

Health and Safety Policy

1. General Statement of Policy

Our Aim

The Association for Science Education (ASE) seeks to achieve the highest standards in the field of health and safety. We pursue this aim not simply to comply with current legislation, but also to protect both our staff and anyone else who may be affected by our activities.

People are our most important asset. It follows, therefore, that the identification, assessment and control of health and safety along with other risks, is a key management responsibility, and inseparable from all other association objectives.

Our Policy

Our policy is to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for our employees, members and visitors, and to provide such information, training and supervision as they need for this purpose.

We will meet all legal requirements under health and safety legislation and accept our responsibility for the health and safety of both our own employees and other people who may be affected by our activities. Consequently sufficient time and resources will be allocated to ensure that all legal obligations are met.

Everyone at the Association has a part to play in ensuring compliance with both the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and all other current health and safety legislation.

This policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner depending on legal requirements.

2. Organisation and Responsibility for Health and Safety

ASE recognises that to secure and maintain a safe place of work and safe work practices, everyone at the workplace needs to be aware of their individual responsibilities for safety and act accordingly. The Association secures safe working practices and promotes a positive safety culture in the workplace by establishing appropriate systems of control, communication, co-operation and competence.

2.1 Control

ASE provides appropriate control of health and safety issues in respect of employees and those who work on their behalf (volunteers, members, contractors and visitors) by ensuring that:

- agreed safe methods of work are put into practice at all times;
- employees have the equipment they need for the job;
- employees are properly trained and competent in what they do;
- adequate supervision of employees takes place and that the work of contractors is appropriately monitored;
- those who supervise know what is expected of them and how they are to undertake the task.

ASE demonstrates its commitment to health and safety, both by example and in its everyday decisions, for example by discussing work activities and any associated safety issues, by reviewing guidance in light of changed conditions such as Covid19 and by carrying out an annual risk assessment and review of working practices at HQ.

Allocation of responsibilities

Trustee Body:

It is not reasonably practicable for trustees to manage health and safety on a daily basis. This is the responsibility of the Chief Executive as outlined below. However, trustees will ensure that all their decisions reflect ASE's health and safety intentions, as articulated in this health and safety policy statement; and that there is a process in place to communicate any significant health and safety issues affecting the Association and the subsequent action(s) taken to address these.

Trustees are responsible for:

- a) ensuring that the Chief Executive is provided with the time, resources and support to operate an effective system of health and safety management throughout ASE;
- b) providing their support and commitment to establish a positive health and safety culture.

Ultimate Responsibility

The Chief Executive has overall and final responsibility for the effective management of health and safety throughout the Association.

Day to Day Responsibility

The Head of Finance and Operations has day to day responsibility for ensuring that the organisation's arrangements for Health and Safety (section 3) are put into practice and will work alongside the Office Manager to do this.

Individual Responsibilities

Everyone, including trustees, managers, and employees, has individual health and safety responsibilities and must:

- follow reasonable instructions given in the interests of health and safety;
- take reasonable care for their own health and safety at work, as well as the health and safety of others who may be affected by their work;
- follow the health and safety rules which apply to their particular job and to the premises in general;
- not misuse anything that has been provided in the interests of health and safety (for example propping open a fire door with a fire extinguisher or blocking a fire escape route with rubbish or equipment);
- report anything that might present a danger to either themselves or anybody else following agreed procedures.

In the unlikely event of an individual failing to discharge their health and safety responsibilities, the Association reserves the right to take disciplinary action against employees.

2.2 Communication

ASE ensures that everyone is clear about their health and safety responsibilities through effective communication. This is done by informing all employees of:

- this health and safety policy and what it means in practice;
- the allocation of safety responsibilities;
- details of safe working practices;
- fire and emergency arrangements;
- any additional requirements identified by our landlords, the University of Hertfordshire
- the findings of any investigations or issues raised.

2.3 Co-operation

ASE aims to obtain the co-operation of everyone at the workplace, thus confirming that all members of staff have accepted their safety responsibilities and can be expected to implement safe working practices. All employees have a legal responsibility to co-operate to achieve a safe and healthy workplace and to take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their work.

Should an employee identify a health and safety problem which they are not competent to rectify, they will immediately notify the Chief Executive, who will be responsible for finding a solution.

2.4 Competence

ASE ensures that all employees are capable of doing their work in a way which is safe and healthy for themselves and others, by:

- operating an effective recruitment and placement procedure, to ensure those employed (including those who support on a voluntary basis) have relevant knowledge and experience in what they do and are competent to do their work in a safe and healthy way;
- operating an induction programme for all employees, volunteers and those on work placement which includes Health and Safety training;
- providing information, instruction and training where changes to the job, staff or equipment are planned;
- allocating and organising work activities in such a way that it secures and maintains a safe place of work.

3. Arrangements for Health and Safety

ASE aims to manage issues successfully by identifying hazards and controlling risks.

Risk Assessments

ASE identifies the hazards in its workplace and relevant contracts, assesses the risk of any harm arising and decides upon adequate precautions to ensure that no one gets hurt or becomes ill. The organisation's risk assessment will be reviewed and updated annually and always when circumstances change such as due to the risks posed by Covid 19 and the associated move to working from home.

When buying or hiring plant, equipment or materials, ASE will obtain from the suppliers the relevant health and safety information and either provide training on the safe use or consider the use of a specialist contractor.

Instruction, Information, Training and Consultation

All employees are provided with necessary information, instruction, training and supervision to enable them to work in a safe and healthy way and are required to comply with measures put in

place to ensure their health and safety at work and are made aware of the company's Health and Safety Policy.

We will consult staff routinely on Health and Safety matters as they arise and formally when we review this policy.

We will make sure suitable guidance is in place for employees who work remotely.

4. Accident Reporting and Investigation

All employees are made aware of the need to record accidents for themselves, colleagues, volunteers, members and visitors using the 'ASE Accident Report Book' and to inform the Chief Executive or Office Manager as soon as possible.

The Chief Executive is responsible for investigating accidents and incidents and will make every effort to establish the causes of such accidents and incidents in order to prevent recurrences.

If appropriate, a report will be sent to either the Health and Safety Executive or the appropriate local authority for injuries, diseases or dangerous occurrences, that are notifiable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR).

5. Fire Precautions and Emergency Arrangements

The Association ensures that a workplace fire risk assessment is undertaken at the premises where its employees are based.

ASE's employees must keep sources of ignition away from combustible materials and must not hamper the fire precautions of premises in which they work. Fire exit routes and fire doors must be kept clear at all times.

ASE holds fire drills in liaison with the University of Hertfordshire and implements appropriate measures to ensure good fire precautions.

ASE complies with The Smoke-free (Premises and Enforcement) Regulations 2006 and through its *No Smoking Policy*, ensures that it is followed at all its premises. All employees, volunteers, contractors and visitors are expected to adhere to this.

ASE acknowledges that good housekeeping is a prerequisite of achieving high standards of safety and fire safety. Employees must ensure that appropriate standards of housekeeping are established and maintained. Waste materials must be disposed of appropriately and must not be allowed to accumulate.

6. Plant and Equipment

All equipment used by ASE is in accordance with the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 and the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998. Equipment must be checked before each use to ensure that it is appropriate for the task intended. It must be used and maintained as recommended by the manufacturer.

7. Electricity

ASE ensures that all electrical equipment is in good order and used in accordance with the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989. ASE is responsible for arranging for appropriately qualified and competent people to develop and implement a suitable system of inspection and maintenance for both fixed electrical installations and portable electrical equipment.

8. First Aid

Both the provision of first aid equipment and the need for trained first aiders are part of the ASE risk assessment programme along with the allocation of responsibility for checking first aid boxes. First aid boxes are made available in designated places within the building ensuring easy access to one. First aid boxes will be checked on a quarterly basis. Any out of date items will be disposed of and such items replenished as needed at the time.

9. *Manual Handling*

ASE is committed to ensuring safe manual handling. ASE is responsible for undertaking risk assessments in accordance with the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992. Special arrangements for manual handling training shall be made for appropriate employees where this is necessary e.g. in moving heavy office equipment.

10. *Substances Hazardous to Health*

Substances hazardous to health, either created by work processes or used by ASE, must be assessed in accordance with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) 2002. ASE will identify, obtain and issue all necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) should it be required. In the hierarchy of control measures, the use of PPE is seen as a last resort, not the first choice. External cleaning contractors use chemicals that may be hazardous to health; these are stored on ASE premises and should not be accessed by employees

11. *Lone Working at HQ*

ASE considers the health and safety implications of lone working at HQ as part of its general risk assessment process. Lone working will be allowed only after suitable and sufficient risk assessments have taken place and appropriate measures taken that will ensure the safety of employees.

12. *Display Screen Equipment*

ASE undertakes risk assessments in accordance with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992. Guidance on safe working with display screen equipment will be made available to all employees to enable them to carry out a risk assessment in the office and/or at home. Where employees are found to be users as defined in the regulations, eyesight tests are provided for them and all staff will be trained in the safe use of display screen equipment. Such testing and training is in accordance with legal requirements and Health and Safety Executive guidance.

13. *Driving*

It is essential that ASE employees give their full attention when driving on association business. Drivers are responsible for driving in accordance with the Highway Code and must hold a valid licence for the class of vehicle they drive. They should also ensure that any vehicle they drive on company business is roadworthy, fully insured for the use it is put to, and, if appropriate, has a current MOT certificate.

The use of mobile phones while operating any motor vehicle is against the law. ASE recognises that there is an abundance of in-car hands free equipment available to drivers. Employees may use systems that automatically answer the phone during any journey and hold a discussion with the caller. ASE does not permit however, the use of hands free kits, that in order to answer a

call, the driver needs to actively use a mobile handset. Unless calls can be automatically answered all activity involving a mobile phone or in-car kit is prohibited.

Satellite navigation systems are not provided by the company and drivers using their own equipment should only do so whilst following the safety warnings/instructions provided by the manufacturer.

Smoking is not permitted in vehicles leased to or owned by employees whilst they are on ASE business and carrying members or other employees.

14. Smoking

All employees are reminded that it is an offence to smoke within a public building or enclosed space. All employees should make themselves aware of any local arrangements or prohibitions regarding smoking on premises and adhere to all requests. Provision is made at Head Office for smokers to smoke away from the building, but remain on site.

15. Visitors

ASE is responsible for ensuring the health and safety of its visitors, including volunteers. All visitors must be accompanied during their visit and accounted for in the event of an emergency evacuation of the building.

16. Contractors

The University of Hertfordshire is responsible for the hiring of any contractor to undertake work at the Headquarters building in Hatfield. If there is a need to use a contractor for other reasons, then ASE will ensure that quality, registered, insured and competent contractors and tradesman are used within or upon its premises. ASE employee safety will be of primary concern when asking any contractor to undertake work on site.

17. Monitoring

As part of its commitment to health and safety at work, ASE will ensure that all elements of its health and safety policy and practices are monitored. Therefore checks that health and safety procedures are being operated will take place regularly.

18. Review of Health and Safety management system

ASE accepts that management control systems tend to weaken with time, especially as people, equipment, processes and tasks change. Therefore periodic reviews of the health and safety management system will be undertaken internally. The timing of reviews will be determined by the Chief Executive.

19. Review of this Policy

This policy will be reviewed biannually, or sooner if circumstances demand, at which time, all necessary changes will be made to this policy in accordance with both legal developments and staff issues. Following each review, the policy will be signed and immediately reissued.

Last updated: July 2021

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