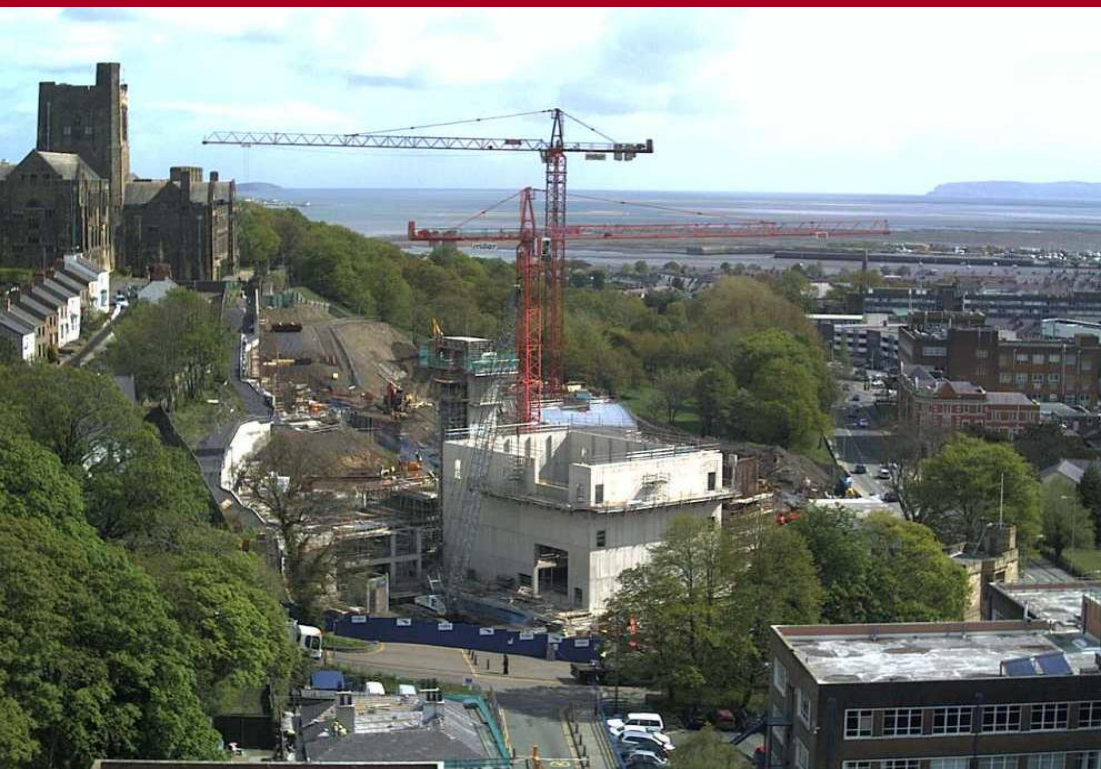




PRIFYSGOL
BANGOR
UNIVERSITY

Health and Safety



Annual Report
2012

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the 2012 Annual Health and Safety Report. The Report provides statistical information on a number of areas and where possible the University's performance is compared against National data.

The Appendix to the Report provides information on the work of the central Health and Safety Services (HSS) Department.

Overview

2012 saw steady progress in simplifying and better understanding the management of risk, both at an institutional level and within individual Departments and Colleges. The recently produced Self-Assessment, that provides clear benchmarkable measures, is currently being completed by each Department and College. Once this first stage is complete it will provide the clearest indication yet of strengths and weaknesses across Colleges and Departments.

Staff health support continues to operate as a leading example within the HE Sector, with the University's Occupational Health Support Service being the first University to be awarded an acclaimed quality assurance accreditation through the Royal College of Physicians.

Statistically, the University performed, once again relatively well on measures such as accidents and fire alarm incidents in Halls of Residences when compared to the UK Sector norm.

Challenges Ahead

Last year the Annual Report indicated that the University's enforcing authority, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), has changed its approach to working with employers. Focusing more on prioritised interventions and introducing a "Fee for Intervention" scheme. The University is unlikely to receive proactive inspections by the general Inspectorate, though Specialist Inspections of key risks such as Biohazards will continue. The challenges posed by this approach revolve around the reduced contact with the HSE Inspectors and

likelihood that in future contact will be more formal and will follow an accident or incident.

The good working relationship over recent years between the HSE and the University resulted in the significant enhancement of the Corporate Risk Assessment, which seeks to identify and better understand risk exposure and identify when tolerance of risk is acceptable, and in some cases preferred.

Future Reporting

As most national statistics are now gathered per Academic Year, as opposed to Calendar year, it is proposed to change the reporting year from the current calendar year to the academic year.

Gareth W. Jones

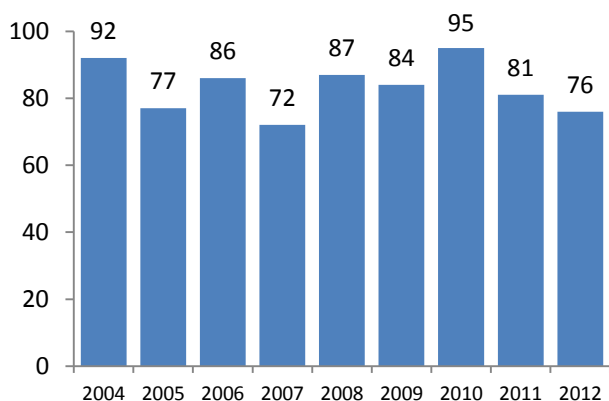
Head of Health and Safety Services

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Accidents and Incidents

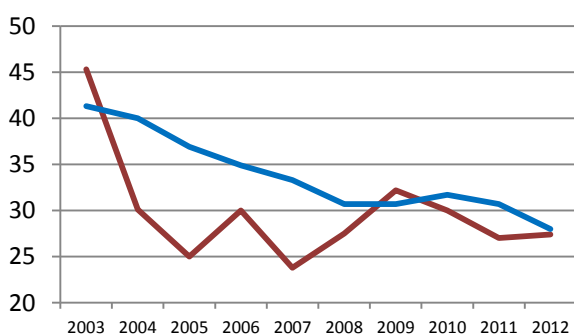
2012 saw a small decrease in the total number of reported Staff and Student accidents that involved injury, from 81 notified in 2011 to **76** in 2012.

Total Number of Accidents



To identify a comparable rate which allows for the annual fluctuations in Staff and Student numbers a ratio of accidents “per thousand at risk” is used. This is then compared to the National HE Sector Average.

National and Bangor University Accident averaged per 1000 Staff (2003 - 2012)



03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12
45.3	30.1	25	30	23.8	27.5	32.2	30	27	27.4
41.3	40	36.9	34.9	33.3	30.7	30.7	31.7	30.7	28

— Bangor University
— Sector Average

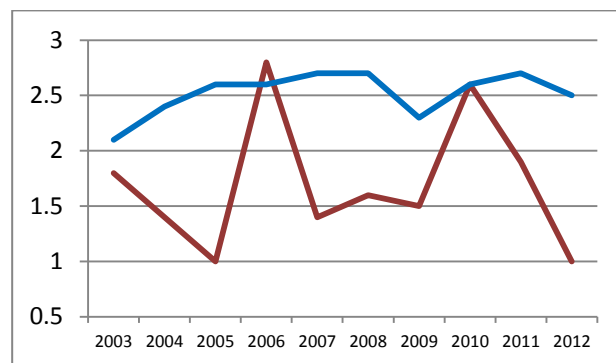
Members of Staff reported a total of 65 accidents (involving injury) in 2012, a ratio of **27.4** accidents per 1,000¹. This is a slight increase from the 27

¹ Based on 2368 members of Staff during the year

accidents per 1000 in 2011. The HE Sector² reported 28 accidents per 1,000 Staff in 2012 a reduction on the 30.71 reported in 2011.

For Students 11 accidents involving injury (non-sports) were reported in 2012, the equivalent of **1** accident per 1,000 Students³ compared to 1.9 in 2011.

National and Bangor University Accident averaged per 1000 Students (2003 - 2012)



03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12
1.8	1.4	1	2.8	1.4	1.6	1.5	2.6	1.9	1
2.1	2.4	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.3	2.6	2.7	2.5

— Bangor University
— Sector Average

The number of Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Reportable Accidents and Incidents (RIDDOR) for 2012 was **2**, a slight decrease from the 3 in 2011.

Both RIDDOR reportable accidents involved Students who were taken to hospital for checks to ensure no harm had occurred following contact with chemicals during taught scientific practicals.

The two Student RIDDOR reportable accidents equate to **0.19 RIDDOR's** per 1000 Students.

Prior to April 2012 all injuries that resulted in a member of Staff being off “normal” work duties for over three-working days had to be reported under RIDDOR. In April of 2012 such absences are only required to be reported on the 8th day of absence and not the 4th. Historically the majority of University Staff RIDDOR reportable accidents have

² Information gathered from 108 Universities / Institutions

³ Based on 10,722 Students during the year

been those where members of Staff have been absent for just over the reporting period of 3 days and it is therefore anticipated Staff RIDDOR incident rates will be reduced in number from now on when compared to pre-2012 data.

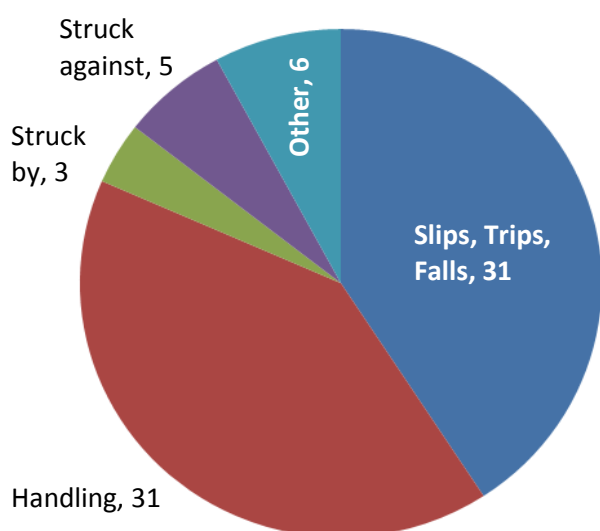
The HE Sector as a whole experienced a slight decrease in the numbers of Staff RIDDOR incidents in 2012 to **1.59** from the **2.1 per 1000** Staff rate in 2011. The National Student rate fell to **0.14 per 1000** in 2012, from **0.16** in 2011.

NOTE: Due to the changes in RIDDOR rolling averages can no longer be used to compare historical Staff RIDDOR statistics.

Accident Causation

The majority of the 76 accident reports received in 2012 were a result of a slip, trip or fall (31 = 41%) or involved a handling incident (31 = 41%). The other 14 incidents were attributed to *being hit by a moving object, hitting something fixed or stationary* and 'other' which includes *exposure to / contact with a harmful substance*.

Breakdown per Causation (by incident total)



Other Incidents and Accidents

The above statistics relate to those incidents which resulted in an "injury" and which arose due to the University's work. This criterion used for National comparators is only available for accidents

involving "injury" during activities which are under the control or direction of the University.

A further 103 Reports were also received during the year which are broken down as:

- 55 for Sporting Injuries
- 34 Near Miss/Concern Reports
- 14 Illnesses and Other non-accident Reports

Staff Sickness Absence Rate

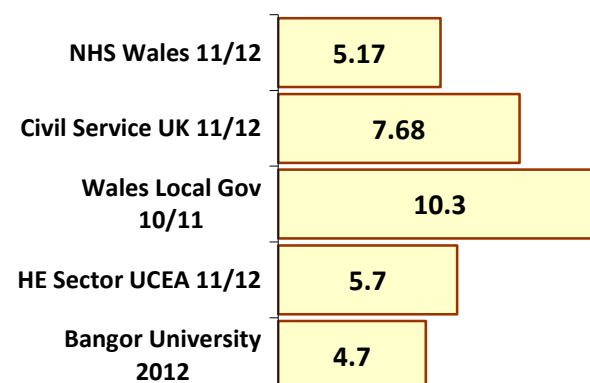
A Sickness Absence rate of around **4.7** days per FTE employee was recorded in 2012. This compares to the National (HE) Sector Average of **5.7** days⁴.

Due to the wide variances in recording methodologies employed across the Sector and beyond, comparison with National statistics should only be considered as indicators of performance. There is currently no single agreed methodology for recording and measuring absences, though the latest UCEA Report does provide a framework for such in the future.

The 2012 Sickness Absence rate of 4.7 days equates to around **1.8%** of the available time⁵ being lost due to sickness absence. The rate in 2011 was **2.23%**.

64.18% of University (FTE equivalent) **did not** report a single day sickness absence in 2012.

Sickness Absence (comparator) Rate
(days per member of staff [FTE] per year)



⁴ Average provided by UCEA Sickness Absence in Higher Education Report 2011/12; based on 84 respondents.

⁵ Based on an average of 260.715 working days per year

NOTE: The Bangor University absence rate decrease may reflect improvements made in how absences for part-time Staff are now recorded and reported. For example, a 50% FTE employee off work due to illness for a week was previously recorded as 1 week (5 day) absence but is now recorded as 2.5 days.

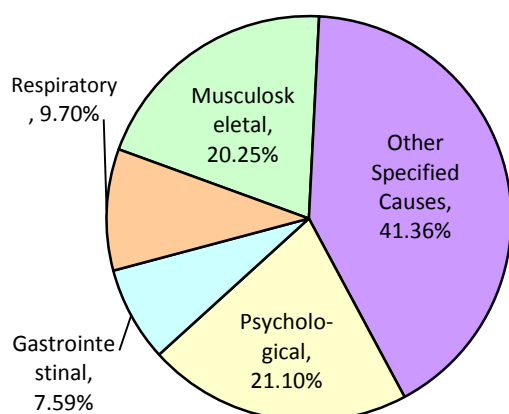
As noted previously, general comparisons with other employers are not possible due to variances in how data is recorded. It may be possible however to benchmark against other institutions which record absences in the same way. This will be investigated further as more information is made available.

Staff Sickness Absence Causations

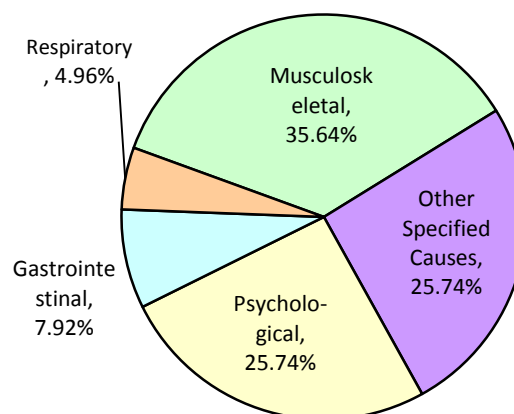
The declared illness/reason of each absence, both certified and self-certified, is recorded centrally and helps to provide a better understanding of Staff health needs. 23% of all sickness absences were confirmed by a medical certificate (Fit Note), with the remainder self-declared.

Using medically certified data only, it is noted that musculoskeletal causations (incl. back, joints and fractures) and psychological illness again account for the greater number of long term and general medically certified absences.

Top 5 Medium-Term (under 20-days) Certified Absence Causations



Top 5 Long-Term (over 20-days) Certified Absence Causations



Under the category of long-term musculoskeletal there were 15 incidences of fractures/injuries, 6 incidences of back pain/injury and a further 19 incidences of general musculoskeletal conditions (includes shoulder injury, arthritis).

Health Checks & Surveillance

The programme of Staff Health Checks has been ongoing since 2007. From this year the focus has shifted to offering Health Checks directly to new members of Staff, as opposed to a cyclical visit to Schools and Departments alone. This approach is proving to be very popular with new Staff.

The programme of Health Checks for existing Staff has recently re-commenced and will be delivered on a rolling programme per School and Department over the next 2+ years.

Every year over 60 members of Staff receive annual Health Surveillance, due to the potential risks pertaining to their work. These include Grounds Workers, Drivers and those working in potentially harmful atmospheres or with certain harmful products. During 2012 Health Surveillance was also provided for Night Workers and Food Handlers.

Fire & Fire Alarm Incidents

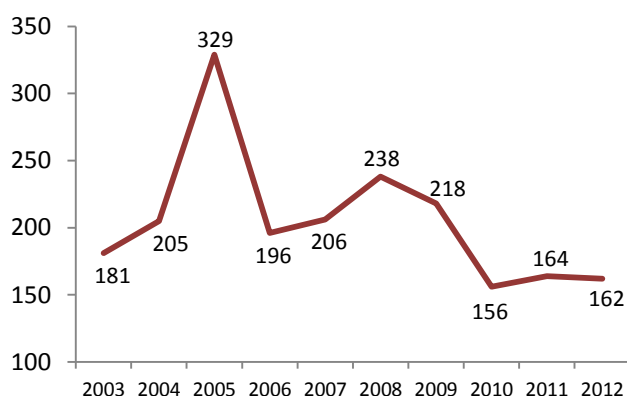
NOTE: Fire statistics are now reported for the academic year 2011/12 and not the calendar year.

The majority of the University's 96 buildings⁶ are fitted with Fire Detection and Alarm systems. Most of these systems are modern and incorporate a combined total of over 8000 detectors (heat and smoke) and several hundred manual "smash glass" call points.

All buildings have been risk assessed for fire risk and mitigation measures, with significant financial investment made every year to maintain and improve standards.

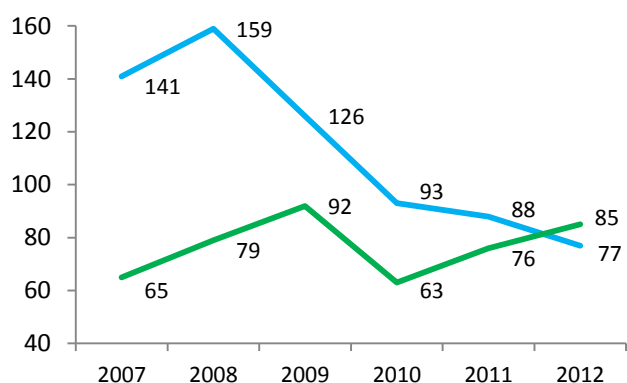
During 2011/12 unplanned fire alarm activations within University buildings fell slightly to **162**, from 164 the previous year.

Bangor University Total Fire Alarm Activations



The total of 162 fire alarm activations is further divided to identify activation rates for the two primary University estates, namely Residential and Academic/Admin buildings.

Fire Alarm Activations per estate



— Academic & Admin
— Halls of Residences

⁶ Including Gwalia and Wales & West Halls of Residences

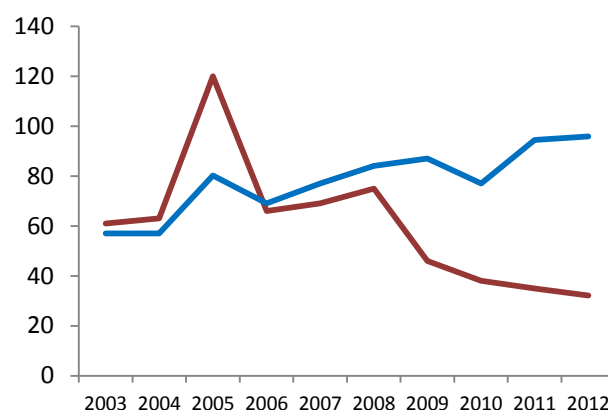
For the first time in many years unplanned fire alarm activations within the non-residential estate was higher than that of Halls of Residences during 2011/12.

Historically the HE Sector has only presented data for residential buildings, which is calculated per 1000 study bedrooms and per 1000 detectors. For 2011/12, data was also reported per 1000 detectors for Academic & Administration buildings.

In 2011/12 the HE Sector experienced **12.3** activations per 1000 detectors within Academic & Administrative buildings⁷, compared to **22.7** at Bangor University.

For the residential estate the University continued to perform well against the National average⁸ using both the activations per 1000 detectors and per 1000 bedrooms measurements.

Fire Alarm Activations per 1000 Study Bedrooms



03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12
61	63	120	66	69	75	46	38	35	32.1
57	57	80.2	69	77	84	87	77	94.4	95.8

— Bangor University
— Sector

The National activation rate per 1000 detectors within residential accommodation is **61.4**, the University rate is **17.9**.

⁷ Based on returns from 69 Universities who supplied data

⁸ Based on returns from 95 Universities who supplied data

The combined activation rate (both estates) for 2011/12 is **20.1** activations per 1000 detectors⁹ (0.5/25). This compares favourably to the unacceptable rate specified in the applicable British Standard¹⁰ of 1 false activation for 25 detectors per annum.

Fires

There were no *actual* fires within a Bangor University building during the academic year 2011/12.

Nationally the HE Sector reported that within Halls of Residences there were 15 “major” fires, 390 “minor fires” and 750 fires that involved cooking; there were 7 fire related injuries. For the UK Academic & Administrative estate there were 11 major fires, 149 minor fires and 2 injuries.

There were two major fires within UK University Chemistry/Engineering departments during February 2012. Both resulted in significant damage.

Enforcement Action

During 2012 no enforcement action was taken against the University and no formal investigations were carried out.

Civil Claims (H&S related)

The University received one Public Liability claim in 2012 and one claim by a member of Staff for damages following an accident.

Staff Training and Development

During the year 106 courses were provided or facilitated by Health and Safety Services.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of Courses / Briefings</i>	<i>Staff Attending</i>
2012	106	719
2011	120	1125
2010	91	880
2009	84	572

There was a decrease in the number of courses provided / sourced, down ≈12% compared to 2011, and Staff numbers attending courses also decreased by ≈36%.

Training included risk assessment, fire safety, handling and general health and safety inductions. Detailed modular courses on health and safety law, management systems and risk management were also introduced.

Other courses are also provided locally by Colleges and Departments. These are not currently recorded centrally and are not always included in the above statistics.

College and Department Self-Assessments

A new self-assessment process has recently been introduced for all Colleges and Departments. The Self-Assessment summarises health and safety expectations in the form of “performance benchmarks” and allows Senior Managers to clearly identify what the primary expectations are of University policies and procedures, and enables them to easily assess own “performance” against these measures.

It is envisaged that the revised approach will simplify the management and measurement process and enable key information to be held in one document, replacing numerous separate assessments and forms of information.

To date all Colleges and Departments have either completed the first phase of this exercise or are still in the process of assimilating information. It is anticipated that for the next Annual Report a breakdown of general College and Departmental Health and Safety Management will be provided.

Audits and Reviews

An audit of the College of Health and Behavioural Sciences against the requirements of BS OHSAS 18001/2 was completed, with each School and Institute also audited separately. The College’s overall qualitative performance was found to be very good.

⁹ There are approximately 8,057 detectors across both estates

¹⁰ BS 5839 Fire Alarm Installation and Maintenance

Website Statistics

The Health and Safety Website continues to expand and is developing into a valuable repository for University specific health and safety advice and resources.

During 2012 the University's Health and Safety Website (bangor.ac.uk/hss) received **12,940** visits, with **39,302** pages viewed, a slight decrease on 2011.

The Website was accessed on more than 4,931 occasions by University Staff and Students, and there were a total of 6,515 'unique' visitors.

Policy Development

In 2012 and following an extensive period of consultation the following revised Policies were approved by the Health and Safety Committee for adoption across the University:

- Non Smoking (revised)
- Fire Safety (revised)
- Ionising (open source) Radiation (revised)

Document Developments

During the year considerable effort has been expended on improving and simplifying information.

Detailed documentation and support materials have been produced for a number of Service Departments.

The overlap between health and safety legislation with other statutory requirements associated with anti-terrorism, drugs and ethics was reviewed and a searchable database produced. This enables academics to identify whether an activity or material requires statutory registration or permission.

This Section is expanded upon within the HSS Report.

Health & Sustainability Grant Awarded

In 2012 the University successfully applied for a grant from the regional Sustainable Travel organisation TAIH for three distinct schemes and the full allocation of £10,000 was awarded.



The funding will go towards purchase of new bikes to serve as Loan Bikes, purchase of additional cycle storage facilities to be placed across the estate and for the purchase of hundreds of personal pedometers for use by Staff taking part in the Travel the World initiative.

Travel the World aims to promote physical activity for both Staff and Students and will be run in conjunction with a similar scheme at a neighboring University. It is anticipated that over 500 members of Staff and Students will take part.

A full report on the success of Travel the World will be provided separately to this document.



The University's Charity, Tŷ Gobaith

Over £12,000 was raised across the University during 2012 to help support the quality of life for local children, many of whom have a life limiting illness, and assist with the psychological care of their families.

Part of the Health Agenda encourages activities to promote mental and physical health whilst raising funds for the University adopted charity, Tŷ Gobaith and money was raised through a number of health related events such as Snowdon walks, bike ride, and abseiling.

Other events included the Students' Union Dance Club which raised a massive £1,000 through a sponsored dance and sponsored walk up Snowdon and through donations and refreshment sales at their dance shows. The University's Occupational Health Practitioner cycled from London to Paris,

raising several hundred through his efforts, and two members of Staff, from the School of Psychology and Bangor Business School, trekked up Kilimanjaro raising a four figure sum for the Hospice.

Money was also raised through the Staff lottery and in 2012 a significant sum was given to Ty Gobaith by the University funding £5 for every response received to the Staff Survey.



Further information on the type of fund raising events held in 2012 is on the dedicated Website:
www.bangor.ac.uk/tygobaith

North West Wales Health and Safety Group (NWWHSG)



The North West Wales Health and Safety Group facilitated by HSS and established to enable local employers to support one another

to promote good health and safety practices arranged ten monthly talks in 2012 with topics ranging from Electrical Safety and Dangerous Gases to the more unusual Confined Space Rescue in Mines.

The Group was also again recognised by 'Safety Groups UK' and awarded a Silver Prize for its support to local organisations and health and safety.

End.

BACKGROUND

Health and Safety Services (HSS) is a central Department providing support to the University and its Colleges, Departments, Staff and Students on health and safety. Managerially the Department reports to the Registrar's Office, with its work being supported and directed by the Safety Executive Task Group and University Health and Safety Committee.

During 2012 the Department continued in its role to effectively support the University and its Staff and Students, through providing sensible and supportive services, advice and assistance. Although a proportion of the Department's time will always be allocated to ongoing commitments and reactive work, which naturally occur in the ever changing University environment, significant effort was again made in 2012 to increase the amount of practical and pro-active assistance provided to Colleges and Departments.

HSS continues to support and promote the health of Staff and a summary of activities during the year is provided.

1. HEALTH MATTERS

Introduction

The Staff Health Agenda aims to support fitness for work through health promotion activities that are complemented by a Health Surveillance Programme to check that health is not being harmed by work, and by Health Monitoring to ensure fitness for certain duties such as driving and night work.

The Occupational Health Practitioner also provides Staff with the knowledge and clinical skill for providing basic life support, defibrillation and the use of auto-injectors to reverse symptoms of severe anaphylactic shock. In addition to these core duties, welfare contact is made with Staff suffering from long term illness, ultimately supporting their return to work. Support to Expectant and New Mothers is provided by the Health and Safety Assistant.

As in previous years a calendar of occupational health activities spans the academic year in the form of a plan that illustrates what will happen, when and where. This is developed in consultation with representatives of the Health and Safety Committee. The outcome of delivered activities is then reported to members of the Committee and recorded in detail through those meeting minutes.

Ensuring the Quality of Staff Occupational Healthcare

As reported last year, the Faculty of Occupational Medicine has developed expected standards of practice from Occupational Health Services across the UK. To be accredited as a 'Safe, Effective, Quality Occupational Health Service' (SEQOHS), evidence of working practice must be submitted to the Royal College of Physicians in London, who send documented evidence to a team of Assessors who then visit to Audit working practice against the evidence that has been supplied.

In April 2011 the Safety Executive Group agreed to fund an application for a SEQOHS audit of Occupational Health Services at Bangor University. The Occupational Health Practitioner then formed a Working Group to review occupational health practices against the SEQOHS requirements:

- Compliance with legal obligations for the security and access to occupational health records were confirmed by an audit conducted by the University Data Protection Officer.
- Compliance with national guidelines and professional standards of occupational health records were confirmed by a peer review conducted by Occupational Health Practitioners from Gwynedd Council.
- An important part of the accreditation process takes account of the views expressed by people that access the service through Customer Satisfaction Surveys. For this reason the Working Group agreed on the content of an Occupational Health Survey. This was conducted by questionnaires sent to those who

do not have email access and through an on-line survey for people who do. SEQOHS required a 10% sample of the University Staff and this level of response was attained.

The Key Findings

- 100% satisfaction amongst people seen for either: a Health Check, workplace support during pregnancy, help in returning from long term sick leave or Health Surveillance due to occupational hazards.
- 99% confirmed their confidentiality was respected.
- 97% confirmed they were seen on time.
- 92% found it easy to contact Occupational Health.
- 86% said their expectations of Occupational Health were being met.
- 77% felt they were receiving adequate information to support their physical health.
- 75% confirm the Health and Well-being Website is valuable.
- 64% felt they were receiving adequate health information to support their mental health.
- 40% requested health information to avoid heart disease.
- 25% wished to be trained in the use of an auto-injector that treats anaphylaxis.
- 23% wished to be trained in the use of a defibrillator.

Where there was less than 75% satisfaction, the steps that have been taken to meet the expectations of Staff are detailed in this report.

In February 2012 SEQOHS Accreditation Assessors visited Bangor University. They reported their findings to the Accreditation Quality Assurance Panel at the Faculty of Occupational Medicine who have confirmed that Bangor University is providing a safe, effective, quality Occupational Health Service.

At that time we were the 1st University in the UK to be accredited and the first Occupational Health Service in Wales to be accredited.

Quality accreditation lasts for 5 years before a revisit. During this time annual reviews of working practice are undertaken and reported to SEQOHS who (a) check to verify that our high standards are being maintained and (b) confirm the accreditation continues for a further year, or (c) give advice regarding the steps required to maintain accreditation.



Mental Health at Work

Whilst 64% of respondents felt that their mental health at work was being supported, further efforts have been made to promote awareness of mental health issues. In November 2012 'National Stress Awareness Week' was marked by an exhibition in the Main Arts foyer to raise awareness of support available from the Network of Staff Supporters (NOSS), alcohol education (CAIS) and bereavement support (CRUSE). In addition, the Occupational Health Practitioner joined a presentation to raise mental health issues at the Senior Managers meeting. More recently the Health and Safety Adviser has taken a lead role in this area, revising the HR Stress Management Policy with presentations also given to the Commercial Services and HR team on the subject.

Health Information for the Avoidance of Heart Disease

40% of respondents requested information to avoid heart disease and in response a 4 week Healthy Heart Programme was delivered during the summer.

The Programme consisted of a lunchtime talk supported by week long health activities to put the 'talk' into practice. Thanks are extended to the speakers who freely supported this initiative, namely: Sian Davies - Lecturer in Medical Nursing/Cardiovascular Care, Rebecca Crane – Research Fellow 'Mindfulness', Iorwerth Jones – Exercise Physiologist at Calon Lan (the Gwynedd and Ynys Môn Cardiac Rehabilitation Team) and George Petry, a qualified nutritionist studying at Bangor University.

Basic Life Support Training for Staff to Help Others

This involves recognising the reasons for unconsciousness and managing the consequences, responding to the signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis by the use of an auto-injector to promote recovery, competence in CPR and the confidence to use a defibrillator.

Whilst some of these skills are part of the First Aid training, the advantages of non-first aiders being familiar with the action to take in basic life support cannot be underestimated. During the course of 2012 all those who responded to the Occupational Health Survey requesting this training have been trained and now have the practical skills to recognise and respond to medical emergencies.

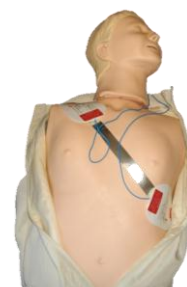


Halls Wardens have been trained to recognise anaphylaxis and were taught how to safely administer medication with an auto injector. School of Ocean Sciences Academic Staff received a bespoke course to equip them with the skills needed to deliver first aid to Students on field courses within the UK and overseas. This approach was favoured to the courses formerly delivered at great cost by first aid training organisations.

School of Sports, Health and Exercise Sciences Academic Staff received refresher training in basic life support and how to use the defibrillator next to their laboratory.

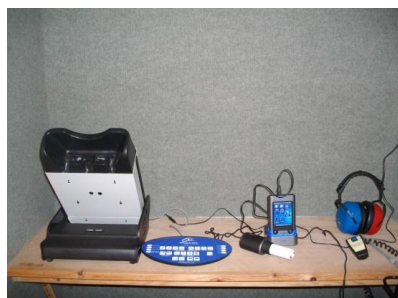
A refresher course on basic life support was also provided to the Staff from Maes Glas (where the defibrillator has been used successfully twice) and the Security team (who recently resuscitated a member of the public).

As well as responding to the findings of the Occupational Health Survey, the routine work of Health Surveillance, Health Checks, support for Staff unable to work due to long term illness and our lead role to raise funds for the University's adopted charity, Ty Gobaith, has continued.



Health Surveillance

The Health Surveillance Programme forms part of our 'Health and Safety' obligations to check that health is not being harmed by work. It consists of health interviews to enquire about work related symptoms and objective measures of health. These include:



- Hearing tests where Staff are exposed to sounds that are at a level that risks noise induced hearing loss (85db and above).
- Spirometry where the working environment contains dusts or vapours that may place respiratory health at risk.
- Those who drive University vehicles receive an eye screening test. This checks whether they meet the required standard of vision to drive on the public highway.

- People who spend many hours using machinery such as strimmers and chain saws are at risk of permanent muscle weakness or grip problems due to blood vessel and nerve ending damage.

To check whether any of these problems are emerging, tests of hand grip strength are performed using a hand dynamometer and fine finger movement requiring manual dexterity to pick, assemble and place small objects on a peg board.

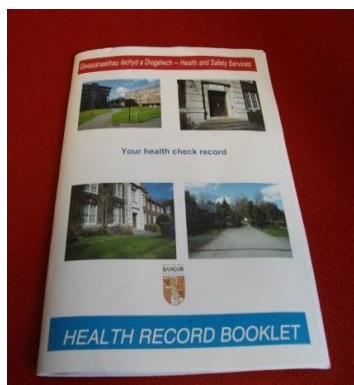


Each year over 60 Staff are seen by the Occupational Health Practitioner for audiometry, respiratory or hand arm vibration tests. In addition, over 40 people are seen for Driver Health Assessments.

During 2012, the other people who received Health Assessments to ensure fitness for the job that they do included 12 night workers, as night work may trigger illness, and 26 food handlers to exclude skin problems triggered by regular contact with water and detergents that can damage skin.

Our Health Surveillance Programme has been showcased as an example of best practice by the 'Health and Safety Executive' (HSE)¹¹ and assessed by SEQOSH that our Clinical Governance follows current evidence based Guidelines and Approved Codes of Practice.

Staff Health Checks and Support for Expectant/ New Mothers



Our Programme of Staff Health Checks has been ongoing since 2007. Since 2012 the focus has been to offer the service to new starters and is proving to be very popular. In addition, the rolling Programme of Health Checks to existing Staff re-commenced and will last into 2014.

Support to expectant and new mothers continues and is led by the Health & Safety Assistant, who often involves HR whose role ensures the appropriate provision of maternity entitlements. During 2012, 63 Staff have been on maternity leave and several new mothers requested a loan of our mini-fridge, for the storage of milk whilst at work. This facility has proven to be very popular and greatly appreciated.

Ongoing Support for Staff on Sick Leave

Sickness absence falls into three categories; short term lasting less than 7 days (usually a result of colds, flu, headaches/migraine), medium term lasting between 2 or 3 weeks (usually due to infections that require medical treatment), or long term lasting 4 weeks and longer. Those on longer term sick leave benefit most from welfare contact and support to return to work. In addition, Managers appreciate knowing how they can actively support the return to work process.

Our approach to supporting Staff and the creation of Website guidance '*Pathways to Health from Sick Leave*' has been shared with local GPs who attended a meeting where Occupational Health Practitioners from Gwynedd Council and Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board also gave presentations. Dame Carol Black, the National Director for Work and Health suggested publishing this as an example of 'best practice' for other Occupational Health Services to adopt. The article was published in November 2012¹².

¹¹ HSE (2011) 'Creating Healthier, Safer Workplaces' www.hse.gov.uk/strategy/one-year-on.pdf

¹² <http://www.bangor.ac.uk/hss/wellness/documents> Working with GPs to Support a Return from Sickness Absence

2. SAFETY & GENERAL

Health and safety remains one of the most regulated areas of the University's activities bringing with it many challenges and copious workloads. A small team of Staff are dedicated to supporting the University and its Colleges, Departments, Staff and Students to ensure that we not only stay on the "right side of the law" but also ensure that the advice and support provided is tailored to enable activities to happen, even with an element of risk.

The principle of ensuring the University does not harm anyone remains at the forefront but this principle must be balanced by the need to sometimes challenge the norm, to allow Students to experience controlled risk and to sometimes push the boundaries in our teaching and research.

Health and Safety Management System Audits - Colleges

An audit of the College of Health and Behavioural Sciences (COHABs) health and safety management system against the requirements of OHSAS 18001/2 was completed in 2012. Each School / Institute was audited separately and the College's overall qualitative health and safety performance was found to be 'Very Good'.

The final College audit for the College of Arts and Humanities commenced in 2012.

Themed Audits & Reviews

- Radon Survey: The Radon Survey continued in 2012 with 42 monitors placed in December within previously unmeasured University buildings and buildings where radon mitigation work was carried out to confirm the efficacy of the work. The Department has also provided advice and support to other Universities with regards to undertaking their own radon surveys.
- Ionising Radiation: During 2012 the University's processes for managing its open-source ionising radiation materials was reviewed by the external Radiation Protection Adviser. No significant issues were found and it is considered that management of ionising radiation (open-source) remains good.
- Childcare Nursery: A review of Infection Control arrangements within the Nursery facility was undertaken with only minor improvements noted. It was highlighted that over the previous twelve months a significant amount of work has been expended to improve hygiene facilities and develop management processes.

The Infection Control Review followed the recently developed Audit Pack which is to be used by the Local Authority across the childcare sector.

Policies / Documents

A small number of Policies were reviewed in 2012, primarily to update the information provided to reflect revised University arrangements.

Significant effort has been given to assessing updated guidance provided by the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) on Fieldwork Safety and a revised Policy together with tailored guidance for particular Fieldwork activities has been produced. These documents will go to consultation shortly with a view to being adopted in the new Academic Year.

Website information remains the most important means of communicating technical and more detailed information. The University's Health and Safety Website has developed into a very valuable hub and provides a significant resource for managing most areas of risk experienced at the University. Specific areas of the Website are updated regularly and in total over 39,000 pages were visited in 2012 and the site accessed by University Staff and Students on over 4,900 occasions.

Self-Assessment

During the year great effort has been expended to “pull together” key information from University Policies and Information with the purpose of developing a useful and valuable Self-Assessment document for all Colleges and Departments. The Self-Assessment identifies primary requirements and lists these in simple terms per subject area, allowing each College and Department to see in one document what is expected of them, with links provided to detailed information if required.

The Self-Assessment will not only allow a better understanding locally of what is expected and what is being done to manage risk, but will also form the headline risk (management) assessment for the College/Department, identifying what is currently in place and where effort is required.

Training

During the year 106 courses were provided or facilitated by Health and Safety Services, a 12% decrease on the number of courses provided / sourced in 2011. Sessions included what are perceived as the health and safety staple courses e.g. Risk Assessment, Fire Safety, Manual Handling, Health and Safety Induction. This year also saw the introduction of modular courses such as law, health and safety management systems and risk management.

Specific Laboratory Hazard Awareness training was also provided to University Security Staff as a follow up to the major training exercise; a ‘mock’ radiation spill which took place in 2011. Similar courses are now available to Contractors, Estates Workers and Domestic Staff who work within laboratories. The laboratory training course has only been possible through significant support from the College of Natural Sciences and College of Physical and Applied Sciences.

Corporate H&S Risk Assessment

The University’s headline Corporate Health and Safety Risk Assessment (CHSRA) was again reviewed during the year, up-dating progress and re-evaluating risk exposure. This document continues to help direct the work of HSS to better ensure that resources and effort are directed where best value is gained, without losing sight of the everyday needs of Staff and Students.

The CHSRA is a substantive document, assessing the University’s risk management position for dozens of hazards and risk activities.

Detailed Departmental Support

Detailed support has been given to new departments such as Conferencing and Catering (Commercial Services) to develop their policies and most importantly arrangements for managing health and safety within the kitchens, during deliveries and for conferences and events. Such involvement should enable the department to continue to improve and deliver a high level of safety management.

Similarly, HSS has worked closely with the recently created department of Sports & Recreation to substantively streamline and re-write the many procedures and documents previously in existence.

Other areas of support include continued work with the Estates & Facilities Department in key areas and risks. The Estates & Facilities Department is regarded as the most complicated Service Department at the University with a legislative ‘burden’ far in excess of that which is experienced by any other College or Department. This legislative pressure reflects the extent of risks it is required to manage, from providing safe water systems and electrical supplies to refurbishing complicated research facilities and managing multi million pound building projects.

The areas of construction and facilities management have the highest incidence and prosecution rate of any Sector in the UK and it is for this reason, combined with the need to balance risk management with the

necessity to provide a modern and well managed University estate, that HSS retains a close working relationship with the Department.

Summary of other Support Activities

The following section provides some day to day examples of the support the Department can be asked to provide to Colleges / Departments:

- Numerous specific risk assessments have been produced to support and enable activities to be undertaken safely. These include assessments for major initiatives, concerts and community events such as Serendipity, Pontio Stepping Stones, Cerebellium, Hogwarts Feast, and many more.
- HSS continues to work with Student Volunteering on its safety arrangements, promoting activities and supporting Students and the Students' Union with their desire to increase volunteering opportunities. It was particularly pleasing to work with the RAG Committee this year and help with their fund raising.
- Personal Emergency Egress Plans are produced during discussions with Students with disabilities that may affect them during an emergency. These are further enhanced to consider how their studies can be supported and to reassure Students that health and safety will not be used as a barrier to their learning and development.
- Assisting Colleges with lab clearances. This work includes decommissioning and decontaminating equipment and the laboratory infrastructure.
- As well as participating in College and Departmental Health and Safety Committees, HSS has representation on specialist groups such as Asbestos Management, Physical Access, Disability Working Group and numerous one-off groups seeking to resolve particular risk management issues.

HSS continues to work closely with the College of Natural Sciences Health and Safety Officer, particularly in his role as University Biological Safety Officer and Radiation Protection Officer. This has seen an increasing level of joint working to ensure arrangements continue to support teaching and research in the sciences.

Grant Award

HSS on behalf of the University applied for and was successful in obtaining financial support for three initiatives aimed at supporting and encouraging physical activity and reducing the University's environmental impact. A Grant of £10,000 was awarded by TAIH, the regional sustainable travel organisation, for the provision of additional cycle storage facilities, purchase of bikes to loan to Staff for free and for the purchase of hundreds of pedometers to promote walking.

The latter Grant of £3,000 for the purchase of pedometers relates to a major health promotion initiative which is planned for the end of this Academic Year and which will run side-by-side to a near identical promotion at Aberystwyth University.

The £2,000 awarded for the purchase of loan bikes has immediately proved popular with Staff and is also seen as a stepping stone to purchasing a bike through the University's Salary Sacrifice scheme. The remaining £5,000 award will see numerous new cycle stands been placed across the University, including a new secure cycle store for the Science site.

North West Wales Health and Safety Group (NWWHSG)



The NWWHSG facilitated by HSS and established to enable local employers to support one another to promote good health and safety practices arranged ten monthly talks in 2012 with topics ranging from Electrical Safety, to the more unusual Confined Spaces in Mines. The Group was again recognised by "Safety Groups UK" and awarded a Silver Prize for its support to local organizations and health and safety in general.