

Health and Safety Policy

2025-26

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Committee Approval

Committee	Committee Action	Date
Health and Safety Committee	Approved by Chair's Action	30 July 2025
SMT	Approved	10 September 2025
		16 September 2025

This Health and Safety Policy will be reviewed by our Health and Safety Committee on a regular basis in line with our Policy Review schedule unless there is cause for an earlier review (e.g. the introduction of new legislation). Any amendments require the approval of the Senior Management Team.

1. Introduction

We regard the health and safety of our staff, students and visitors to be of the highest priority. Bloomsbury Institute is committed to meeting its statutory health and safety responsibilities and to creating a culture that is both proactive and collaborative in supporting the health and safety of our community.

This Health and Safety Policy sets out how the Institute complies with its legal and moral obligations relating to the health and safety of its staff, students and any other person who may be affected by its day-to-day operations. This policy has been formulated with due consideration of the Institute's responsibilities as an employer, as set out within the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations. For information on how we comply with the wellbeing aspects of our obligations under the latter, see our Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy.

2. Responsibilities

Bloomsbury Institute's Board of Directors is the Institute's legal authority and, as such, ensures systems are in place for meeting all the Institute's legal obligations, including those arising from contracts and other legal commitments made in the Institute's name. This includes accountability for health, safety and security.

The Senior Management Team (SMT) approves the Health and Safety Policy and ensures compliance with both it and all relevant health and safety legislation and regulation.

To support the Senior Management Team (and ultimately the Board of Directors) to meet their health and safety obligations, a Health and Safety Committee has been established. The committee is chaired by the Estates and Facilities Manager and comprises members from various departments across the organisation as well as the Manager of the Student Guild

On a day-to-day operational level, Heads of Divisions/Departments and the Guild Manager are responsible for ensuring all relevant health and safety policies and procedures are adhered to, and any concerns, hazards, accidents etc are reported to ensure the health and safety of our staff and students is protected.

The health and safety of externally employed contractors remains the responsibility of the contracted company whilst employed and acting on the specified contracted works.

3. Objectives

Our Health and Safety Committee are committed to supporting our Senior Management Team (SMT) and Board of Directors to achieve the following objectives:

- Identifying and adhering to legal requirements as a minimum acceptable level of health and safety performance;
- Ensuring that risks related to health and safety that arise within our environment are effectively controlled;
- Preventing accidents and causes of ill-health from occurring within our environment;
- Communicating with staff and students on matters affecting their health and safety;
- Providing information, instruction and training on health and safety matters to staff;
- Keeping accurate records by recording events in the accident/incident logs;
- Promoting general awareness of health and safety;
- Maintaining safe and healthy working conditions; and,

- Reviewing our health and safety policy and procedures on a regular basis to ensure compliance with all appropriate legislation and best practice standards.

The principal functions of our Health and Safety Committee can be found in the Health and Safety Committee Terms of Reference¹ which are subject to approval by the SMT.

Safeguarding our students and staff from radicalisation or terrorism is as important to us as protecting them from any other forms of harm; however, our obligations and approach under the Prevent duty are covered within our [Prevent Policy](#)². We provide our staff with advice and guidance on how to identify and respond to a terrorist incident. This information is contained within a procedures document that is one of the key company documents that all staff are required to read³.

4. Health and Safety compliance

Staff and students have a duty to take care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions or inactions. Any situation which may be considered to be a serious, immediate or long-term danger to health and safety must be reported to their line manager or lecturer as soon as possible. This includes any deficiencies or shortcomings they have identified within arrangements for health and safety practices and procedures. Where appropriate and/or necessary, a risk assessment will be carried out (see section 11).

As a minimum, all staff and students must:

- Actively contribute and comply with Bloomsbury Institute's positive health and safety culture;
- Take reasonable care of their own and other's health and safety;
- Co-operate with management on health and safety, and not interfere, or misuse, any facilities, services or equipment provided for their use;
- Carry out activities in line with instructions and all health and safety policies and procedures;
- Report all accidents, serious risks or incidents;
- Do not take part or promote horseplay, pranks or practical jokes, which may result in accident or injury; and

In addition, all staff must:

- Carry out all necessary health and safety training on a regular basis, and when required;
- Report any health and safety concerns raised by students or visitors to the relevant manager.
- Carry out their duties with due regard for colleagues, students and visitors by following safe working practices

Any colleague who is faced with a conflict between their own safety and the demands of their job should raise the matter immediately with their Line Manager or Estates and Facilities Manager. If there is a conflict of interest with these people, then the matter should be raised with the relevant member of SMT.

¹ Copies of this document can be requested from quality@bil.ac.uk

² <https://www.bil.ac.uk/qem/section-3/>

³ See **Potential Terrorist Incidents - Identification and Response Procedures**, available on HR online.

Failure to comply with our health and safety policies and procedures may lead to disciplinary action under our [Student Disciplinary Policy and Procedures](#)⁴ and/or Staff Disciplinary Procedure⁵.

5. Accident prevention and incident reporting

All staff and students have a duty to avoid the occurrence of accidents by behaving in a sensible and safe manner. This includes the need to adhere to all legal requirements and safeguarding that govern the use of furniture, equipment and facilities.

Inappropriate, reckless and/or careless behaviour that may cause injury or damage must always be avoided, and staff and students should carefully consider their actions before carrying them out. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Special care should be taken when lifting objects, and it is advised that nothing should be lifted without prior understanding of the weight involved.
- Standing on furniture is strongly discouraged, as is swinging on or tilting chairs while seated.
- No running is allowed within our sites, particularly not on the stairs.
- Electrical equipment should not be tampered with. This includes opening PCs and pulling on power cables.

Any accidents that occur must be reported to the Estates and Facilities Manager at the earliest opportunity either by phone (07534405481) or by email to incidents@bil.ac.uk. If the Estates and Facilities Manager is unavailable, then the Head of Division/Department (if staff), or lecturer (if student) should be informed of the incident. This initial verbal report of the accident will later be confirmed with a written Incident Report form, which will be completed by the person affected by the incident, their line manager, their lecturer or the Bloomsbury Institute first aider who attended. This record will support the Estates and Facilities Manager to establish the cause of any accident and pinpoint any necessary precautions to prevent the recurrence of such incident. It will also support escalation, if the accident/incident is reportable under RIDDOR, (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013).

The [Incident Report form](#)⁶ is available on SharePoint in the Health and Safety Committee site.

We are protected by our automatically renewed Employers' Liability Insurance. The certificate is displayed at the entrance to 7 Bedford Square.

5.1 First Aid

An accessible and fully equipped first aid box is available on each floor at 7 Bedford Square. All staff and students should ensure they are aware of the location of the first aid boxes. These will be maintained and replenished by the Estates and Facilities team. Anyone who takes any item from any of the first aid boxes should report that to the Estates and Facilities team to ensure stock levels are full. Designated staff members have been trained to administer first aid and the full list is available next to each first aid box.

Smoking, vaping and the consumption/use of drugs or other banned substances is prohibited in all venues (Bloomsbury Institute and third-party sites), as is the unauthorised consumption of alcohol.

As well as physical wellness, the mental health of our staff is important to us. Our Disability and Wellbeing Manager is also a Mental Health First Aid champion. Staff can also speak in confidence to

⁴ <https://www.bil.ac.uk/qem/section-3/>

⁵ Available to staff on HR online.

⁶ <https://bloomsburyinstitute.sharepoint.com/:b:/r/sites/HealthandSafety/HSLibrary/Incident%20Report%20Form.pdf>

their Line Manager, the Head of People and Development, or consult a member of our team of Mental Health First Aiders for initial advice on support options. Further information on wellbeing support can be found in our Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy⁷.

6. Fire Safety

6.1 General fire protection

Smoke detectors, fire alarms and fire extinguishers are installed throughout our site at 7 Bedford Square.

Regular fire drills (a minimum of one fire drill a year), are conducted on site by the Fire Manager (Estates and Facilities Manager), and trained Fire Marshals.

All fire systems and infrastructure are maintained and serviced on a weekly or monthly basis by competent Bloomsbury Institute personnel and on a 6-monthly or annual basis by qualified competent third-party engineers depending on the type of fire system.

On a regular basis, selected volunteer staff will receive face-to-face Fire Marshal training to ensure that enough Fire Marshals are on site at 7 Bedford Square to efficiently and effectively manage any evacuation procedures. The certification lasts for one calendar year and just before expiry the Fire marshal is required to take an online refresher course if they wish to remain a Fire Marshal.

On a regular basis all staff will undertake a mandatory online Fire Safety course. In addition, the Fire Safety Information document provides information on site specific evacuation procedures and can be accessed on BreatheHR.

The Fire Safety Logbook includes records of fire safety equipment, testing and fire drills. The logbook is maintained by the Estates and Facilities team and is regularly audited during annual Fire Risk Assessments.

Fire doors must not be wedged open at any time. An alternative to wedging doors open is to use electro-magnetic door retainers. These are linked to the fire detection system and normally hold the door open. If there is a fire and the detection system is activated, the detection system automatically releases the doors and allows them to close. Regular weekly checks are made to ensure they are all functioning, and the test results are recorded in the Fire Logbook.

6.1.1 Fire Risk Assessments

It is a legal requirement to commission a Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) to be conducted at all sites on a regular basis.

We undertake regular FRAs at our Bedford Square site in line with our legal obligations and conducted by qualified third party inspectors. The FRA must always be available for inspection by the enforcing authority (London Fire Brigade).

This fire risk assessment is reviewed by the Estates and Facilities Manager at regular intervals so as to keep it up to date.

The assessment is reviewed following:

- Any significant changes to work practices or procedures;
- Any significant change in the number of people present or the characteristics of the occupants including the presence of people with some form of disability;

⁷ For publication in academic year 2025-26

- Any significant structural or material changes to the location (including the internal layout) or to the processes or activities conducted at the location, including the introduction of new equipment;
- Significant changes to furniture and fixings and/or to displays or quantities of stock;
- The introduction or increase in the storage of hazardous substances;
- Any change in the fire precautions in the location; or
- Any near miss or fire incident; and,
- In any event, at recommended intervals of no more than twelve months.

The Estates and Facilities Manager ensures that the additional fire safety controls, recommendations and actions set out in the fire risk assessment are addressed to bring the location up to a standard that will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of staff, any other person at the location or any person(s) in the immediate vicinity of the location who are at risk from the fire.

6.2 Fire Management

Any individual discovering smoke or a strong smell of burning, should immediately raise the alarm by operating the nearest fire alarm call point, as per the Fire Action Plan for that site (Bloomsbury Institute or third-party site). Fire Action Plans can be found next to all Fire Call points.

Fire Safety Information will then be followed to assist with the evacuation and safety of all on-site persons.

Upon hearing the alarm, staff, students, visitors and contractors are required to evacuate the building immediately in a calm and orderly manner, following the processes laid out in the Fire Safety Information document.

Staff and students must be aware of the evacuation procedure, and it is strongly recommended that they familiarise themselves with the location of fire escapes and assembly points.

Overall, fire hazards should be avoided by following basic instructions and precautions, such as adhering to guidance on the proper use of electrical equipment. Any personal electrical equipment can only be used in our premises, if it has been PAT tested internally. Furthermore, staff and students are prohibited from bringing highly flammable, toxic, explosive or otherwise hazardous materials to the premises.

Fire exits must never be blocked, and any obstruction should be reported to Reception, a member of the Estates and Facilities team or a designated Fire Marshal immediately. In addition, any buildup of flammable materials such as paper or cardboard should be brought to the attention of a designated Fire Marshal at the earliest convenience.

7. General emergency procedure

It may be necessary to evacuate the site in the event of an emergency. In such a case, the signal to evacuate will be either the activation of the fire alarm or an order from the Fire Marshal, the class lecturer or a member of the Estates and Facilities team.

In such a case, staff and students should follow the same evacuation procedure as explained above.

8. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans

Where it has been pre-determined that a staff member or student cannot get themselves out of a building unaided, a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) will be created with the help of the Disability and Wellbeing Manager and the Estates and Facilities Manager to agree the best possible

escape plan in an emergency. The plan will then be shared with all Fire Marshals to inform them in the case of an emergency.

For individuals with severe mobility impairment, including wheelchair users, accessing areas above the first floor may present significant challenges during an emergency evacuation due to the reliance on stairs when lifts are inoperable. To ensure their safety, and as part of the agreed PEEP, it is a necessary safety precaution that individuals whose PEEP identifies that they cannot use the stairs unaided are accommodated on the ground or, failing that, first floors wherever reasonably practicable. This is to facilitate a timely and safe evacuation in the event of an alarm.

Any PEEP holder must check in and out of the Sign-In App in Reception upon entering and exiting to allow for correct procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency evacuation. The Fire Marshals will be automatically alerted by email that a person with a PEEP is in the building. They will then familiarise themselves with that person's PEEP record. Upon hearing the evacuation alarm, the Fire Marshals will arrange for the safe evacuation of the PEEP holder.

9. Major incidents and civil contingency events

In case of major incidents or civil contingency events that would disrupt our regular activity (e.g. virus outbreaks, terrorist attacks), the Estates and Facilities Manager will take necessary steps to secure the building and (where applicable) draft a risk assessment for the site in line with governmental advice.

Any risk assessment will then be circulated to the Health and Safety Committee and SMT for approval.

Upon approval the document will be accessible on relevant platforms such as the Health and Safety SharePoint site.

10. Hybrid working

Information on opportunities to work from home is included within individual staff job descriptions. It is important to ensure optimal work conditions for our staff. Incorrect use of display screen equipment (DSE) or poorly designed workstations or work environments can lead to pain in necks, shoulders, backs, arms, wrists and hands as well as fatigue and eye strain.

Occasional remote workers should follow the advice available on the [Tips for Home and Remote Working⁸](#) document available in the Health and Safety Committee Library on SharePoint.

Where individual staff have a more permanent arrangement to work remotely, a DSE Self-assessment should be carried out, and control measures put in place. Staff should contact a member of the Estates and Facilities team if they need further details about the DSE Self-assessment.

11. Risk Assessments

11.1 Generic Work Based Risk Assessment

A Generic Work Based Risk Assessment will be completed by the Estates and Facilities Manager or appointed responsible person. This will cover the day-to-day risks associated with working on site including but not limited to slips, trips and falls, general use of equipment, moving furniture and equipment and awkward loads. Any findings from the risk assessment will be passed onto the Managers of the respective areas and they will oversee any mitigating training. This would include the risks to them, the risks to others and the control measures that must be implemented if they engage in this work activity.

⁸<https://bloombsburyinstitute.sharepoint.com/sites/HealthandSafety/HSLibrary/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2FHealthandSafety%2FHSLibrary%2FTips%20for%20Home%20and%20Remote%20Working%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2FHealthandSafety%2FHSLibrary>

The Generic Work Based Risk Assessment must be reviewed on an annual basis, or where there have been significant changes to equipment, procedures or structure. A review will also be triggered for the risk assessment if there has been an accident or near miss as this may indicate that something in it may not be effective or adequate.

The Generic Work Based Risk Assessment is available on the [Health and Safety SharePoint site](#)⁹.

11.2 Location Specific Work Based Risk Assessment

If a work activity or hazard has been identified and there is no generic risk assessment available for the activity/hazard, the Estates and Facilities Manager or appointed responsible person should conduct one by:

- Walking around the location and looking out for any hazards that have not been included in the generic risk assessments;
- Focusing on those hazards which involve a significant risk of injury;
- Evaluating the risks and decide whether existing precautions are adequate and meet legal standards, comply with industry standards, and reduce the risk so far as reasonably practicable to prevent harm;
- Deciding whether more needs to be done to reduce the risk; and
- Notifying all relevant colleagues of the findings, explaining the control measures and providing specific training for colleagues where applicable.

Copies of Location Specific Risk Assessments can be requested by emailing the Estates and Facilities Manager at estates.facilities@bil.ac.uk.

11.3 Specific Risk Assessments

Some activities require a more detailed process of risk assessment, as there could also be specific controls that need to be put into place. The list below illustrates the policies that are relevant to activities that may require a specific risk assessment form to be completed if it is not already part of the individual survey:

- Asbestos Survey (to be undertaken by a competent third party)
- Control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH)
- Display Screen Equipment (DSE) (Self-Assessed)
- Fire Risk Assessment (to be undertaken by a competent third party)
- Legionella Risk Assessment (to be undertaken by a competent third party)
- Manual Handling
- New and Expectant Mothers
- Working at Height
- Young Persons

⁹ <https://bloombsburyinstitute.sharepoint.com/sites/HealthandSafety>

Copies of specific Risk Assessments can be requested by emailing the Estates and Facilities Manager at estates.facilities@bil.ac.uk.

11.4 External Contractors

External contractors will be required to complete and submit Risk and Methodology Statements (RAMS) before works can be commenced. If necessary, a Permit to Work must be issued by the Estates and Facilities Manager which contains details of the works to commence. Mandatory scenarios when this must be issued include any “Hot works” using spark-emitting grinders or oxy-acetylene torches, electrical works to live systems or works in confined spaces.

12. Related regulations, policies and procedures

All regulations, policies and procedures below are available on our website, HR Online or the relevant third party's website:

- Internal documents
 - o Certificate of Employers' Liability Insurance
 - o Fire Safety Information
 - o Student Guide to Health and Safety
 - o Prevent Policy
 - o Staff Disciplinary Procedure
 - o Staff Grievance Procedures
 - o Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
 - o Student Disciplinary Policy and Procedures
 - o Out of Hours Working Guidance
- External Documents
 - o Birkbeck Health and Safety Information¹⁰
 - o Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974¹¹

13. Review of the Health and Safety Policy

This Health and Safety Policy will be reviewed on a regular basis by the Health and Safety Committee in line with our Policy Review schedule, unless there is cause for an earlier review (e.g. the introduction of new legislation). Any amendments introduced by the Health and Safety Committee require the approval of the Senior Management Team.

¹⁰ <http://www5.bbk.ac.uk/so/>

¹¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/37/contents>