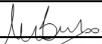
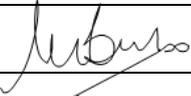




Northumberland
SKILLS

**Learn.
Discover.
Grow.**
Endless possibilities...

**Policies and Procedures
2021/2022**

Document Title	Health and Safety Policy	URN	NS-P216
Version	2	Written by	Brian Harrison
Approved by			
Effective date	September 2021	Date of next review	September 2022
Senior Manager Responsible	Joanne Hewison - Curriculum and Skills Manager		
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NORTHUMBERLAND SKILLS

NS-P216 HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Part 1 - Statement of intent

1. Northumberland Skills recognises and accepts its legal responsibilities for health and safety, it is the policy of the service to develop and ensure that adequate health and safety conditions are in place and maintained for all employees, learners, visitors, volunteers and contractors. Northumberland Skills is committed to the continual improvement in standards of health and safety.
2. The objectives of the Health and Safety Policy are to:
 - Maintain and adhere to a successful health and safety management system.
 - Ensure the Safeguarding and Prevent Policies and associated procedures are in place and followed.
 - Promote standards of health and safety and welfare that comply with the provisions and requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, all other relevant statutory provisions and Approved Codes of Practice.
 - Provide and maintain safe, healthy and supportive working and learning environments, safe systems and methods of work and to protect employees, learners, and others, including members of the public who come into contact with foreseeable work and site/campus hazards.
 - Manage health and safety by a process of assessment of risk and have in place appropriate control measures to reduce the risks to an acceptable level.
 - Provide all employees with the information, instruction, training, and supervision they need to work safely and efficiently. Northumberland County Council monitor this through mandatory training and their eLearning portal.
 - To develop safety awareness among employees and learners and to ensure appropriate competence of staff who deliver training to learners.
 - Make employees aware of their individual responsibility to take all reasonable care for their own safety and that of others and to co-operate with Northumberland Skills in matters of health and safety.
 - Engage in full and effective consultation with Union Appointed Safety Representatives and all staff representatives on health and safety matters, as per Northumberland County Council guidelines.
 - Encourage learners to contribute to ensuring a safe and healthy learning environment.
 - Ensure that health and safety is part of every staff and learners' induction and part of the curriculum delivery to help ensure that learners are equipped with the appropriate health and safety knowledge to take forward into their working lives.
 - To comply with the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010 and that no person(s) shall be disadvantaged or discriminated against.
3. The day to day responsibility for health and safety rests with line management.
4. Safety and occupational health are important management responsibilities and support, training and advisory services to assist Managers in the implementation of this will be provided.
5. Line Managers will be expected to identify high risk activities which require extra resourcing for consideration by the service. It is expected that routine health and safety issues can be dealt with at a local Departmental level within their agreed budgets.
6. This policy will be subject to regular review and will be revised at least every two years.

Health and Safety Policy and Procedures

Terminology

- The **Service** - means Northumberland Skills
- **NCC** – means Northumberland County Council
- **Senior Leadership Team (SLT)** - means the staff who form the Senior Leadership Team in the service.
- They have direct responsibilities for Curriculum and Business Support and other nominated functions.
- **Staff** - means every employee of Northumberland Skills.
- **Learners** - means any person enrolled on any learning programme.
- **Safeguarding Lead** is dealt with by the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) relating to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.
- **Funding Agency (FA)** - means The Education and Skills Funding Agency.
- **Equality and Diversity (E&D)** - Equality is the framework which enables opportunity, access, participation and contribution that is fair and inclusive whilst diversity is the recognition, respect and celebration within and between different groups of people.
- **Contractors** - Any person(s), organisation, company or self-employed person that is engaged to undertake work who is not an employee of Northumberland Skills.
- **Visitor** - any persons attending campus premises.

Covid 19 general guidance and fast-spreading SARS-CoV-2 variant now known as Omicron

“The health and wellbeing of Northumberland Skills staff and learners is our highest priority and we have put in place a large number of safety measures to ensure our campuses are as safe as possible. This has been done in line with Government guidance in full consultation with our recognised unions, Northumberland public health authorities and Northumberland County Council public health experts.

“Prior to the most recent national lockdown, we moved a number of operational and educational activity online with the exemption of a small handful of practical teaching programmes, SEND learners and 16- to 18-year-old learners. All buildings have been put on restricted access in December 2021 to significantly reduce the numbers of frontline staff needed on campus. Educational front line staff are attending as normal to complete face to face learning.

Our campuses remain open in line with Government guidance to support learners and in line with Plan B requirements dated 9th December 2021.

“We have worked relentlessly to ensure our campuses are Covid secure. Our safety measures include: regular testing for all staff twice weekly including learners, tailored risk assessments for all areas of campuses, reduced class sizes where possible and wearing face coverings in communal areas. All campuses have clear cleaning stations in place.

Part 2 - Organisation and Implementing the Health and Safety Policy

The Health and Safety Policy consists of:-

Part 1— The Statement of Intent.

Part 2 - The organisation in place, for implementing the aims and objectives of the service and the arrangements: these guide the management, staff, learners, and visitors alike in their actions to ensure a safe, healthy, and supportive learning and working environment.

The health and safety procedures listed in Part 3 are an addendum to the policy and are subject to periodic changes and updates.

The framework for managing health and safety in Northumberland Skills follows the guidance laid down in the HSE publication HSG65 - 'Managing for Health and Safety'.

The key elements of the HSG65 principles which we aspire to are:

- Plan
- Do
- Act
- Check

The model is a framework to achieve a balance between the systems and behavioural aspects of management whilst treating health and safety as an integral part of good management generally, as opposed to a stand-alone health and safety system.

Policy

The Health and Safety Policy is the foundation in establishing and maintaining an effective health and safety management model that is proportionate to the risks for Northumberland Skills and linked to Northumberland County Council.

Risk Profiling

The aim is to **minimise health** and safety risks, in accordance with sensible risk management approach, which is supported by clear lines of roles and responsibility. Risk assessments are used to decide on priorities and to set out objectives for eliminating hazards and reducing risks. Wherever possible, risks are eliminated or engineered out by selection and design of facilities, equipment and processes. If risks cannot be eliminated, they are minimised by the use of physical controls or, as a last resort, through systems of work and personal protective equipment.

Health and Safety is the owned responsibility of all employees. Everyone must work towards creating an ever improving safe, healthy and supportive working and learning environment. Staff must not disregard hazards which they come across, but are to actively seek rectification by raising the issue through the correct channels and/or temporarily make safe those situations until a proper solution is found.

Should any employee be found to be negligent and/or in any serious or repeated breaches of their health and safety duty, disciplinary action may be taken against them.

Risk Assessing—Risk assessments are in place for each campus. The Health and Safety Department of Northumberland County Council provide guidance, support, and training. The risk assessment process is the primary way in which the service manages health and safety risks.

Where an area has been considered sufficiently low risk by the Managers, such that documented risk

assessments are not required, evidence of reasoning for this decision must be retained.

Defects Reporting System — The service has a defect reporting system in place; the 'Helpdesk' is a method by which staff can report identified defects within the fabric of buildings, external areas or to items of equipment and other building issues.

Insurance – Northumberland Skills legal liabilities to third parties, including learners, are covered by Northumberland County Councils Public Liability Insurance Policy. Policies are in place to cover the services liability to its employees and **limited** personal accident, travel and motor vehicle cover is also provided. The Certificate of Insurance is displayed prominently throughout all sites.

Risk Assessment for learners and staff with medical, physical, or learning impairments — Learners and staff with disclosed disabilities who learn or work at Northumberland Skills must be assessed by the Manager of that area to ensure that they can do so without putting themselves or others at risk. This assessment process will be fair and meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. In support of the Manager there are a number of specialist staff employed to offer specific and competent advice, these include Student Services, Health Coordinator and outsourced Occupation Health Service, Head of Health and Safety – Northumberland County Council.

Organising

Competence - Competence is about more than training and qualifications; it is the experience of applying skills and knowledge. Managers need to be aware of the relevant legislation and how to manage health and safety effectively in their areas of control. All employees need to be able to work in a safe manner and staff recruited must be vocationally competent and able to best train and educate *our* learners.

Co-operation - Participation by employees supports risk control by encouraging ownership of health and safety arrangements and procedures. Pooling knowledge and experience through participation, commitment and involvement helps ensure the whole organisation has the right approach to health and safety.

The service will endeavor to encourage co-operation by all staff, contractors and learners to help ensure a positive health and safety culture exists.

Communication - Communication is the key to achieving success in health and safety management and the effective implementation of the Health and Safety Policy within our service. Information is made available to staff and learners for help and guidance on any health and safety matters.

Managers need to communicate information to their staff and learners on the risks to their health and safety as identified by the area risk assessments, and the preventative and protective measures in place necessary to control risks. Managers are to act upon any feedback that may arise from communications.

Health and safety is communicated by a range of methods which include:

- Staff and learner inductions
- Northumberland County Council development days and mandatory training
- Internal briefings
- Chief Executives briefing's
- All staff emails
- Senior Leadership Team Briefings/meetings
- Curriculum Leadership Group meetings
- Management Planning Days
- Staff and learner Padlet
- NCC Intranet

Information, Instruction and Training — The provision of information, instruction and training is a necessity to ensure the health, safety and welfare of staff.

Health and Safety Training - There is in place a training plan which covers all essential and recommended health and safety training for service staff. All training is logged and recorded on staff Continual Professional Development logs.

Staff Induction — All employees receive an induction module that incorporates health and safety. This is backed up by localised inductions delivered by NCC online learn together portal.

Student Induction — Learners attend an induction talk within their first two weeks of starting their course. These induction talks include the importance of feeling safe inside and outside of our learning environment and the arrangements and provisions of Safeguarding. Code of Conduct and our Values is brought to the attention of learners at induction with further information being supplied at their curriculum inductions.

Curriculum areas introduce health and safety at appropriate points in the learners training, particularly before using equipment and tools for the first time. This is set in conjunction with the awarding bodies' criteria for course delivery and covered by mandatory safety units on courses.

Emergency Evacuation — Fire emergency evacuation is covered within staff and learners' induction information. Appropriate staff are identified and trained in the *use* of evacuation chairs, fire extinguishers, fire zone tags and Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPS). PEEPS are in place to ensure that any persons with impairment needs can be continuously and safely evacuated from The College buildings in the event of an emergency.

The Health and Wellbeing Lead is responsible for:-

- Promoting high standards of health and safety throughout our service.
- Implementing, co-ordinating, maintaining and reviewing the Health and Safety Policy.
- *Ensuring* that members of staff *are* fully informed on all significant developments in health and safety matters. Particularly around Covid guidance and legislation.
- Establishing effective reporting and communication on health and safety throughout the service.
- Ensuring the access needs of all are met, making reasonable adjustments where appropriate.
- The development and overseeing of appropriate inspection, monitoring, auditing systems and risk assessment management process.
- Planning, management, and operational implementation of first aid provisions.
- Representing the service at meetings with Northumberland County Council.

Senior Leadership Team is responsible for:-

- Allocating appropriate resources to ensure effective health and safety measures are introduced and maintained.
- Bringing to the attention of Northumberland County Council any high risk activity which cannot be effectively controlled by use of curriculum/business support resources.
- Setting and monitoring health and safety objectives and performance for their staff.

Curriculum Leads are responsible for: -

- All health and safety matters within their area.
- Managing the risk assessment process within their area of responsibility. Supported by the Health and wellbeing lead.
- Making and organising adjustments for an individual's requirements in line with the Equality Act 2010.
- Ensuring all their staff fully understand their duties and responsibilities, as outlined in the Health and Safety Policy, associated procedures and localised safe systems of work.
- Ensuring that all learners, for whom they are responsible, are inducted effectively in emergency procedures and the vocational hazards they will encounter as part of their training.
- Ensuring health and safety procedures are implemented and adhered to.
- Ensuring that all apprenticeship/work experience employers are checked for health and safety purposes in accordance with the requirements of the Funding Agency.

- Setting standards for their area in the monitoring and improvement of health and safety.
- Ensuring there is up to date health and safety training for all staff in their area.
- Ensuring local safe working practices are devised, implemented, and reviewed regularly or when there has been a significant change.
- Communicating health and safety matters to staff and learners.
- Keeping themselves aware of any legal and technical developments relevant to risk controls of the activities they have responsibility for and where applicable make arrangements to maintain/introduce them.
- Conducting minimum termly health and safety checks of their areas, where obvious examples of good or bad performance is noted, actioned appropriately and in accordance with health and safety procedures.
- Carrying out initial investigation of all accidents in their area, referring to Northumberland County Council Health and Safety Department as appropriate, and completing the incident report form on the online portal.

Employees are responsible for:-

- Taking reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions.
- Co-operating with the service to enable compliance with statutory duties for health and safety.
- Not intentionally or recklessly interfering with or misusing anything provided in the interests of health and safety.
- Being familiar with and conforming to, so far as they are able, any statement of health and safety, policies, procedures, and safe working practices appertaining to them.
- Informing managers of:
 - Any work situation that a person would reasonably consider represented a serious or immediate danger to health and safety.
 - Any matters which a person with the employee's training and instruction would reasonably consider represented a shortcoming in protection against arrangements for health and safety.

Staff with Teaching Responsibilities

The health, safety and wellbeing of learners are the responsibility of the staff member teaching them whilst in the training environment. They must ensure learners are given an appropriate induction including fire and emergency at the beginning of each course which is repeated, as appropriate, throughout their time in our settings. Where learners are introduced to new hazards, they must be made fully aware of the health and safety risks associated and the control measures needed to be in place to minimise the risk to them and others. All staff talking a lesson, class or sessions must maintain an up to date attendance register.

Learner Responsibilities

Northumberland Skills will exercise its responsibility for all learners under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. It is essential that learners understand their individual responsibilities in relation to health and safety. The service expects all learners to abide by the rules, regulations and responsibilities set out in the learner Agreement signed at enrolment or induction, Learner Handbook, and regulations and codes of practice. The service will provide an appropriate health and safety induction for all learners. This will emphasise the learners' responsibility to comply with the rules and regulations by which it fulfils its duty of care towards our learners.

The following methods are used in Northumberland Skills to measure performance:-

Health and Safety Inspections — The Health and Safety lead completes regular spot checks in campuses. All identified actions to be recorded and communicated to the SMT. A monthly checklist is completed for audit at Northumberland County Council.

Accident and Incidents — There is an accident/incident reporting and investigation procedure in place. Accidents are investigated to identify the underlying causes and root factors to improve health and safety within the service and prevent re-occurrence.

All near miss accidents/incidents which could have caused serious injury are investigated in the first instance by

the line Manager, making appropriate reports to the Health and Safety Department at NCC.

All accidents/incidents of a serious or potentially serious nature must be reported to the Health and Safety Department by the quickest means possible. The line Manager will initiate all investigations and report the findings to the Head of Health and Safety for formal investigation.

The SMT is responsible for full investigation and reporting of all notifiable accidents, disease and dangerous occurrence to the relevant enforcing authority and Education & Skills Funding Agency.

Reviewing Performance

External auditing will be carried out by The Education & Skills Funding Agency, Environmental Health Practitioner visits to catering areas, fire officer inspections, insurance company inspections, and other providers of work-based learning where we are the employers and visits from HSE.

Risk Assessment Review and Audit - The management of risk assessments is to be reviewed at least annually by the Health and wellbeing lead under health and safety risk assessment procedures.

Self-Assessment Report (SAR) - The service completes a Self-Assessment Report sub report on health and safety. This SAR process reviews health and safety performance of the previous academic year, checks and monitors outlined performance standards and progress on development plans. New standards by which health and safety performance can be measured for the forthcoming year must also be agreed and submitted to the Education & Skills Funding Agency provider pathway as part of the continuous quality assurance process.

Learner Feedback - forum meetings are held by curriculum areas, where learners' views on the service are considered and any *complaints* and issues are responded to. Reports are produced and actions allocated to members of staff as appropriate. Any health and safety issues raised at these meetings are actioned accordingly. Learners complete an annual survey where they are directly asked if they 'feel safe at the Northumberland Skills', any views and comments are assessed and actions taken as appropriate.

Learning Lessons

Health and Safety is a core value of Northumberland Skills and embedded in effective teaching, learning and working practices. Identifying underlying causes to cultural and organisational issues forms an important aspect of successful change and safety development. The service values have been developed and implemented to focus and drive the organisation and have been facilitated by excellence in management training and improved communication methods.