



## **College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine (Edinburgh bioQuarter Campus)**

### **Annual Report on Health & Safety (2022)**

**Summary:** This is the seventeenth annual report concerning health and safety (H&S) activities pertaining to The University of Edinburgh's College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine (CM&VM) operations on the Edinburgh bioQuarter (EbQ) campus.

The H&S Manager remains grateful to all who, throughout the year, have contributed so substantially to the quality of and compliance with health, safety and welfare arrangements, particularly in the challenging times that have been a feature of so much of the last three years.

**Campus Development Activities:** The construction of the new Institute of Regeneration and Repair (IRR) has been on-going during 2022. Practical completion of the back part of the building was achieved in October 2022 and the remainder is due for practical completion in Spring 2023. The occupation of the building is anticipated in the second quarter of 2023. The local Health and Safety committees in place in the Centre for Regenerative Medicine will be expanded to include the new building and will be managed operationally as an Institute. The Usher Institute is also under construction with practical completion anticipated in the second half of 2023. Weekly health and safety and operationally focused meetings led by the Estates team have taken place during the constructions. These have included representation from all interested parties including contractors and BioQuarter stakeholder representatives from the University of Edinburgh, Scottish Enterprise, the City of Edinburgh Council and NHS Lothian.

**Plans and Policies:** Numbers of amendments (some substantial) have been made during the year to Sections of (and Appendices to) the Safety Manual for UofE buildings on the EbQ campus; notification of these was made to colleagues through the medium of Safety Bulletins sent electronically to everyone on the campus who is registered on one of our

various email distribution lists. The Manual is scheduled for its next triennial “root and branch” review during 2025, although periodic updates to specific Sections of the Manual can still be expected on an occasional basis as circumstances dictate.

**Safety Audits:** The momentum of campus-internal safety audits was maintained during the year (at whole-building and individual Centre levels, or focusing on specific laboratories and areas, including a derogated CL3 laboratory in Chancellor’s Building and a laboratory suite within QMRI currently being prepared for use as a CL3 facility. These took the form of visits and safety tours, and scrutiny of samples of paperwork such as risk assessments, training records and self-inspection reports. Although the standard remains generally very high, for which managers and all teams are to be commended, recommendations were made regarding means to achieve some further improvements to arrangements.

Fire drills were carried out for all UofE (and UofE-occupied) buildings on the EbQ campus during 2022, with arrangements to complete the programme having been agreed with the University’s Fire Safety Unit; where conducted, these all were assessed as satisfactory. A number of fire risk assessments were also updated during the year.

Certain specific aspects of CM&VM operations on the EbQ campus were audited during 2022 by SEPA and Police Scotland and by the Wellcome Trust’s Internal Audit team, all of which resulted in satisfactory outcomes. Visits by HSE are anticipated during 2023.

**Training:** Something in excess of one hundred hours of general induction and subject-specific training sessions were delivered by the H&S Manager during 2022 (mainly through the medium of on-line meeting platforms, though some in-person training has resumed). A new course in the principles of risk assessment, and an associated risk assessment clinic, was introduced during the year, and this has been well subscribed.

By continuing to deliver some specific training courses directly from within our own resources, which were previously procured from external providers (*e.g.* compressed and laboratory gas safety, and liquid nitrogen safety), it is estimated that the CM&VM, and some areas of the larger UofE campus, the College has been able to avoid spend many thousands of pounds per year, and also to disseminate training to a greater number of people.

Numerous self-paced, self-taught training presentations, prepared by the H&S Manager, and published on H&S pages of the CM&VM's web site, were updated during the year.

Training was delivered also to colleagues in partner organisations based on the Edinburgh bioQuarter campus, elsewhere within the University upon invitation, and occasionally more widely afield.

During the year, the H&S Manager was an invited trainer at a number sessions arranged by the Royal Society of Biology (and also to the Liverpool School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (all having been delivered on-line).

**Committees:** The H&S Manager participated in numerous Committee meeting throughout the year (*via* on-line meeting platforms), including the EbQ Campus H&S Committee, Centre/Building and individual Centre/Floor-level H&S Committees, GM and Biological Safety Committees, the EbQ Campus Management Team, and the University's Biological Safety Committee.

**H&S Plan:** All other targets set out in H&S Plan were successfully delivered to the satisfaction of the Edinburgh bioQuarter Buildings H&S Committee.

**Business Continuity Planning:** The H&S Manager continues to lead on matters connected with business continuity planning, and led a "root and branch" review of the Plan during 2022. Further exercises of arrangements, and associated training activities, have been suspended while COVID-19 measures have remained a feature of College operations on the EbQ campus, but it is anticipated that there exercise programme will recommence during 2023. Aspects of business continuity planning were reviewed during the year by central University colleagues, though with no recommendations having being made for changes to arrangements for the EbQ campus.

**Accidents and Incidents:** Of the 18 occurrences of accidents and incidents reported during 2022 (to be compared with 21 occurrences during 2021, 22 during 2020, 28 during 2019, 43 during 2018, 32 during 2017, 37 during 2016, and 44 during 2015), none dictated formal notification to the HSE in the context of the Reporting of Injuries, Disease and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).

Without being in any way complacent about these headline figures, the rate of occurrences must be taken in the context of there being something in excess of 1,500 whole-time staff and post-graduate students and several hundred undergraduates based on the Edinburgh bioQuarter campus, some engaged in the handling of substances of high consequence and involved in hazardous procedures.

Injuries caused by medical sharps, glassware and tools remain the most frequently occurring source of injury year-after-year within UofE premises on the bioQuarter campus, albeit in low total numbers, and continued attention is directed to the sharps injury avoidance training package contained within the CM&V web site. A more detailed analysis of all incidents reported during the year is published on the College's web site.

**Waste Management:** During 2022, in addition to routine uplifts of waste electrical and electronic items and domestic waste throughout the year, there were two substantial uplifts of chemical waste (with a further uplift being planned for early 2023), and monthly reports were submitted throughout the year to the University's Radiation Protection Unit detailing acquisition, holdings and disposal of unsealed sources of radioactivity.

**Sustainability:** The H&S Manager continues to actively promote a sustainability agenda for CM&VM operations on the EbQ campus, including through publication of sustainability tips using the medium of periodic Safety Bulletins.

**Professional Development:** The H&S Manager has continued throughout the year to complete all necessary continuous professional development programmes and self-directed learning activities (directed variously by the Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, the Institute for Safety in Technology and Research, the Society for Radiological Protection, the Health Research Authority, and the Royal Society of Biology) to the continued satisfaction of all regulating authorities.

**Support for Other Areas:** The H&S Manager has been providing some degree of professional support for the College's central area pending appointment of a replacement for a post that became vacant during 2019/20.

**Dr. Sharon Hannah**

**Campus Operations Manager and Convenor, Edinburgh bioQuarter  
Buildings H&S Committee**

**L.G. Murray**

**CM&VM H&S Manager (Edinburgh bioQuarter Campus) and Vice-  
Convenor, Edinburgh bioQuarter Buildings H&S Committee**

**31<sup>st</sup> December 2022**