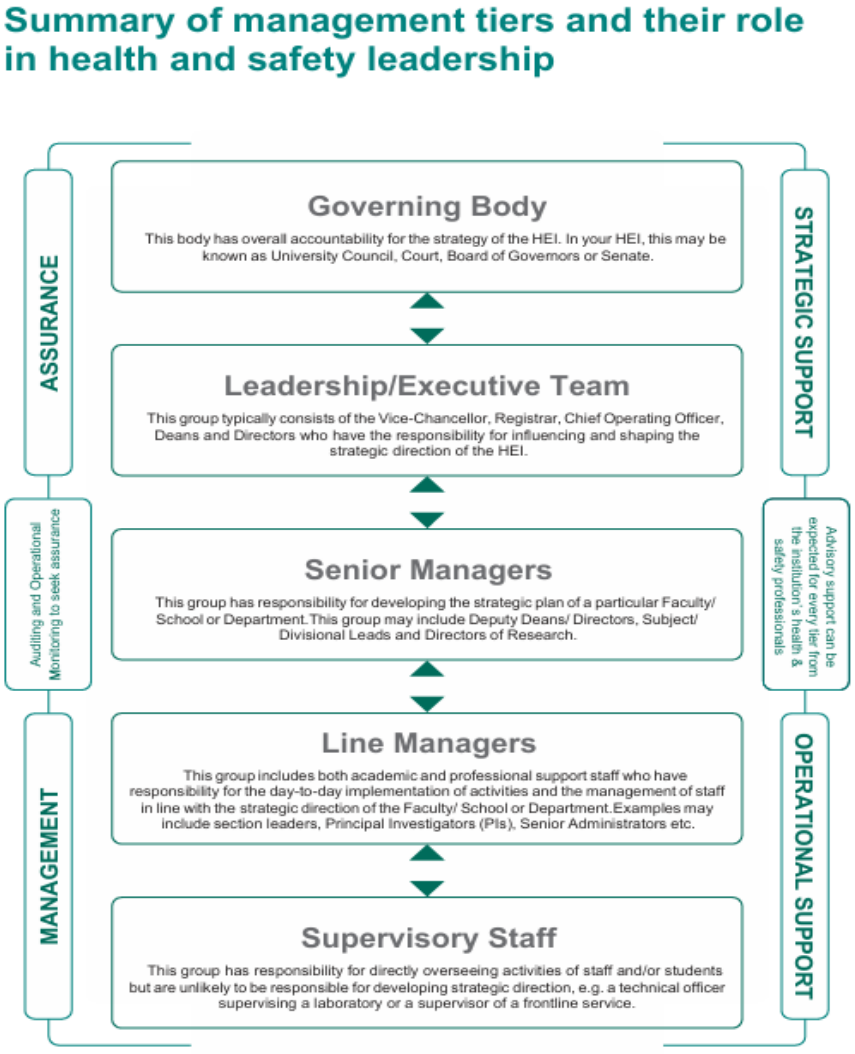
A priority for 2026/27 should be to increase the completion rate at Tier 1 to promote a strong safety culture and Tier 4 to ensure safety within our operations.

Management & Policy Update

We have adopted and are now active in preparation for implementation of USHAs Leadership and Management of Health and Safety in Higher Education Institutions Management Standard .Implementing this standard will mean that risk ownership and management is embedded into the working duties of all members of college staff. Heads of Departments being responsible for the risks created by their department. It should be

noted that implementation will be determined by the level of resource that can be assigned to working on the enabling strategy and actions.





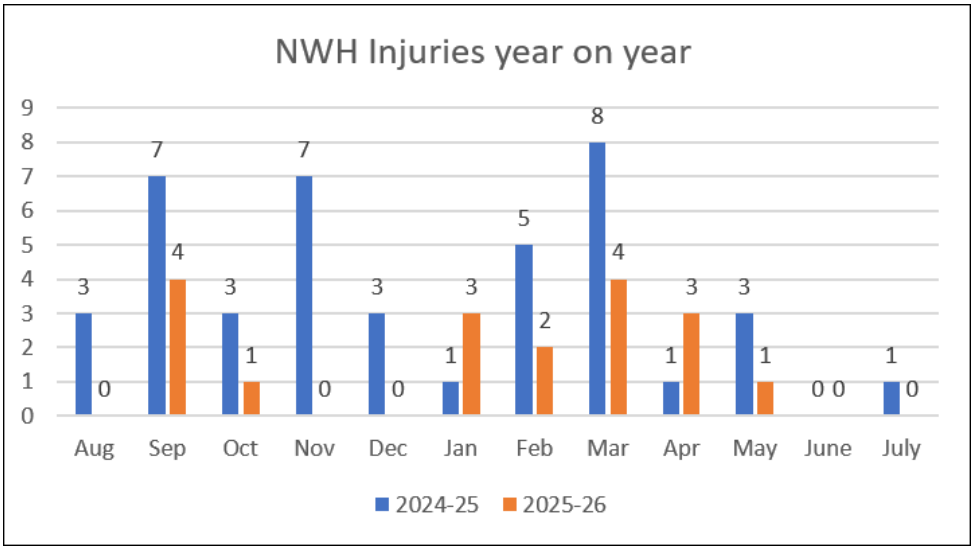
Changes to Legislation & Guidance

No changes since our last Board Meeting

Incident and Injury Occurrence Statistics

The following sections provide an overview and discussion on the reportable incidents and injury occurrences across our sites from 1st May to 31st July 25-26.

In terms of reportable injuries, the graph below illustrates the monthly injury rate and compares occurrences to the previous reporting period. Our trend of a year-on-year reduction continues with reported injuries of only 1 v 4 in the same period last year. Reporting of near misses (3), unsafe conditions (3) unsafe acts (3) and medical (1) resulted in appropriate investigation leading to actions to "make safe" and to prevent reoccurrence.



Summary of incidents 1.5.26 to 31.7.26

INJ	UC	UA	PD	NM	MED	RID
1	3	3	0	3	1	0

Minor Injury

Overtaking car had to take avoiding action from oncoming car and hit our driver's vehicle on the side, resulting in a shoulder injury to our staff member.

Near Miss

A less able visitor was trapped in a toilet cubicle, and it took several staff over an hour to release them.
Increased pedestrian traffic at our campus gate with kids on bikes crossing immediately across exiting driver.
Large glass panel shattered at foyer door with no apparent cause.

Unsafe Condition

Water leaking into the electrics for automatic access front door.
Multiple extensions leads daisy chained in an office.
Fire escape blocked with a tv on a stand.

Unsafe Act

Alarmed door triggered by persons using the door causing security incident.
Door lock was smashed off toilet door.
Contractor cutting down tree for homeowners was working on campus property. Work stopped until the job could be carried out safely and area on campus could be made safe

Work Related Stress

At the anniversary of the HSE Work Related Stress survey, the college did not proceed to carry out it's initially planned follow-up survey with the justification given being to avoid a clash with implementing significant changes to the curriculum staff structure. A date for this follow-up survey is still to be planned.

The curriculum staff structure changes referenced above have resulted following an action derived from the WRS Working Group requesting a curriculum structure review and significant staff engagement.

The enforcement action on the University of Birmingham highlights the importance of managing psychosocial risks, which are now the primary cause of work -related injuries. Mental health is now being treated with the same seriousness as physical safety.

There is a risk that the college may just be supporting people after the harm is done and is not controlling the hazard sufficiently to prevent harm occurring.

Psychosocial risk management cannot rely too heavily on Employee Assistance or Wellbeing Programmes, awareness training or resilience programs. Those supports have a place. But they are not a substitute for changing the conditions of work.

When the hazard is not a machine, chemical or piece of plant, but workload, role ambiguity, low control, bullying, trauma exposure, poor supervision, unreasonable deadlines or unsafe organisational behaviour. Then psychosocial hazards need to be controlled at the source wherever reasonably practicable. That means looking closely at work design, staffing, workflow, leadership behaviour, communication, escalation pathways and governance.

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.

Some staff have still to complete IOSH Safety for Executives and Directors, IOSH Leading Safely and IOSH Managing Safely. IOSH Working Safely roll out, to appropriate staff, commenced just before the summer break.

The College has recently purchased access to Safety Hub, an online workplace safety training platform at low cost. This is being implemented from August and provides us with efficient, immediately accessible training with LMS tools and the ability to custom build our own training videos.

Asbestos

Asbestos Management: Review and work on our Asbestos Management Plan continues.

Asbestos Competencies: Key Infrastructure staff completed Duty to Manage Asbestos Training in July with several members of their team being permitted to also join in online to raise their awareness and knowledge of asbestos.

We now have an Asbestos section on our SharePoint.

COSHH

The College currently manages substances hazardous to health through a combination of local registers, disparate documentation, and inconsistent practices across campuses and departments. Some areas do not appear to actively manage COSHH. This approach does not offer a robust, standardised or auditable system aligned to the requirements of Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002.

A new COSHH Procedure was published in July and a Chemical Safety Guidance and Advice section is now available on our updated Safety SharePoint.

To further improve the management of COSHH, ELT approved the implementation of a structured, College-wide COSHH management framework supported by a dedicated COSHH Management System (CMS). The CMS will be a digital cloud-based management tool, enabling the College to establish a centralised register, standardise risk assessments, and clearly define roles and responsibilities.