

SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL AND AFRICAN STUDIES

HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Wednesday, 9 May 2007 at 10.00am

Room 116

Present: N Foster (Chair)
S Page (Registrar)
Heidi Alderton (Safety Officer)
Keith Sparrow (Library Safety Officer)
P Baran (Nominated Member)
R Poulson (Head of Estates)
D Stipniecks (UCU)

In Attendance: D Ciuta (Secretary)

Apologies: S Leitch (Nominated Member)
M Smith (Safety Officer)
N Page (Nominated Member)

20. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 21st of February 2007 were approved.

21. MATTERS ARISING

The Students' Union General Manager reported that the mice situation in the Bar had improved.

The Head of Estates reported that there are still signs of mice activity in the service rises and voids and work would be done to improve the situation.

22. REPORT FROM THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OFFICER

RECEIVED: The Smoking Policy, documents regarding Fire Drills, Main Building Fire Alarms and Formal Inspections, Reports of the incidents reported since the last Health and Safety Committee Meeting, correspondence regarding the proposed new outside area for the Bar.

The Health and Safety Officer reported that the training course for the Departmental Safety Supervisors is almost complete and scheduled to run between the two May Bank Holidays.

The Health and Safety Officer reported that the fire drills had been successful with the mention that problems had been reported regarding the attitude of some students and staff with regards to the evacuation procedure. More fire alarm drills would be organised in order for people to get used to the procedures.

The Health and Safety Officer reported that there had been a lack of interest in people becoming fire wardens and steps should be taken to encourage staff to volunteer.

The Health and Safety officer reported that there had been a cut down on the number of false fire alarms.

The Registrar suggested that the fire wardens should be more involved in the process of evacuation.

AGREED: That all staff and students should be sent a message with instruction to follow the directions of the fire wardens.

The Health and Safety Officer reported that the Fire Inspection at Vernon Square Campus had been successful and a formal report is yet to be received.

The Health and Safety Officer proposed the acquisition of defibrillators which would increase the chance of survival for people with heart attacks.

AGREED: That the Head of Estates will look at the budgets to find a solution for financing this project.

Approved: The SOAS Smoking Policy.

23. REPORT FROM THE HEAD OF ESTATES

The Head of Estates reported that funding had been obtained for remedial works for the lifts, due to be undertaken during the summer.

The Head of Estates reported that the documentation regarding the asbestos survey for the College Building had been received and the rest of the sites would be re-surveyed beginning with the 1st of June.

The UCU representative raised concerns about the School's compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act in relation to the newly acquired premises at 21 and 22 Russell Square.

AGREED: That this issue will be discussed in more detail in future meetings.

24. REPORT FROM THE LIBRARY

The Library representative reported that there are ongoing problems regarding the lifts in the Library.

The Head of Estates reported that the problem is being rectified and the delays had been caused by supplier problems for parts needed for the repairs.

25. REPORT FROM THE STUDENTS' UNION GENERAL MANAGER

No Health and Safety Issues had been reported by the Students' Union General Manager.

26. NEW AREA FOR THE BAR

It was noted that several colleagues had recently objected to the proposed new outside area for the Bar (correspondence tabled, noted in paragraph 22 above as received by the Committee). The Safety Officer and the Students' Union General Manager stated that the new area was felt to be necessary as a 'safety valve', and would ensure greater compliance with the ban on smoking elsewhere. The Students' Union General Manager reported that he would contact the people involved in order to try to reach a mutually acceptable solution.

27. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The UCU representative reported that there is a problem with the air flow in room G1.

AGREED: That the Head of Estates will look into the matter in order to find a solution to keep the windows open at all times and have them closed automatically in case of a fire alarm.

The Safety Officer proposed that the Agenda should be altered to reflect the composition of the Health and Safety Committee as per Appendix A.

28. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting of the Committee would be Wednesday, the 28th of November 2007 at 9.00am.