



Central Office Health and Safety Policy

Document Control	
Document Title:	Central Office Health and Safety Policy
Short Code:	N/A
Version:	3
Summary of Changes from Previous Version	§11.2 – new para on fire marshals/evacuation arrangements under hybrid working Minor corrections Changes to the named responsible persons
Ratified By:	Executive team
Date Ratified:	39/1/24
Name of Originator/Author:	Stuart Males – Group H&S Manager
Name of Responsible Committee	Compliance Committee
Date Issued:	30/1/24
Review By Date:	31/1/25
Target Audience:	All central office staff

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1. Overview

- 1.1 This document is United Learning's Central Office Health and Safety Management Policy. It details the management arrangements in place for the protection and promotion of excellent standards in occupational health and safety in relation to central office staff and operations.
- 1.2 It is based on the same principles and expectations as the Group Health and Safety Management Policy used by the group's schools, however, it is presented in a slightly different format to reflect the significant difference in operation and structure between schools and central office.
- 1.3 All central office employees are required to work in accordance with the roles and responsibilities detailed in this document and in line with the principles contained in the Group Health and Safety Topic Policies where relevant.
- 1.4 Effective health, safety and welfare management is not about ticking boxes, or filling out forms. It is about providing a work environment in which people are happy, safe, and healthy; all of which help to make United Learning an employer of choice.
- 1.5 This Policy covers all central office functions including physical offices and mobile/field-based employees, including when central office staff are working in one of the Group's schools. Where there is a variance in control measures between central office requirements and school requirements, the higher standard takes precedence.

2. General Documentation Requirements

- 2.1 A copy of the current version of this Policy and any related information or documents is stored in the central office area of United Hub.
- 2.2 All central office locations display a copy of the current year's Health and Safety Statement of Intent and hold a copy of this policy available for anyone who may wish to see it e.g. contractors. In addition, all offices display a copy of the current HSE Health and Safety Law poster.

Health and Safety Statement of Intent

- 2.3 A copy of the current Health and Safety Statement of Intent is displayed in all central office locations and available in the H&S section of the United Learning [Policies Portal](#). A copy is also enclosed at Appendix 2 of this policy.

Organisation

3. Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 The following details for the organisation of health and safety roles and responsibilities follow on from the '*Group Health and Safety Statement of Intent*' and its supporting principles.
- 3.2 This section details the organisation of health and safety roles and responsibilities for all central office staff.

4. Trustees

- 4.1 The Trustees of United Church Schools Trust (UCST) and United Learning Trust (ULT) as the employers, are responsible for ensuring compliance with:
- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (and its subsidiary Regulations),
 - The Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order 2005,
 - The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2015
- 4.2 They hold the Chief Executive Officer and Executive Directors to account for their performance with the duties under this Policy.

5. Chief Financial Officer

- 5.1 The Chief Financial Officer is the Executive responsible for health and safety, reporting directly into Trustees and the rest of the Executive team via the Group Board.

6. The Executive Team

- 6.1 The Executive Team are directly responsible for:
- Holding overall responsibility for the health and safety of those employees within their teams
 - Providing sufficient resources as necessary to ensure that health, safety, and welfare requirements of their teams are complied with.
 - Promoting a positive health and safety culture through leading by example, considering health and safety implications at the conceptual stages of all new projects or initiatives, and by fostering a 'no-blame' culture.
 - Ensuring that specific risk assessments produced by their teams are completed where appropriate and periodically reviewed.
 - Periodically reviewing the training compliance of the employees within their teams.

7. Group Health and Safety Manager

- 7.1 United Learning's Group Health and Safety Manager is directly responsible for:
- Developing and publishing the employer's health and safety policies applicable across the Group.
 - Developing and publishing guidance documents to assist in meeting the requirements of the employer's health and safety policies.
 - Implementing and advising on systems for the planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of the preventive and protective measures for health and safety.
 - Monitoring compliance with health, safety, and welfare requirements across the Group.
 - Serving as the Group's Radiation Protection Officer (RPO).

- Investigating significant accidents or health and safety incidents at central office locations and schools, with the authority to instruct all employees as necessary to facilitate the investigation.
- Stopping operations where there is an immediate risk to employee health, safety, or welfare.
- Reporting on the above to Trustees via the Chief Financial Officer.
- Reporting to the Trustees, via the Chief Financial Officer, on any current or emerging health and safety issues that may have a significant impact on the Group.
- Supporting the Executive Team in the promotion of a positive health and safety culture.

8. Office Leads

8.1 Each office has a lead contact for matters relating to that office. They are not health and safety specialists; however, it is this individual's responsibility to:

- Be familiar with the contents of this Policy and ensure it is made available to all employees.
- Support departmental heads/line managers in identifying health and safety training needs.
- Support line managers in the preparation and review of department specific risk assessments.
- Be the day-to-day contact for health and safety matters relating to their location.
- Oversee arrangements for fire and first-aid at their office.
- Ensure that accidents and incidents are reported and investigated and uploaded to the Group's Accident Reporting and Management System (ARMS).
- Liaise with enforcing authorities if necessary (fire authority, local authority environmental health officers).
- Raise any matters of concern to the Group Health and Safety Manager.

9. Human Resources

9.1 The Central Office Human Resources Team are responsible for:

- Enrolling new starters onto the SmartLog training system and monitor training completion.
- Overseeing the induction and onboarding process.
- Overseeing the work experience process.
- Ensuring that young person's risk assessments are carried out, where applicable.
- Ensuring that new and expectant mother's risk assessment are carried out.
- Monitoring and coordinating training and refresher training for first aiders and fire marshals.
- Maintaining records of the above as necessary

10. Line Managers.

10.1 All employees within United Learning who hold a line management position are directly responsible for:

- The health, safety, and welfare of those employees who report to them.
- Inducting new members of staff to their department.
- Identifying role-specific training needs of their employees on appointment and at appraisal.
- Ensuring those under their management have completed core and role-specific health and safety training as applicable.

- Developing a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan for an employee where necessary.
- Carrying out risk assessments for activities under their control, documenting the significant, acting upon these findings, and reviewing these risk assessments at least every two years.
- Attempting to resolve any health, safety, or welfare issues affecting their employees.
- Notifying their local Health and Safety lead of any health, safety, or welfare issues that they are unable to resolve directly.

11. Fire Marshals

11.1 All office locations should have at least one trained fire marshal on site during normal business hours. It is the fire marshal's responsibility to:

- Ensure the safe and total evacuation of the premises in the event of the fire alarm going off.
- Liaise with building management or the fire authority as necessary after evacuation.
- Monitor the premises for issues that may compromise fire safety, e.g. wedges in fire doors.

11.2 Hybrid working means that there may be times when there is no formal fire marshal present. All staff should therefore familiarise themselves with the evacuation protocols for their place of work as necessary.

12. First Aiders

12.1 All office locations should have at least one trained first aider on site during normal business hours. It is the first aider's responsibility to:

- Respond to accidents, providing first aid treatment, and contacting the emergency services if necessary.
- Maintain supplies of first aid equipment.
- Record the accident on ARMS.

12.2 In the absence of a trained first aider, the office leads will serve as the appointed person and if neither a first aider or office lead is available then the role of appointed person will default to the most senior member of staff on site at the time.

13. Employees

13.1 All United Learning employees are directly responsible for:

- Taking reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions.
- Cooperating fully with their line manager or other responsible person on all matters pertaining to their health and safety at work.
- Not recklessly or intentionally interfering with, or misusing any equipment, safety devices etc that have been provided in the interests of health and safety at work.
- Reporting promptly, in the first instance to their line manager, any accident, injury, significant near miss, incident of violence and aggression or case of work-related ill health.
- Reporting to their line manager, any defect, hazard, damage or unsafe practices or other items that could give rise to an unsafe place of work or cause injury or ill health to others.

- Wearing any protective clothing or equipment and using any equipment that has been provided for their health and safety while at work.
- Observing safety rules, complying with codes of practice, Group health and safety policies and guidance, and adhering to safe working procedures at all times.
- Acquainting themselves, and complying with, the procedure to follow in case of a fire or other emergency.
- Challenging any unsafe acts or conditions that they see. If they feel that any task allocated to them is unsafe, they may stop work, and raise their concerns with their line manager.
- Showing respect for fellow workers and managers by accepting constructive intervention in a positive manner when any member of staff, regardless of position, takes action to stop an unsafe act.

Delegated Roles

The following delegated roles support effective health and safety management across central office functions.

Role	Delegated Lead (Name and Position)
Exec with Responsibility for Central Office Health and Safety	Louise Johnston (Chief Financial Officer)
Competent Person for Health and Safety	Stuart Males (Group Health and Safety Manager)
Office Lead - Peterborough	Audrey Wills (Executive Assistant)
Office Lead – London	Jackie Wright (Executive Assistant)
Office Lead – Salford	Holly Cookson (Head of Operations)
Apprenticeships H&S Lead	Steve Bull (Head of Apprenticeships)
Premises Compliance Lead	Nick Roalfe (Director of Estates)
Training/Induction Lead	Nicole Kibble (HR Advisor)



Arrangements

14. Accidents and Incidents

- 14.1 Any accidents that occur to central office employees while at work must be recorded on our online accident book [ARMS](#). Records can be created by all employees and in the absence of a first aider at the time of an accident, line managers are expected to complete a record where any of their team suffers an accident while at work. Accidents should be recorded within 24 hours of the event.
- 14.2 Where an employee has an accident on a third-party site, e.g. hotel or in a school this must still be recorded on ARMS. This includes accidents that occur in the employee's own home if they were 'at work' at the time of the accident.
- 14.3 Where an accident relates in some way to the premises or condition thereof photos should be taken of the scene at the time of accident and uploaded to the ARMS record. Witness statements should be obtained from any witnesses. A template witness statement form is available in the information library on the [SmartLog](#) system and the [A-Z section](#) of the H&S pages on United Hub.
- 14.4 Near-misses i.e. events that could have given rise to injury but where harm was not realised, should also be recorded on ARMS as 'Near Misses'.
- 14.5 Investigations into accidents should be led by the individual's line manager in the first instance with support from the Group Health and Safety Manager where necessary. For more serious events, the investigation is likely to be led by the Group Health and Safety Manager.
- 14.6 Further details on the principles applied here can be found in the [Group Accident and Incident Management Policy](#).

15. Construction Projects

- 15.1 Any works meeting the definition of construction projects will be managed in accordance with the requirements of the [Group Construction Projects Policy](#). In most cases, this will be carried out by the Estates team.
- 15.2 The definition of construction work and further details on the principles applied here can be found in the [Group Construction Projects Policy](#).

16. Consultation

- 16.1 United Learning will consult with all employees on any matters that might affect their health and safety either directly or through the Central Office Safety and Health Committee. Trade union representatives will be included in this process (where they exist) and non-union employees can nominate a representative of employees. In the absence of such a nomination, all employees will be consulted directly.
- 16.2 Further details on the principles applied here can be found in the [Group Health and Safety Committee Policy](#) and [Group Consultation \(HS\) Policy](#)

17. Display Screen Equipment

- 17.1 All permanent workstations have been specified to meet statutory requirements in relation to desk, chair and equipment properties.

- 17.2 All employees are automatically enrolled on the central office DSE training and assessment programme on the [SmartLog](#) system; providing them with the necessary training for safe DSE use and the means to assess their own workstations. Any actions arising from these assessments will be brought to the attention of the employee's line manager for action. This training and assessment process is refreshed every two years.
- 17.3 Field-based employees, i.e. those who have no permanent office/desk will be provided with either the necessary equipment to meet statutory requirements or financial reimbursement for any items bought privately up to a value as determined in the [Expenses Policy](#). Employees buying equipment privately should have regard to the specifications detailed in the [Group Display Screen Equipment Policy](#) to ensure the equipment is compliant and does not create a risk to health.
- 17.4 All DSE Users are entitled to request an eyesight examination which must be carried out by an optician and at no cost to the employee. Any such request may be made annually, or sooner if deemed necessary by the optician. Where corrective spectacles are required for DSE use, the cost of these must be also be covered. Refer to the [Expenses Policy](#) for details on the current value that an employee may claim towards corrective spectacles.
- 17.5 Those staff who choose to work from home as part of flexible working arrangements are responsible for ensuring their workstation is suitable and without risks to health. For anyone wishing the review their home set up, further guidance is available in the [A-Z section](#) of United Hub.
- 17.6 Further details on the principles applied and minimum workstation requirements can be found in the [Group Display Screen Equipment Policy](#).

18. Driving for Work

- 18.1 Employees who drive for work, as opposed to those who commute to and from a single place of work, are required to comply with the requirements of the [Group Driving for Work Policy](#).
- 18.2 Line managers must check the driving licence of any employee, both at the time of employment and annually thereafter. This process requires the last eight digits of the employees driving licence and a 'check code' that the employee needs to generate from the [DVSA](#) website.
- 18.3 A template '*Driver Declaration Form*' is available on the [A-Z Section](#) of United Hub to aid this process. Employees should notify their line managers immediately if they incur any endorsements to their licence while driving for work. Disciplinary action will be considered for any endorsements incurred while driving for work.
- 18.4 Should an employee have their licence revoked or be disqualified from driving for any reason they must notify their line manager immediately.
- 18.5 Detailed below are the expectations of all United Learning employees who drive as part of their work activities:
- that they will adhere to road traffic laws.
 - the need to take a rest break of 15 minutes after every 2 hours of driving and when tired.
 - not driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs (including prescription drugs that may affect your ability to drive).

- not using a handheld phone when driving and only using hands-free phones for brief conversations in slow moving traffic or when stopped at the side of the road (see 15.10-15.12).
- 18.6 Line managers of employees who drive considerable distances on most days must risk assess this activity and consider enrolling their employees on an advanced driver training course.
- 18.7 Employees who use their own vehicles for work are insured for business through the Group's insurers, Zurich, but only where this use is 'occasional'. Clarification from Zurich has established a general interpretation that occasional use can be defined as 'once a month' though any incidents will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- 18.8 Should an employee drive for work using their own vehicle more frequently than this, 'business use' must be added to the employee's personal insurance policy. This needs to be verified and evidenced by the line manager at the licence check stage.
- 18.9 All employees are required to carry out pre-use inspections of any vehicle they use and ensure they are safely loaded. These are requirements of the Highway Code, not just of United Learning.
- 18.10 The law states that handheld mobile phones or similar device(s) must not be used whilst driving unless the vehicle is fitted with suitable hands-free equipment. However, making or receiving calls whilst driving even with a hands-free kit can impair a driver's ability to remain in complete control of the vehicle.
- 18.11 For this reason, United Learning does not advocate the making or receiving of calls while driving. If any employee wishes to do so, they must ensure that they remain in complete control of their vehicle at all times and understand that they are personally liable for any at fault accident that may result. Some factors that may affect the decision to make or receive calls are:
- The road/weather conditions
 - The nature/complexity of the call
 - Tiredness/fatigue
 - The need to look away from the road to initiate a call, dial the number or interact with the hands-free device.
- 18.12 *If a call is so important that it must be made, then it is reasonable to expect that it will affect your ability to retain complete control of your vehicle. Pull over at the next safest opportunity and make the call there instead.*
- 18.13 Where an employee commits a driving offence e.g. speeding, any associated fines must be paid for personally and will not be reimbursed by the Group. Should the employee be required to undertake a driver safety awareness course, and this be scheduled for during the normal working day, the employee is required to notify their line manager and to take this time as unpaid leave.
- 18.14 Any accident that occurs while driving for work in any vehicle on company business must be logged onto the Group Accident Reporting and Management System ([ARMS](#)) as an 'Incident' as soon as practicably possible after the accident, regardless of whether or not any personal harm has been realised.

- 18.15 Driving and working hours must be monitored to ensure compliance with the Working Time Regulations. In the work planning process, line managers must avoid the need for employees to drive at the end of excessively long working days by either building-in overnight accommodation, arranging for drive sharing, or using public transport. Line managers must also consider the impacts of the employee's workload on safe driving.

19. Electrical Safety

- 19.1 No staff are to carry out any work on or involving electrical systems unless specifically trained to do so and where an activity specific risk assessment has been carried out.
- 19.2 Portable appliance testing is arranged for all qualifying equipment by the Technology department in accordance with the frequencies as outlined in the HSE publication *Maintaining Portable Electrical Equipment in Low Risk Environment* (copy available in the [A-Z section](#) of United Hub).
- 19.3 If you feel you have a device that should have been tested, please notify the Service Desk.
- 19.4 Most office equipment, while portable in nature, is normally fixed in one location. However, for items that are regularly moved around, e.g. TV trolleys, laptop chargers, employees must carry out basic user checks prior to each use. This is simply checking over the plug, flex and housing for any signs of damage. If any issues are found the equipment should not be used and the Service Desk notified.
- 19.5 Fixed wire testing in all central office premises is carried out by our landlords and the Director of Estates works with our landlords to ensure this is carried out at the required frequencies and that all remedial action is followed up accordingly.
- 19.6 Further details on the principles applied can be found in the [Group Electrical Safety Policy](#).

20. Event Safety

- 20.1 For the purposes of this section, an 'Event' is any activity that does not constitute routine operation, and which is therefore not covered by existing risk assessments and procedures.
- 20.2 Any events led or managed by central office staff will be carried out in line with the principles outlined in the [Group Event Safety Policy](#), including the nomination of an Event Organiser and development of an event safety management plan where appropriate.

21. Fire

- 21.1.1 Fire risk assessments for all central office locations are coordinated by the Director of Estates in accordance with the principles detailed in the [Group Fire Safety Policy](#). Copies of these are available in the information library on the [SmartLog](#) system.
- 21.1.2 Fire Safety Management Plans are developed for each site by the Director of Estates and Group Health and Safety Manager. Copies are available in the information library on the [SmartLog](#) system.
- 21.1.3 Fire Evacuation Notices are displayed throughout the premises and all staff are required to familiarise themselves with their contents.



- 21.1.4 Fire safety awareness training is provided to all office-based staff on induction via the [SmartLog](#) online training tool. Refresher training is provided every three years. Fire marshals are enrolled on additional training which is refreshed every three years.
- 21.1.5 Each central office location has nominated fire marshals whose role it is to ensure that, in the event of the alarm sounding, evacuation takes place quickly and safely. The marshals will liaise with other building tenants/operators and the fire authority as necessary. If the alarm sounds, they have control of the premises and employees must follow any instructions given to them.
- 21.1.6 Details of current fire marshals is available in the information library on the [SmartLog](#) system.
- 21.1.7 There may be times when there is no marshal present. All employees must be familiar with the evacuation plans and always evacuate when the alarm sounds, only re-entering when told it is safe to do so.
- 21.1.8 Where an employee has a mobility issue or other condition that may impair their ability to evacuate the premises in the event of an emergency, their line manager is required to draw up a personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) – a template for which is available in the [A-Z section](#) of United Hub. This PEEP should be shared with HR who will communicate it to the office's fire marshals as appropriate. PEEPs should be kept under review and updated as necessary.
- 21.1.9 Visitors to central office locations will have their needs assessed to ensure that any assistance with evacuation that may be required is properly evaluated. Hosts will complete a PEEP where appropriate.
- 21.1.10 Mobile/homebased workers are reminded to ensure that they take all necessary steps to protect themselves from the risk of fire when working from their home or other premises not controlled by United Learning.

22. First-Aid

- 22.1 All offices have a number of trained first aiders to help provide first aid in the event of injury. However, the low-risk nature of the work carried out and the low numbers of staff who may be in the office on any one day means that it is possible that there is not always a trained first-aider available.
- 22.2 Details of current first aiders is available in the information library on the [SmartLog](#) system and on the central office pages on United Hub.
- 22.3 There should always be an appointed person on site when no first aider is available. The Office Leads are the primary contact for this. An appointed person is someone who will take charge in the event of an accident – they do not need to be first-aid trained and they do not need to administer first-aid.
- 22.4 If they are not available, then the most senior staff member on site will assume the duties of the appointed person.
- 22.5 Although an appointed person does not need to be first-aid trained, they should still feel able to attempt first-aid if it would be helpful to the condition of an injured party. Zurich have confirmed that such 'good Samaritan' efforts are covered by our insurance policy in the unlikely event that a claim was to be brought against United Learning.

22.6 Field staff, especially those who drive for work are advised to carry a first aid kit with them.

22.7 Further details on the principles applied can be found in the [Group First Aid Policy](#).

23. Health and Safety Committee

23.1 There is a Central Office Safety and Health Committee (COSHC) whose purpose it is to:

- Consult with employees on matters concerning health and safety.
- Discuss any significant accidents, incidents, cases of ill health, defects or matters of concern.
- Monitor progress on recommendations from any authoritative source e.g. internal or external audit.
- Monitor the effective implementation of the arrangements for health and safety.

23.2 It meets three times a year and is chaired by the Group Health and Safety Manager.

23.3 The membership of the COSHC is as follows:

- Chief Financial Officer
- Group Health and Safety Manager
- Office Leads
- Training Lead
- Director of Estates
- Technology/Service Desk
- HR

23.4 Representatives from other departments are welcome to attend with line manager permission.

23.5 The Chief Financial Officer attends to represent the Executive Board and as the Executive responsible for central office health and safety.

23.6 A copy of the full terms of reference for COSHC is available in the information library on the [SmartLog](#) system and in the central office pages on United Hub.

24. Induction and Training

24.1 All staff on joining United Learning are automatically enrolled on the central office training system, [SmartLog](#). This system provides access to basic compliance training required by all staff when they start work and this training is periodically refreshed.

24.2 To help with the induction process HR administer and oversee an online induction process covering all areas of employee induction.

24.3 The following courses are automatically assigned to all staff (refresher periods are shown in brackets):

- Health and Safety at Work (3 years)
- Fire Awareness (3 years)
- Display Screen Equipment (2 years)

- Work at Height Awareness (2 years)
- Safeguarding and Prevent (2 years)

24.4 Additional courses are available via the SmartLog system. A list of these can be found at Appendix 2. If you wish to book onto one of these courses, please contact the Professional Development team.

24.5 The courses on the SmartLog system are equivalent to Level 2/awareness level training. As such, while it is suitable as a complete solution for most employees, anyone with enhanced duties e.g. first aider, or who carries out specialist tasks e.g. electrical work, or who may come into contact with hazardous materials e.g. asbestos, is likely to require further training.

24.6 These additional training needs should be determined through risk assessment, and it is each department's responsibilities to identify and arrange for any additional training that may be required. The Group Health and Safety Manager can provide further advice where necessary.

24.7 Records of any additional training provided, including refresher periods, should be maintained by the employee's line manager.

25. Manual Handling

25.1 Manual handling is the application of human effort to transport or support a load. Using a mechanical aid such as a sack barrow or trolley may reduce but will not eliminate manual handling activities.

25.2 Action is required where a risk of injury from manual handling is identified as part of the risk assessment process.

25.3 Most central office manual handling tasks are low-risk and require no further action. There are, however, occasional tasks or activities that are likely to require further consideration, e.g. movement of large items of furniture, bulk deliveries, field staff who carry laptops and files for significant distances.

25.4 All staff are provided with basic manual handling training as part of the Health and Safety at Work module of their induction training. Line managers are responsible for identifying those staff who carry out more significant manual handling tasks and for ensuring that these tasks are appropriately risk assessed and that suitable training is provided.

25.5 Further details on the principles applied can be found in the [Group Manual Handling Policy](#).

26. Monitoring and Review

26.1 The employer has a legal duty to monitor health and safety performance and implement improvements where necessary. This is achieved through a combination of ad-hoc proactive and reactive measures.

Proactive measures

- Annual premises safety inspection

- Training audits
- Departmental audits
- Staff climate surveys / interviews
- Task observation
- E-audits

Reactive measures

- Accident data review/ accident investigation
- Complaint/query resolution

26.2 Findings from the above are considered by the Central Office Safety and Health Committee with action plans for improvement if necessary.

26.3 This Central Office Health and Safety Management Policy will be reviewed at least annually and at any other time that it is found to no longer accurately reflect central office operation.

26.4 The standalone [Group Health and Safety Topic Policies](#) are reviewed no less frequently than every three years, or sooner if they no longer reflect legislative requirements or the Group's approach to the management of risk for these topic areas.

26.5 Further details on the principles applied can be found in the [Group Monitoring \(HS\) Policy](#).

27. New and Expectant Mothers

27.1 A "new or expectant mother" is an employee who is pregnant, who has given birth within the previous six months, or who is breastfeeding. The employee must have notified management in writing that they are pregnant before the assessment requirement takes effect. 'Risks' to be considered include those to the unborn child or child of a woman who is still breastfeeding, not just risks to the mother herself.

27.2 The risk assessment should be carried out by the employee's line manager as the person best placed to understand the employee's role and the risks linked to it.

27.3 A template risk assessment is provided in the [A-Z section](#) of United Hub. All persons involved in managing the risks to new or expectant mothers are advised to have regard to the [United Learning Maternity Leave and Pay Policy](#).

27.4 A copy of this completed assessment should be passed to HR for storage on the employee's file.

28. Personal Protective Equipment

28.1 Personal protective equipment (PPE) is items that are intended to be worn or held by a person at work and which protects that person against one or more risks to their health or safety.

28.2 PPE is the last line of defence when protecting employees from risks to the health and safety and should only be deployed when all other measures have been considered.



28.3 Central office operations do not routinely expose employees to substances, materials, or environments that would give rise to a need for PPE to be used. If any employees become aware of a potential need for PPE this should be raised with their line manager and the Group Health and Safety Manager.

28.4 Further details on the principles applied can be found in the [Group Personal Protective Equipment Policy](#).

29. Premises/Estates Compliance

29.1 In all central office premises, United Learning is a tenant in a managed premises. As such, normal premises compliance matters such as fixed wire testing and legionella control are managed by our landlords.

29.2 The Director of Estates monitors the implementation of all required measures as relevant to the premises and will, with support from the Group Health and Safety Manager, take action to address and immediate risks to health and safety or escalate matters to our landlords as appropriate.

29.3 Further details on the principles applied can be found in the [Group Premises Topic Policies](#).

30. Risk Assessment

30.1 Employers are required to risk assess all work-related activities. The significant findings of these risk assessments must be committed to writing. Determining risk is a product of the likelihood of harm occurring and the most likely severity of that harm.

30.2 Central office operations are generally low risk, but that does not mean there is no risk present or that control is not required.

30.3 A general operations risk assessment has been produced and is available in the information library on the [SmartLog](#) system.

30.4 Line Managers are responsible for considering their team's activities and ensuring that, where there is a risk to health or safety in those activities, that the activity is either sufficiently covered in the existing general risk assessment, or that a team specific risk assessment is drawn up accordingly. An annual line managers checklist has been drawn up to help with this. It is available in the document library on the [SmartLog](#) system.

30.5 The Group Health and Safety Manager will support line managers in developing team specific risk assessments where necessary, but they must be owned by those in control of the activity.

30.6 Risk assessment must be carried out before an activity begins for the first time.

30.7 All risk assessments must be reviewed at least every two years, or sooner if there is any reason to believe they are no longer accurate or, for example, following an accident.

30.8 Training in risk assessment is available through the [SmartLog](#) system with further information contained in the [Group Risk Management Policy](#).

31. Work at Height

31.1 Work at height is work anywhere that a person could fall a distance liable to cause personal injury.

- 31.2 Central office operations do not generally require employees to work at height with the odd exception of a stepladder or step stool for retrieving items from cupboards.
- 31.3 Where possible, work at height should be avoided, but where this isn't possible it must be risk assessed and properly controlled – including being appropriately supervised. Work at height should not be carried out when lone working.
- 31.4 Stepstools/stepladders are only suitable for short duration tasks where the total cumulative time spent working is less than 30 minutes. This should be sufficient to cover all office functions and any work likely to take longer than this, or which is unusual in any way is likely to require specific assessment and potentially specialist access equipment, e.g. scaffold tower.
- 31.5 All ladders must be rated and labelled by the manufacturer as either Class I, or Class EN131 Professional. This equipment is inspected every 6 months with records held on the [SmartLog](#) system.
- 31.6 Class III ladders and EN131 Non-Professional ladders are for domestic use only and must not be used in the office.
- 31.7 Work at height awareness training is included for all staff as part of their induction training via the [SmartLog](#) system.
- Items such as chairs, desks, and tables are never to be used for work at height, regardless of the task. Any employee observed working in such a manner is likely to face disciplinary proceedings.**
- 31.8 Where employees may carry out any other form of work at height, line managers are responsible for ensuring this is appropriately risk assessed and controlled. The Group Health and Safety Manager will assist in this process where necessary.
- 31.9 Further details on the principles applied can be found in the [Group Work at Height Policy](#).

32. Work Equipment

- 32.1 All equipment provided for work purposes is matched to the task to which it will be used.
- 32.2 In central office this is predominantly office furniture and technology devices, and the associated risks are low and/or covered elsewhere e.g. under display screen equipment.
- 32.3 If a department require specialist or unusual equipment for any activity, then a risk assessment is likely to be required and reference should be made to the [Group Work Equipment Policy](#).

33. Work Experience, Apprenticeships and Young Persons

- 33.1 Any person on work experience at United Learning is regarded in law as a United Learning employee for the duration of their time with us. As such, HR should be notified in advance of placement commencing so that those joining a central office team can be provided with the same induction process as any other employee and they are enrolled on the [SmartLog](#) system for core training.
- 33.2 The individual's school or college may make additional requests for information or for certain steps to be taken. These can sometimes be onerous and are often disproportionate to the risks involved in working at central office. Should such a request be made the case the student's line

manager/sponsor should endeavour to provide as much information to the student's school as possible. If they are unable to provide answers satisfactory to the school or college then the matter should be escalated to the Group Health and Safety Manager.

- 33.3 Apprentices may already be working within United Learning or there may be persons who are engaging United Learning as an apprenticeship provider. All apprenticeship placements will be overseen by the central office Apprenticeships management team who will ensure the health and safety of apprentices is properly managed at all times, including the reporting of accidents should this ever be necessary. This team will be supported by the Group Health and Safety Manager where necessary.
- 33.4 Apprentices joining a central office team will be subject to the same controls as for central office employees. Those apprentices already employed within a United Learning school will continue to abide by their home school's systems and procedures for health and safety.
- 33.5 Those who are engaging United Learning as an apprenticeship provider must continue to follow their employer's systems and procedures for health and safety.
- 33.6 The apprenticeships management team will carry out basic checks to ensure that apprentice's placement providers (whether operated by United Learning or a third party) have fundamental health and safety arrangements in place. Records of these checks will be held on the apprentice's file.
- 33.7 Where these external apprentices are required to attend United Learning premises they shall be provided with all information as may be necessary for them to do so and without unreasonable risks to their health, e.g. fire procedures, site induction.
- 33.8 Where Apprenticeship Training Agency (ATA) services have been used to source, arrange and find a host for an apprenticeship, the Agency is the apprentice's employer. The ATA and United Learning will work together to ensure risks are effectively controlled but the ATA will not dictate how United Learning discharges its duties. The principle to be achieved is that apprentices are afforded the same level of protection as host site employees.
- 33.9 The only time specific consideration is required is where the individual (work experience, apprentice, employee) is below 18 years of age, in which case the line manager/sponsor must carry out a young persons risk assessment (a template is available in the [A-Z section](#) of United Hub). This needs to specifically consider:
- The inexperience, lack of awareness of risks and immaturity of young persons.
 - The fitting-out and layout of the workplace and the workstation.
 - The nature, degree and duration of exposure to physical, biological and chemical agents.
 - The form, range and use of work equipment and the way in which it is handled.
 - The organisation of processes and activities.
 - The extent of the health and safety training provided, or to be provided, to the young persons.

- 33.10 The findings of the young persons risk assessment and the specific controls applied must be communicated to the young persons parents/guardians. This can be carried out in any format, including verbally.
- 33.11 **A copy of this young person’s risk assessment should be passed to HR for storage on the employee’s file**
- 33.12 Further information on the principles applied can be found in the [Group Work Experience and Apprenticeships Policy](#) and [Group Young Persons at Work Policy](#).

34. Work-Related Stress

- 34.1 Work-related stress is one of the most significant risks to health in the education sector. As health and safety legislation requires an assessment to be made of the level of risk from all hazards occurring in the workplace and to take all reasonably practicable measures to prevent or sufficiently reduce those risks, is it explicit that employers must consider work-related stress in their risk management processes.
- 34.2 The effective management of work-related stress involves a structured, logical, and continuous process, carried out with consideration of all operations and involving the workforce.
- 34.3 This assessment is carried out and discussed by the COSHC and draws on data from the staff survey and sickness/absence data and any other source as appropriate. If this assessment identifies stress as a significant risk factor a formal working group will be established to explore the situation in line with HSE’s Management Standards.
- 34.4 Further details on the principles applied can be found in the [Group Work-Related Stress Policy](#).

Declaration of Adoption

This Policy has been reviewed and agreed by the Central Office Compliance Committee and **Central Office** hereby adopt this Policy and its contents as detailed above.

Executive Lead



Louise Johnston

Date 30/1/24

Group Health and Safety Manager



Stuart Males

Date 30/1/24



Appendix 1 - Health and Safety Statement of Intent

United Learning Health and Safety Statement of Intent 2023-24

The **Trustees of the Group Board** recognise and accept their responsibility, as the employer for all United Church Schools Trust (UCST) and United Learning Trust (ULT) employees, to provide workplaces and work practices which are safe and healthy for employees, pupils, and visitors - including contractors or anyone else who might be affected by our operations.

Trustees are especially mindful that exposure to risk is an essential part of the education process. **United Learning** is committed to providing a learning environment that, whilst not unduly hazardous, provides all students with a stimulating experience that equips and prepares both children and young adults for life in the real world.

In all schools, the day-to-day responsibility for health and safety rests with the **Head Teacher**. At central office, the **Executive Team** share this responsibility. Overall, the **Chief Financial Officer** is the Executive with responsibility for health and safety compliance. The **Group Health and Safety Manager** is the person appointed under Regulation 7 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 to assist the **Chief Financial Officer** in fulfilling these responsibilities.

The **Group Health and Safety Manager** authors and reviews the Group Health and Safety policies, carries out monitoring and audit activities to establish and evaluate compliance with these policies, investigates significant accidents or incidents on behalf on the Trusts, and regularly reports on organisational compliance to **Trustees**.

United Learning operates a devolved system of operational control in its schools, guided by the overarching requirements of the Group's health and safety policies which are expected to always be followed. **Trustees** acknowledge the operational flexibility required in each school and accept the risk gap this approach creates. Should non-compliance be identified **the Trust** reserves the right, as the employer, to take control of school operations as may be necessary to ensure no persons are placed at unacceptable risk.

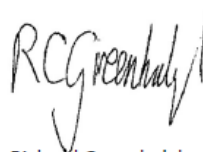
Each school has a **LGB Representative for Health and Safety** who represents the Local Governing Body at the school's termly Health and Safety Committee meetings. The **Head Teacher**, alongside the **LGB Representative for Health and Safety** reports to the local governing body on health and safety matters, which are a standing agenda item at local governing body meetings.

Employees are reminded of their own duties to take care of their own personal health and safety and that of fellow employees, pupils and any other persons who might be affected by their work activities.

Details of the organisation for health and safety management and the arrangements for policy compliance are to be found in each site's localised Group Health and Safety Management Policy and its subsidiary topic policies. All **United Learning** employees are expected to adhere to the supporting principles shown overleaf.



Jon Coles
Chief Executive Officer



Richard Greenhalgh
Chair of the Group Board

Dated

11th July 2023



United Learning Health and Safety Policy Statement

Supporting Principles

1. It is expected that all those who work with or for United Learning will:
 - 1.1. Attend appropriate induction training/briefing to any specific health and safety training deemed necessary either by the Group, the School, or the role.
 - 1.2. Feel empowered to intervene or support individuals who intervene or stop an activity because they believe it is unsafe.
 - 1.3. Make a personal commitment to maintaining health and safety standards and promoting a positive health and safety culture.
 - 1.4. Take time to read and understand relevant information provided to them about hazards, risks and preventative measures.
 - 1.5. Understand their role in effectively maintaining and responding to emergency arrangements.
 - 1.6. Accept constructive intervention in a positive manner when any member of staff takes action to stop an unsafe act.

2. United Learning's operating arrangements rely on:
 - 2.1. Those with responsibility for others, to lead by example in promoting a positive health and safety culture
 - 2.2. All safety rules and arrangements being communicated to all employees in a clear and simple way
 - 2.3. Specific procedures being developed where necessary, to reflect policy requirements and support safe working
 - 2.4. Responsibility and accountability for health and safety following an auditable system of delegation
 - 2.5. The incorporation of health and safety considerations and appropriate controls into the procurement procedure and all strategic decisions
 - 2.6. Each school and the Group following an appropriate health and safety improvement plan



Appendix 2

Additional Courses available via the SmartLog system

- Asbestos Awareness
- Basic GDPR
- COSHH Awareness
- Cyber Security
- E - Safety
- Equality and Diversity Awareness
- External Conflict Management
- Fire Warden
- Food Hygiene
- GDPR Awareness
- GDPR for Education
- Generic Infection Control
- Guide to completing a risk assessment
- Internal Conflict Management
- Legionella Awareness
- Managing Safety
- Manual Handling
- Safe home working practice for business
- Safe home working practice for school
- Safer Recruitment
- School Environmental Awareness
- Slips, Trips & Falls in Education
- WEEE

