

## 4. SAFETY AUDITS AND INSPECTIONS, ENFORCEMENT AND INSPECTIONS BY REGULATORY AUTHORITIES

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**4.2.1 Aim:** To describe the purpose of safety audits and inspections, including those led by regulatory agencies, and responsibilities of staff with regard to these.

**4.3.1 Safety Audits and Inspections:** Safety audits and inspections are tools used to assess how effectively health and safety is being managed in any given area.

4.3.2 An audit covers the overall management of health and safety, and typically involves looking at H&S Committee minutes, risk assessments, accident and incident records, training records, area self-inspection records, appointment of First Aiders and Fire Stewards, *etc.* It will usually include a physical inspection of the area being audited.

4.3.3 An inspection focuses on the practical implementation of health safety policies and arrangements, such as whether and to what extent procedures are being properly followed, standards of housekeeping, *etc.*

4.3.4 Each laboratory area will be audited at least on an annual basis in conjunction with the College's Health and Safety Manager for the Edinburgh bioQuarter campus. Exceptions must be justified to the UofE Edinburgh bioQuarter Buildings Health & Safety Committee. Reports are considered by the UofE Edinburgh bioQuarter Buildings Health & Safety Committee.

4.3.5 The frequency and level of campus-internal audits and inspections is determined also by the UofE Edinburgh bioQuarter Buildings Health & Safety Committee.

4.3.6 Model checklists for self-inspection are available on the University's Health & Safety web site at:

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/health-safety/online-resources/checklists>

4.3.7 A record of audits and inspections, and subsequent remedial actions, should be kept by the Health & Safety Adviser for each area that has been subject to such review, and should be available for scrutiny by the University's Director of Health and Safety, Trade Union safety representatives, and inspectors from the Health & Safety Executive etc as may be required.

**4.4.1 Inspections by Regulatory Authorities:** All areas of each University building on the Edinburgh bioQuarter campus may be subject to external inspection by the

Health & Safety Executive (HSE), Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA), Police Scotland, the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service, and the University's insurers and their risk management consultants. The HSE, SEPA, Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service are under no obligation to provide advance notice of a formal visit, but the University's Health & Safety Department *do* usually receive advance notice of visits by inspectors from these organisations.

4.4.2 The University's Health & Safety Department must be informed by the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine of any notice served on the College by regulatory authorities of an intention to visit University buildings on the Edinburgh bioQuarter campus, and the College's Health and Safety Manager for the Edinburgh bioQuarter campus will be expected (if available) to accompany visiting auditors.

4.4.3 Occasionally, staff may be contacted directly by one of the above organisations; this will usually be in the form of a letter or by telephone. In all such cases, the person contacted must consult either with the College's Health and Safety Manager for the Edinburgh bioQuarter campus, or the most appropriate adviser from the University's Health & Safety Department, before responding.

4.4.4 Rarely, the HSE, SEPA, Police Scotland or the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service may arrive in a University building on the Edinburgh bioQuarter campus unannounced. They have a legal right to inspect premises and to request information. In all such cases, be polite, be helpful, and let the College's Health and Safety Manager for the Edinburgh bioQuarter campus, or the most appropriate adviser from the University's Health & Safety Department, know immediately.

4.4.5 Recommendations arising from these visits are generally received in the form of a letter sent to the University. There is a range of Improvement and Prohibition Notices that may be served on the University, employees and other persons, and which can be used to require the suspension (immediately, if necessary) of an activity that an Inspector has considered to be unsafe.

4.4.6 An Inspector from one of the statutory organisations mentioned above may initiate criminal proceedings against the University, or any individual, for a breach of any duty under relevant legislation. Possible penalties include fines and, in the most serious cases, imprisonment.

**4.5.1 Further Information:** Further information concerning monitoring of health and safety policy can be found at:

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/health-safety/policy-cop/policy>

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