

WEA



Learning*for***Life**

Workers' Educational Association

(WEA)

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

1. CONTENTS

Section Number	Title	Pages
1	Contents	2
2	Health and Safety Policy Statement	3
3	Organisation	4 – 6
4	Arrangements	6 – 10
5	Review and Queries	10
6	Index of supporting safety procedures	11

2. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the Workers' Educational Association (WEA), to comply with the terms of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and subsequent legislation, and to provide and maintain a healthy and safe working environment. The health and safety objective of the WEA is to minimise the number of instances of occupational accidents and illnesses and ultimately to achieve an accident-free workplace and learning environment.

The WEA fully supports the 'safe learner' concept and seeks to comply with this in respect of all our learning programmes. The WEA is also concerned with the Health and Safety needs of all employees and recognises that particular groups of employees (e.g. women and people with disabilities) may have particular Health and Safety needs. We have also in our Harassment policy recognised the potential Health and Safety implications of bullying at work.

The WEA shall provide the necessary resource and organisation to fulfil the requirements of the policy and the WEA's management and governing body fully support its implementation.

All employees, volunteers and learners will be provided with such equipment, information, training and supervision necessary to implement the policy.

The WEA recognises and accepts the duty to protect the health and safety of all visitors to the Association, including learners, contractors, temporary workers and volunteers, as well as any members of the public who might be affected by our operations.

While the management of the WEA will do all that is within its powers to ensure the health and safety of its employees and learners, it is recognised that health and safety at work is also the responsibility of each and every individual associated with the WEA. It is the duty of each employee, volunteer and learner to take reasonable care of his/her own and other people's welfare and to report any situation which may pose a threat to the well being of any other person.

The management of the WEA will provide every employee with the training necessary to carry out their tasks safely and recognises that an effective health and safety programme requires continuous communication at all levels.

The WEA's health and safety policy will be continually monitored and updated, particularly when changes in the scale and nature of our operations occur. It will be reviewed at least annually.

A copy of this statement has been signed by the WEA President and General Secretary and will be made widely available within the Association.

3. ORGANISATION

3.1 National Executive Committee

The WEA National Executive Committee is the body of trustees that govern the Association. As such it has no direct control of day to day operations, but has a critical policy setting and monitoring role with regard to the management of health and safety within the organisation, which shall be reviewed at alternate NEC meetings.

3.2 General Secretary

The General Secretary has overall responsibility for health and safety within the WEA and shall ensure the implementation of the policy throughout the organisation. They shall understand the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and its impact on the WEA.

3.3 Head of Human Resources

In addition to his operational duties the Head of Human Resources shall act as the Health and Safety Co-ordinator and report to the General Secretary, Regional Secretaries and Corporate Services Functional Directors all things pertaining to health and safety and shall:

- Keep Senior Management up to date on health and safety legislation.
- Act as the WEA focal point for liaison with local authorities, funders, emergency services and the Health and Safety Executive when required.
- Understand the application of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and other legislation relevant to the WEA's business.

3.4 Health and Safety Advisor

The Health and Safety Advisor, (external), is responsible for providing WEA Management with up to date Health and Safety advice in support of the efforts of the Head of Human Resources. They shall also provide safety training when required and be available to investigate serious accidents, liaising with local authorities including Health and Safety Executive, (HSE), and Environmental Health Officer, (EHO).

3.5 Regional Secretaries and Corporate Services Functional Directors

The Regional Secretaries and Corporate Services Functional Directors of the WEA have overall responsibility for health and safety within their areas of control and shall:

- Report directly to the General Secretary matters of health and safety.
- Administer and interpret the effective implementation of the policy.
- Understand the application of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and other legislation relevant to the WEA's business.
- Ensure adequate resources are available to fulfil the WEA's obligations outlined in the policy.
- Set a personal example at all times with respect to health and safety.

3.6 Regional Managers

Regional Managers in addition to their operational responsibilities shall ensure the health and safety of staff reporting to them and in particular:

- Report to the Regional Secretary matters of health and safety.
- Understand the application of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and other legislation relevant to the WEA's business.

- Ensure that learners are adequately supervised and not put at risk during their training programmes.

3.7 Regional Safety Co-ordinators

Regional Safety Coordinators are responsible to their Regional Secretary for administering the health and safety management systems in their region and shall organise their day to day work in compliance with the Health and Safety Policy and in particular shall:

- Understand the application of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and other legislation relevant to the WEA's business.
- Regularly monitor the documentation relating to health and safety and ensure that standards of health and safety including housekeeping are maintained.
- Audit the safety management systems to ensure that the safety procedures in place are being followed and the necessary reports and findings recorded.
- Carry out accident investigations and reports, ensuring recommendations to prevent a re-occurrence are implemented.

3.8 Employees/including Sessionally Paid Employees

Are responsible to their manager for operational duties and in addition shall:

- Understand the application of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and other legislation relevant to the WEA's business.
- Report any hazardous conditions to their manager or Regional Safety Co-ordinator.
- Monitor health and safety standards within their area of responsibility.

3.9 Volunteers

Shall:

- Understand the application of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and other legislation relevant to the WEA's business.
- Report any hazardous conditions through their branch or to a WEA manager or the Regional Safety Co-ordinator.

3.10 Learners

All learners are responsible for complying with this Policy within the context of direction given by their course Tutor. In particular they shall:

- Report any hazardous conditions to their Tutor/Manager.
- Observe all safety rules at all times and refrain from intentionally misusing or recklessly interfering with anything provided for health and safety reasons.
- Wear appropriate safety equipment/protective clothing where necessary.
- Conform to all instructions given to them by their Tutor/Manager or others with responsibility for health and safety.
- Obtain First Aid for any injury sustained in the learning environment and ensure that it is recorded in the accident book.

3.11 Trade Union Health and Safety Representatives

It is the policy of the WEA to support the appointment of Health and Safety Representatives by the trade unions recognised by the WEA. The role of Trade Union Health and Safety Representatives will be in accordance with the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1996 and such additional functions as may be agreed between the WEA and the recognised trade unions.

3.12 First Aiders

The WEA will provide appropriate training for employees appointed as First Aiders and agree with the recognised trade unions a payment, where appropriate, to these employees for these additional duties.

4. ARRANGEMENTS

The cornerstone of the WEA's Health and Safety arrangements will be to assess Health and Safety risks across all our operations and to take appropriate actions to minimise or mitigate these. Risk assessments shall be completed for all activities where there is significant risk to employees or learners according to defined procedures. Where necessary specific assessments shall be carried out, including:

- Manual Handling
- Display Screen Equipment
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health
- Fire
- Specified Curriculum Areas
- and
- Learning Accommodation

The WEA will seek in all instances to comply with relevant legislation including the following:-

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1996
- Regulations governing noise at work
- Management of Health and Safety at Work regulations 1999
- Workplace (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1992
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
- Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH)
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR 95)

4.1 Consultation

The management of the WEA see communication between workers at all levels as an essential part of effective health and safety management. Consultation will be facilitated by means of **National Safety Committee**, meetings held quarterly or as often as is deemed necessary. The purpose of National Safety Committee meetings is to provide a forum in which information may be conveyed and Secretaries' questions on health and safety issues answered. In addition these meetings will provide an opportunity to assess the continuing effectiveness of the policy in line with the 'Safe Learner' concept promoted by the LSC.

4.2 Communication

The management of the WEA will endeavour to communicate to employees their commitment to safety and to ensure that employees are familiar with the contents of the WEA health and safety policy. The WEA communicates with its employees orally, in the form of directions and statements from supervisors; in writing, in the form of directives and this policy statement; and by example.

4.3 Co-operation and Care

If we are to build and maintain a healthy and safe working environment, co-operation between workers at all levels is essential. All employees are expected to co-operate with managers and to accept their duties under this policy. Employees have a duty to take all reasonable steps to preserve and protect the health and safety of themselves and all other people affected by the operations of the WEA.

4.4 Safety Training

Safety training is regarded as an indispensable ingredient of an effective health and safety programme. It is essential that every worker in the organisation be trained to perform his or her job effectively and safely.

All employees will be trained in safe working practices and procedures prior to being allocated any new role. Training sessions will be held at regular intervals and will provide another opportunity for employees to express any fears or concerns they might have about the safety aspects of their jobs.

4.5 Workplace Inspections

The Regional Safety Co-ordinator will conduct regular inspections of the workplace. In addition inspections will be conducted in the relevant areas whenever there are significant changes in the nature and/or scale of our operations. Workplace inspections will also provide an opportunity to review the continuing effectiveness of the policy and to identify areas where revision of the policy may be necessary. (See Health and Safety Procedure 05 – Office Safety)

4.6 Work Equipment

The WEA will seek to minimise hazards in the workplace to the extent that this is possible. The WEA will endeavour to ensure that all equipment used in the workplace is safe and suitable for the purpose for which it is used. All employees will be provided with adequate information and training to enable them to use work equipment safely. The use of any work equipment, which could pose a risk to the well being of persons in or around the workplace, will be restricted to authorised persons. All work equipment will be maintained in good working order and repair. All employees will be provided with such protection as is adequate to protect them from dangers occasioned by the use of work equipment. All work equipment will be clearly marked with health and safety warnings where appropriate.

4.7 Personal Protective Equipment

The WEA will seek to minimise hazards in the workplace to the extent that this is possible. All employees who may be exposed to a risk to their health and safety while at work will be provided with suitable, properly fitting and effective personal protective equipment. All personal protective equipment provided will be properly assessed prior to its provision and will be maintained in good working order. All employees provided with personal protective equipment will receive comprehensive training and information on the use, maintenance and purpose of the equipment. The WEA will endeavour to ensure that all personal protective equipment provided by them is used and used properly by its employees.

4.8 Manual Handling Operations

Manual handling operations will be avoided as far as is reasonably practicable where there is a risk of injury. Where it is not possible to avoid manual handling operations an assessment of the operation will be made taking into account the task, the load, the working environment and

the capability of the individual concerned. An assessment will be reviewed if there is any reason to suspect that it is no longer valid. All possible steps will be taken to reduce the risk of injury to the lowest level possible.

4.9 Display Screen Equipment

The WEA will conduct health and safety assessments of all workstations staffed by employees who use VDU screens as part of their usual work or where such screens are used for learning. The risks to users of VDU screens will be reduced to the lowest extent reasonably practicable. VDU screen users will be allowed periodic breaks in their work. Eyesight tests will be provided for VDU screen users on request. Where necessary the WEA will contribute to the cost of necessary corrective equipment, such as glasses or contact lenses in line with the Display Screen Equipment Policy. All VDU screen users will be given appropriate and adequate training on the health and safety aspects of this type of work and will be given further training and information whenever the organisation of the workstation is substantially modified.

4.10 Control of Hazardous Substances

A risk assessment will be conducted of all work involving exposure to hazardous substances. The assessment will be based on manufacturers' and suppliers' health and safety guidance and our own knowledge of the work process. The WEA will ensure that exposure of workers to hazardous substances is minimised and adequately controlled in all cases. All workers who will come into contact with hazardous substances will receive training and information on the health and safety issues relating to that type of work. Assessments will be reviewed periodically, whenever there is a substantial modification to the work process and if there is any reason to suspect that the assessment may no longer be valid.

4.11 Fire Safety

The WEA's fire safety policy and procedures take account of special fire hazards in specific areas of the workplace and, where appropriate, have been compiled with the assistance of the local fire service. The person with responsibility for ensuring the maintenance and testing of fire alarms and fire fighting equipment is the Regional Safety Co-ordinator. In the event of the building being leased or multi-occupancy the landlord shall have responsibility for fire fighting equipment. All employees within the WEA have a duty to report immediately any fire, smoke or potential fire hazards to their manager, and to operate the fire alarm. A member of staff shall be nominated to phone the Fire Brigade by dialling 999. Employees have a duty to conduct their operations in such a way as to minimise the risk of fire. This involves taking care when smoking, keeping combustible materials separate from sources of ignition and avoiding unnecessary accumulation of combustible materials.

4.12 Fire Detection equipment

Smoke detectors and manually operated fire alarms are located at strategic points throughout the workplace. If a smoke detector sounds it is the responsibility of any employee present to activate the alarm and evacuate the building.

4.13 Fire Fighting Equipment

Fire extinguishers are located at strategic points throughout the workplace. Employees are expected to tackle a fire themselves only if trained and it would pose no threat to their personal safety to do so. If the situation is dangerous or potentially dangerous the employee should activate the alarm and evacuate the building immediately.

4.14 Fire Doors

Fire doors designed to slow the spread of fire and smoke throughout the workplace have been installed at strategic points. Fire doors are to be kept closed at all times.

4.15 Fire Exits

Fire exits are located at strategic points throughout the workplace. Exit doors and corridors must never be locked, blocked or used as storage space. Emergency lighting has been

installed in exit corridors, above emergency exit doors and throughout the workplace in case of power failure.

4.16 Smoking

Smoking is prohibited in all areas of the workplace except those areas that have been specifically designated as smoking areas. Smoking areas should at all times be kept fire safe. Combustible materials must never be stored or allowed to accumulate in areas where smoking is permitted.

4.17 Emergency Evacuation Procedure

In the event of the fire alarm being activated, or in any other emergency situation (such as a bomb scare), all employees must leave the building by the nearest available exit and assemble at the designated assembly point.

Practice fire drills will be conducted at regular intervals, at least 6 monthly, to ensure employee familiarity with emergency evacuation procedures.

4.18 Accident Investigation

The WEA see accident investigation as a valuable tool in the prevention of future incidents. In the event of an accident resulting in injury a report will be drawn up by the Regional Safety Co-ordinator detailing:

- the circumstances of the accident including photographs and diagrams wherever possible
- the nature and severity of the injury sustained
- the identity of any eyewitnesses
- the time, date and location of the incident
- the date of the report

4.19 Accident Procedure

First aid stations are located in areas where personnel are concentrated around the workplace. All first aid stations are clearly marked and are easily accessible by all employees during all working hours. One person holding a current first aid certificate is responsible for the proper use and maintenance of each first aid station.

The Regional Safety Co-ordinator responsible for reporting all cases of accident and disease to the Regional Secretary. Accident records are compiled and stored by the Regional Safety Co-ordinator. The Regional Secretary is responsible for reporting cases of accident and disease to the relevant enforcing authority under the RIDDOR 95 regulations where applicable.

4.20 Asbestos

In accordance with the 'Control of Asbestos at Work' Regulations 2002 the likelihood of asbestos in WEA buildings is considered low but shall be checked prior to any maintenance. If during maintenance any concerns are raised of the possibility of asbestos being present a survey shall be carried out.

In the Offices/Buildings leased or rented a check shall be made with the landlord to confirm whether or not asbestos is present and if it is, that it is being managed effectively and represents no risk to WEA employees or learners.

4.21 The Learning Environment

As part of the WEA's commitment to providing a safe learner environment we have produced a Guide for tutors on this and conduct a rigorous system of accommodation surveys.

5. REVIEW AND ENQUIRIES

The Head of Human Resources is responsible for maintenance, regular review and updating of this policy. The Association Management Team will be consulted on any changes, which will be agreed with the representative trade unions, who may also request a review of the policy when issues are identified.

Any queries on the application or interpretation of this policy must be discussed with the Head of Human Resources or the Health and Safety Adviser prior to any action being taken.

6 INDEX OF SUPPORTING SAFETY PROCEDURES

02 Risk Assessment

03 Accident Reporting and Investigation

04 Fire and Emergency Planning

05 Office Safety

06 Display Screen Equipment

07 Manual Handling

08 Placement Providers

09 New Premises Safety Checklist

010 Outdoor Activities Assessment

011 Home Working

012 Driving on WEA Business

013 Safety Committee

014 Lone Working