

1. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT

Policy Statement

South Thames Colleges Group (STCG) is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of its employees, students, contractors and visitors. The College recognises its responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and is committed to providing a safe and healthy learning and working environment.

It is intended through this Policy that STCG will take all reasonably practicable steps to prevent accidents and work-related ill health and will strive to continually improve health and safety performance across all college activities and ensure that Health and Safety is promoted within all learning programmes.

The Policy will be made available to all staff and reviewed annually by the Group Health and Safety Committee, it will be updated as necessary to reflect changes in legislation, guidance or college operations.

Responsibility for health and safety is shared across all levels of the organisation. While the Board of Governors holds overall accountability, the Chief Executive Officer / Group Principal has delegated responsibility for day-to-day management to senior leaders, managers, and all staff, each of whom has a duty to follow health and safety procedures and to take reasonable care of themselves and others.

STCG supports and encourages consultation with safety representatives to maintain and improve standards of health and safety. This consultation is primarily conducted through local and Group Health and Safety Committees, which meet once per term or more frequently if required.

This Policy and the associated arrangements will be reviewed annually by the Group Health and Safety Committee or sooner if significant changes occur in legislation, guidance, or operational activity. We expect full cooperation from everyone within the college community to ensure that STCG remains a safe and healthy place to work and study.

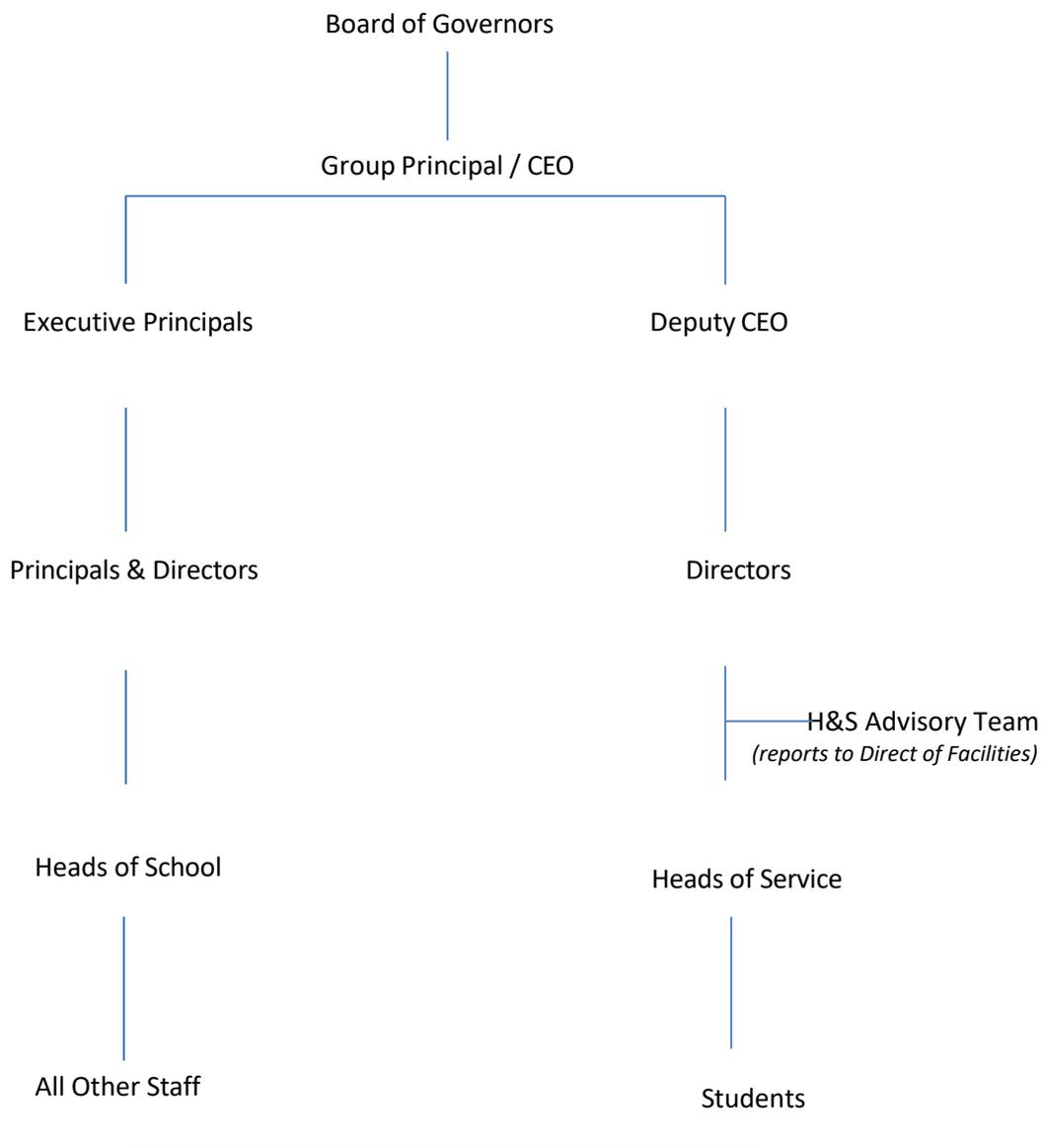
Signed

John Stone
Chair of the Corporation

Peter Mayhew-Smith
Chief Group Principal / CEO

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2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES



2.1 Board of Governors

The overall responsibility for ensuring effective Health and Safety management across South Thames Colleges Group (STCG) lies with the Board of Governors. The Board sets the strategic direction for health and safety across the Group via this policy and ensures:

- That robust policies, procedures and resources are in place to maintain safe environment for all.
- That compliance with legal obligations under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
- Hold senior leadership accountable for health and safety management.
- Promote a positive safety culture and support engagement with staff and students.
- Health and Safety performance of the Group is monitored by the Group Health, Safety, and Safeguarding Committee and reviewed annually.

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2.2 Group Principal/Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

The day-to-day responsibility for implementing this Health & Safety Policy is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer / Group Principal, who is accountable for ensuring that:

- Health and safety responsibilities are clearly assigned at all levels of management.
- Appropriate risk assessments and control measures are in place.
- Staff and students are provided with adequate training, information and supervision.
- The effectiveness of health and safety arrangements is regularly reviewed and improved where necessary.

2.3 Deputy CEO

The Deputy CEO is responsible for ensuring consistent implementation of this Health and Safety Policy across the Group. Key duties include:

- Leading policy implementation across all colleges and services.
- Ensuring an effective Health and Safety Advisory Service is in place.
- Chairing the Group Health and Safety Committee.
- Establishing and maintaining safe procedures and systems of work.
- Ensuring staff receive appropriate health and safety information and training.
- Implementing and testing emergency procedures.
- Monitoring health and safety performance.
- Reporting regularly to the Group Principal / CEO.

2.4 Deputy CEO and Executive Principals

The Deputy CEO and Executive Principals are jointly responsible for implementing the Policy locally by:

- Promoting a strong safety culture and leading by example.
- Maintaining up-to-date college-specific policies and risk assessments.
- Ensuring staff and students follow health and safety procedures.
- Allocating resources to meet safety requirements.
- Monitoring performance and taking corrective actions as needed.

2.5 Director Facilities

The Director of Facilities is responsible for ensuring the safety, security, and legal compliance of the Group's premises. Key responsibilities include:

- Leading the Health and Safety Advisor and ensuring consistent, effective advice is provided across the Group.
- Overseeing the safety, maintenance, and security of all Group premises.
- Ensuring up-to-date fire risk assessments and effective evacuation procedures, including support for individuals requiring assistance.
- Providing adequately trained staff to support emergency evacuations and maintaining all fire safety equipment.
- Ensuring compliance with asbestos and legionella regulations.
- Acting as the lead contact for Facilities Management health and safety issues, and providing

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suitable resources.

- Ensuring that all plant, equipment, and electrical systems (fixed and portable) are maintained and tested as required by law and Group Policy.
- Appointing competent contractors and monitoring their health and safety performance on site.

2.6 Health and Safety Advisory Team

The Health and Safety Advisory team is led by the Director of Facilities and is supported by the Head of Facilities and a Health and Safety Advisor. They have responsibility for;

- Developing and maintaining the health and safety management system.
- Providing specialist advice to resolve Health and Safety issues across the Group.
- Supporting staff and students in meeting their health and safety responsibilities.
- Keeping up to date with relevant legislation and advising the college accordingly.
- Coordinating the investigation of accidents and incidents, and ensuring follow-up actions are completed.
- Maintaining accurate and up-to-date records of risk assessments, inspections, incidents, and safety actions.
- Providing hands-on support through incident response, data monitoring, audits, and risk assessment reviews.

2.7 Principals and Directors

College Principals and Directors hold delegated responsibility for the local implementation of the Group's Health and Safety Policy within their respective colleges or directorates. They are accountable for ensuring that robust arrangements are in place to protect the health, safety, and welfare of staff, students, contractors, and visitors. Their key responsibilities include:

- Promoting a positive health and safety culture and ensuring that all staff under their control are familiar with the Health and Safety Policy and leading by example.
- Ensuring that all health and safety procedures, risk assessments, and emergency plans are in place, up to date, and effectively communicated.
- Ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the provision of sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to enable other staff and students to avoid hazards and contribute positively to their own Health and Safety.
- Allocating sufficient resources and support to meet health and safety requirements.
- Monitoring local health and safety performance, compliance, and incident trends, and taking corrective action where needed.
- Ensuring that all accidents and incidents are reported promptly using the correct procedures, and that those occurring within their area of responsibility are thoroughly investigated with appropriate follow-up actions taken.

2.8 Heads of Schools / Heads of Service

Heads of School and Service Heads are responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of the Group's Health and Safety Policy within their departments or service areas. They play a key role in maintaining a safe working and learning environment for staff, students and visitors. Their responsibilities include:

- Promoting the implementation of the Group's Health and Safety Policy to their own department

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and ensuring that teaching staff are aware of their Health and Safety responsibilities.

- Ensuring that relevant risk assessments are completed, regularly reviewed, and acted upon.
- Ensuring, the provision of sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision appropriate to their roles.
- Ensuring that equipment, materials, and activities are used and managed safely.
- Reporting and investigating accidents, incidents, and near misses in line with college procedures.
- Monitoring and enforcing compliance with health and safety policies and procedures within their areas.
- Supporting the implementation of emergency procedures, including fire evacuation drills and first aid arrangements.
- Liaising with the Health and Safety Advisory Team and Facilities staff as required on matters of concern.

2.9 All Other Staff

All staff have a legal and professional responsibility to contribute to maintaining a safe and healthy environment. Regardless of role or seniority, all employees are expected to:

Where this is relevant to the role:

- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions or omissions.
- Comply with the Group's Health and Safety Policy, procedures, and any instructions or training provided.
- Use equipment, materials, and personal protective equipment (PPE) safely and appropriately.
- Report hazards, defects, accidents, near misses, and unsafe practices promptly using the correct reporting channels.
- Participate in health and safety training and emergency drills when required.
- Cooperate fully with managers, safety representatives, and the Health and Safety Advisory Team to support safe working practices.
- Avoid interfering with or misusing anything provided for health, safety, or welfare purposes.

Failure to comply with health and safety responsibilities may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Group's procedures.

2.10 Students

All students are expected to take personal responsibility for their own health and safety, as well as that of others who may be affected by their actions while on college premises or engaged in college-related activities. Students must:

- Follow all health and safety instructions, signage, and procedures provided by staff.
- Behave responsibly and not endanger themselves or others through careless or inappropriate behaviour.
- Use equipment and materials safely and only as instructed.
- Report any accidents, incidents, hazards, or unsafe conditions immediately to a member of staff.
- Participate in health and safety training, inductions, and emergency drills when required.
- Wear any personal protective equipment (PPE) provided, as appropriate to their learning activities.

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Students who fail to comply with these responsibilities may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Group’s student code of conduct.

2.11 Contractors

Any College Manager engaging contractors or suppliers to work on behalf of South Thames Colleges Group (STCG) is responsible for ensuring that those contractors are made fully aware of their obligations under the Group’s Health and Safety Policy and the Safeguarding and External Contractors Procedure.

All contractors working on South Thames Colleges Group (STCG) premises must:

- Comply fully with the Group’s Health and Safety Policy and the Safeguarding and External Contractors Procedure.
- Providing risk assessments and method statements (RAMS) for approval prior to commencing work in line with the College Permit to Work system.
- Ensuring that their staff are competent, trained, and supervised, and that they use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Cooperating with college staff and the Health and Safety Advisory Team, and complying with all site-specific rules and instructions.
- Reporting any accidents, incidents, or near misses to their college contact immediately and participating in any required investigations.
- Ensuring the safety of students, staff, visitors, and others while work is in progress.
- Not interfering with or compromising the operation of emergency systems, including fire alarms and evacuation procedures, without prior consent.
- Leaving the area of work in a clean, safe, and secure condition at the end of each shift or project.

Failure to comply with these requirements may result in suspension of work and removal from college premises.

2.12 College Health and Safety Representatives

Workplace Health and Safety Representatives are appointed by each recognised trade union in accordance with the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977. These representatives have functions, not legal duties, and play a key role in supporting effective health and safety management across the Group.

South Thames Colleges Group is committed to supporting Health and Safety Representatives in carrying out their functions by providing appropriate time, resources, information, and training. Key functions include:

- Representing employees in discussions with management regarding health, safety, and welfare.
- Raising and pursuing employee concerns or complaints about health and safety with the appropriate managers
- Investigating potential hazards, dangerous occurrences, and employee complaints related to health and safety.
- Carrying out inspections of the workplace in line with agreed procedures.
- Participating in Health and Safety Committee meetings and contributing to policy development.
- Promoting communication and consultation between staff and management on safety matters.
- Supporting the development and review of risk assessments and safe systems of work.

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Health and Safety Representatives are integral to maintaining a collaborative and proactive safety

3. EQUALITY AND LEGAL COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

South Thames Colleges Group (STCG) is committed to ensuring that its Health and Safety Policy and practices comply fully with all relevant UK legislation, including the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Equality Act 2010, and associated regulations and guidance.

The Group recognises its duty to ensure that health and safety arrangements are applied fairly and equitably, and that no individual is disadvantaged or discriminated against on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

STCG aims to provide an environment where everyone is treated with dignity, fairness and respect, and where diversity is actively valued. In line with our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, we will:

- Integrate equality considerations into all risk assessments, safety procedures, and emergency planning.
- Ensure accessible emergency evacuation plans are in place for individuals who may require additional support.
- Provide inclusive and accessible health and safety training, information, and procedures for staff, students, and contractors.
- Make reasonable adjustments to protect the health, safety, and welfare of individuals with disabilities or other specific needs.
- Monitor and review the impact of policies and procedures to identify and prevent any discrimination or inequality.
- Actively engage and consult with staff, students, trade union representatives, and relevant groups to support inclusive safety management.
- Coordinate health and safety practices with key Group policies, including those on Safeguarding, Student Support, Accessibility, and Equality and Diversity.

Through these measures, STCG aims to ensure that health and safety systems are inclusive, fair, and responsive to the needs of its diverse community.

4. GROUP HEALTHY & SAFETY COMMITTEE

4.1 Terms of Reference

The Committee functions in accordance with the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 (as amended) and The Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations (HSCER) 1996.

The Committee will meet each term or more frequently on reasonable request.

4.2 Committee Functions

The functions of the Committee are:

- To discuss safety related matters.

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- To study accident and other safety related statistics and trends, in order that corrective action may be recommended.
- The examination of safety audits on a similar basis.
- Consideration of reports and factual information provided by inspectors appointed under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
- Consideration of reports that safety representatives may wish to submit.
- To assist in the development of safe systems of work.
- To monitor the effectiveness of the content of safety training.
- To consider the adequacy of safety, health, communication and publicity in the workplace.
- The provision of a link with the enforcing authority.

4.3 Membership

<u>Title</u>	<u>Type of Membership</u>
Deputy CEO (Finance and Resources) Chair	Standing
Director of Facilities	Standing
Director of HR	Standing
Health and Safety Advisor	Standing
Safety Representatives	Nominated
	1 trade union representative from each of the Colleges
	Health and Safety groups. 5 in total.

4.4 College site Health and Safety Groups

The Principal of each college (Carshalton, Kingston, Merton, South Thames – Wandsworth and Tooting) will convene a Campus Health and Safety Group. This group will meet at least once each term and more frequently as required, upon reasonable request, to consider and address health and safety matters specific to each college or site.

The responsibilities of the Campus Health and Safety Group will include:

- Discussing and reviewing health and safety issues that affect the college or site.
- Identifying and addressing risks or hazards specific to the site.
- Reviewing incidents and accidents that have occurred, ensuring appropriate corrective actions are taken.
- Coordinating with the Group Health and Safety Committee to ensure alignment with broader health and safety policies and objectives.
- Ensuring compliance with health and safety legislation and ensuring the campus maintains a safe environment for staff, students, and visitors.

Membership

<u>Title</u>	<u>Type of Membership</u>
College Principal (Chair)	Standing
Facilities Manager	Standing
HR Manager	Standing
Health and Safety Advisor	Standing
Safety Representatives	Nominated
1 trade union representative from each	
recognised trade union	

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5. ARRANGEMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Introduction to the Arrangements

South Thames Colleges Group (STCG) has established comprehensive arrangements to support the effective implementation of health and safety practices. These arrangements are detailed in this section of the Policy and are supported by associated guidance documents that outline specific responsibilities, procedures, and statutory requirements.

All supporting health and safety guidance are available on the College intranet (STCG Online) within the Health and Safety section. Additional external resources and best practice guidance are accessible via the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) ([HSE website.](#))

5.1 Accident, Incident & Near Miss Reporting

STCG is committed to minimising accidents and incidents through proactive monitoring, investigation, and continuous improvement.

Definitions:

- Accident: An event resulting in injury or ill health.
- Incident: A dangerous occurrence not resulting in injury or ill health (e.g. fire, structural collapse, asbestos disturbance).
- Near Miss: An event that did not cause harm but had the potential to do so.

All accidents, incidents, and near misses must be reported promptly and investigated in accordance with Group procedures to prevent recurrence. This process ensures that underlying causes are addressed and appropriate corrective actions are taken.

5.2 RIDDOR Reporting

The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) apply where incidents meet specific criteria. Only the Health and Safety Advisor or Director of Facilities is authorised to report such incidents to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

Accident and incident trends will be monitored and analysed termly to inform preventative strategies and risk control measures. The full Accident Reporting Procedure is available on STCG Online.

5.3 Asbestos Control

South Thames Colleges Group (STCG) recognises the significant health hazards posed by asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) and is fully committed to complying with The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012.

Asbestos Management Plan (AMP):

- The Group maintains an up-to-date Asbestos Management Plan (AMP) for all premises under its control. This document outlines the locations, condition, and management measures for any identified ACMs.
- All refurbishment and maintenance programs within the Colleges will assess potential asbestos risks in line with the AMP, ensuring that appropriate asbestos removal or containment is carried out where necessary.

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Contractor Responsibilities:

- Contractors undertaking work in areas that may contain asbestos will be provided with a copy of the AMP and required to comply with the Group’s Permit to Work system. This ensures that any work in asbestos-containing areas is carefully planned, monitored, and carried out safely.

Training and Competency:

- All employees, contractors, and others who may be exposed to asbestos risks will receive asbestos awareness training and/or hold the necessary competencies as outlined in the AMP. This ensures that those working in or around asbestos-containing environments can recognise and manage potential risks effectively.

Ongoing Monitoring:

- The Group will regularly review and update the AMP to ensure it remains compliant with legislative changes and that all identified risks are managed safely.

5.4 Business Continuity Plan (BCP) and Lockdown Procedure

The Group BCP establishes Emergency Response Teams that manage incidents and allocate resources, ensuring minimal disruption to college operations. Emergency responses are guided by Group’s overriding emergency goals of protecting life, securing infrastructure and facilities and resuming the teaching programme.

This BCP is aligned with each College’s specific emergency procedures including evacuation, bomb threats and lockdown protocols as well as departmental continuity plans.

Dynamic Lockdown procedures aim to quickly restrict access to or from buildings in response to internal or external threats. The aim of Lockdown is to keep people safe, prevent people moving into danger areas and block unauthorised access. All procedures are designed to prioritise safety while minimizing disruption to teaching.

5.5 Protect Duty (Martyn’s Law)

The new Duty will require all public venues including Colleges & Universities to take steps to improve public safety, with measures dependent on the size of the venue and the activity taking place.

South Thames Colleges Group fully supports the implementation of this Duty and accepts its responsibility as an enhanced Duty holder.

As a responsible provider of education and as an employer, the South Thames Colleges Group is committed to providing a safe and secure environment in which to learn and work.

Whether you are a Student, Member of Staff or Visitor to the Group’s premises, your Health, Safety and Security is always our top priority.

The Group is constantly reviewing and improving what we do, we have a framework of health, safety and security policies and arrangements in place, designed to keep people and premises safe and secure.

For further details please see **Keeping Students Staff and Visitors Safe in College Protect Duty (Martyn’s**

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Law)

5.6 Contractor Management

The Group will engage with competent contractors to carry out specialist building related works. Prior to a contractor being appointed the person responsible for appointment of the specific contractor will undertake Health and Safety assessments in proportion to the risks posed by the works. Contractor monitoring will take place during works on site, where relevant. Contractors carrying out certain types of work such as work with asbestos, hot works etc. will be required to work under the College or main appointed contractor permit to work system.

The Group will work in accordance with the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM 2015).

5.7 Control of Hazardous Substances

The handling, use, storage and disposal of hazardous substances is covered by the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (as amended) (COSHH) and where items that are flammable are used the Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmosphere Regulations 2002 (DSEAR) additionally apply. The Group will fully comply with the requirements set out in both pieces of legislation.

Hazardous substances may be physical (dust, fumes, vapors) or chemical (cleaning materials, glue, lubricant, beauty products).

Dangerous substances may include solvents, paints, dust from sanding, pressurized gases.

Risk assessments with strict controls and safety data sheets (SDS) are required where individuals may be at risk from exposure to hazardous substances or dangerous substances.

COSHH Risk Assessment form can be found on the STCG Online.

5.8 Educational Trips and Visits

The Group requires risk assessment process to be followed in advance of any trip or visit taking place, including providing details to parents or guardians for relevant students and obtaining consent.

The Group's guidance on Educational Trips and Visits can be found on the STCG Online.

5.9 Electrical Safety

The Group has in place systems to ensure full compliance with The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 for both fixed electrical systems and portable appliances. Employees must take all necessary precautions to avoid working with or coming into contact with live electricity.

Any work with electrical systems or equipment must be carried out by a trained competent individual or contractor. Live work must be controlled using appropriate safety measures including working under the College permit to work system.

Fixed electrical systems and portable appliances will be maintained and tested at the recommended intervals.

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5.10 Fire Safety

The Group recognises that fire is one of the foremost risks to both persons and property and will therefore comply in full with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

Group buildings have fully maintained and monitored fire detection and alarm systems, portable firefighting equipment and personnel trained in fire prevention and fire evacuation. Trained fire wardens are in place to assist during evacuation.

Fire Risk Assessments will be maintained and reviewed periodically by a competent person and all control measures identified will be put in place to ensure the risk can be reduced to an acceptable level. Practice evacuations will be held at least termly.

Further guidance can be found on can be found on the STCG Online.

5.11 First Aid Arrangements

The Health and Safety Advisor will ensure that the appropriate arrangements are made for first aid provision in line with The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981. The number of trained personnel and first aid equipment will be determined after having conducted risk assessments of the areas of activity within each site.

Further guidance can be found on can be found on the STCG Online.

5.12 Health and Safety Inspections and Audit

In order to satisfy the requirement to monitor that health and safety procedures are being correctly applied the Health & Safety Advisor will arrange regular inspection visits to all areas of the College, prioritised by the degree of risk in each area following consultation with the Group Health and Safety Committee.

5.13 Manual Handling

The Group recognises that musculo-skeletal and other injuries may be caused by poor manual handling techniques and will therefore comply in full with the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended). Specific risk assessments are required for any task involving manual handling. Where possible manual handling will be avoided and mechanical aids such as trollies will be provided. Training will be given to those required to complete manual handling tasks.

A Manual Handling Guidance Note can be found on the STCG Online.

5.14 New and Expectant Mothers

To protect the health and safety of new and expectant mothers, the Group has a process in place where by the Health and Safety Advisor will assist the line manager in completion of a risk assessment.

The supporting forms for staff and students are available on the STCG Online

5.16 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

PPE is equipment which is intended to be worn by a person at work to protect the individual against risks to their health. PPE should always be considered as a last resort. Where health and safety risks cannot be controlled by other means, the College will ensure appropriate PPE is identified through risk assessment and will provide it free of charge, in line with The Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 2002.

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PPE may include hard hats, safety footwear, eye protection, gloves etc.

Suitable training and information in PPE use storage care and defect reporting will be given to employees and students where it is issued. Records of the issue of PPE must always be maintained and monitoring of its use will take place.

5.17 Plant and Equipment

All items of fixed plant i.e. boilers, fixed wiring, fire alarm systems, lifts, emergency lighting systems, water systems etc. will be subject to strict maintenance regimes and statutory inspections carried out by a competent person. Any additions or changes to such systems will only be carried out by competent persons and be subject to relevant legislation requirements.

All equipment provided for the use of employees and students will be suitable for its purpose, safe to use and inspected and tested in accordance with manufacturer instructions.

Equipment may include the forklift truck, ladders, mechanical and electrical items within workshops.

Training on the use of equipment will be provided to the relevant standard and competency established before an individual is allowed to use that equipment. Appropriate PPE will be provided for use with plant and equipment.

The Group will comply in full with The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992, The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998, Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 and Pressure Systems Safety Regulations 2000.

5.18 Risk Assessments

The Group recognises risk assessment as essential to managing health and safety and preventing incidents. It identifies hazards related to premises, activities, or individuals, enabling effective controls to ensure a safe working and learning environment.

All work activities require proportionate risk assessments, as outlined in the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, with additional assessments required under specific regulations such as Manual Handling, Display Screen Equipment, and COSHH.

Assessments are also carried out for off-site work and individuals with additional needs or criminal records, in line with College Codes of Conduct, Admissions, Safeguarding, and Disciplinary Policies.

Guidance and forms are available on STCG Online. Any residual risk score above 9 (High Risk) must be escalated to the Health & Safety Advisor. Risk assessments are reviewed annually or when significant changes occur.

New teaching provisions (e.g. buildings, equipment) require risk assessments at least 4–6 weeks before teaching begins. For work-based learning, including Apprenticeships and placements, annual Health & Safety Plans (HASPS) are completed by trained assessors and signed off by the Head of School.

5.19 Stress Management

The Group is committed to promoting a healthy working and learning environment where stress is effectively managed. We recognise that excessive or prolonged stress can impact wellbeing, performance, and safety.

Managers are responsible for identifying potential sources of stress and supporting staff and students through appropriate measures, including stress risk assessments, workload management, access to mental

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health support, and promoting a positive culture.

Support is available through the Group's Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), counselling services, and referral to occupational health where needed. Students can access wellbeing services via their College's student support team.

All concerns related to stress should be raised promptly so early intervention and appropriate support can be provided.

5.20 Violence to Staff

The Group believes that no employee or worker should be faced with violence in the workplace either from fellow employees, students or members of the public. Where a concern is identified risk assessments will be carried out to identify the likelihood of violence occurring and suitable control measures introduced.

This links with the relevant College Code of Conduct (staff), Code of Conduct (students) and Student Disciplinary Policy & Procedure.

5.21 Work at Height

Where work at height cannot be avoided, the Group will ensure works are controlled so far as is reasonable, to prevent the risk of falling from height. The Work at Height Regulations 2005 will be complied with at all times.

Work at height may include use of scaffold towers, ladders, stepladders through to the use of small 'kick stools' in offices. The College will provide suitable training and equipment that is fit for purpose to all those who may be at risk from falls from height.

5.22 Workplace Safety Arrangements and Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

The Group recognises that the workplace has an impact upon the health and wellbeing of all those within it. As a result, it is committed to providing a safe workplace, without risks to health and appropriate welfare facilities in line with The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992. Measures will be applied to protect employees, students and all others from risks associated with the working environment.

Health and wellbeing reports are provided to the H&S Committee on a regular basis.

All enclosed, substantially enclosed or open parts of the College site including the car park are designated as smoke-free and all staff are expected to comply with and enforce this Policy which is set out in the relevant Code of Conduct (Staff).

The Group has in place a process to ensure all staff Access to Work requirements are addressed. The procedure falls in line with the Governments Access to Work scheme guidelines.

The College aims to ensure that ill health associated with the use of Display Screen Equipment (DSE) is avoided in accordance with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992.

DSE; otherwise known as a workstation may consist of a PC, screen, chair, keyboard, mouse, desk telephone etc. and includes the work environment.

Whilst line managers have the responsibility to ensure that suitable risk assessments have been undertaken, employees should take personal responsibility for ensuring that their workstation is setup correctly and that breaks to other tasks away from the screen are included in their normal working day.

A workstation self-assessment form should be completed, actions followed up with direct line manager and passed to the Health and Safety Advisor should additional advice be required.

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5.23 Workplace Transport and Driving for Work

The Group has in place systems to manage the operation of College vehicles and the competency of drivers, including casual car use. All Group owned vehicles will be maintained to an appropriate standard and regularly checked prior to use. Appropriate documentation checks will be carried out to ensure competency and training will be provided where required.

Checks are undertaken by the HR department where staff drive their own personal vehicle for business purposes to ensure compliance with The Road Traffic Act.

5.24 Commercial Lettings

Where individual College provides a facility for Commercial Lettings the College Lettings procedure will be followed with appropriate documentation completed by both the client and the Lettings Organiser.

5.25 Epidemic/Pandemic Management

The Group will follow all Government, Department for Education, HSE, Association of Colleges and insurance guidance during any declared epidemic or pandemic.

A high-level risk assessment covering all premises, activities, students, staff and visitors will be carried out by H&S Advisor and approved by the Executive Group and by the Board of Governors in consultation with relevant trade unions and senior College staff. This will be regularly reviewed in line with the current Government advice.

Specific risk assessments will be completed for all individual activities by the Head of School or divisional heads and will be signed off by the College's Health & Safety Advisor prior to commencing activities. Only planned activities in specified locations with specified staff and students, which have been risk assessed, may be undertaken.

The management of staff related health issues will be undertaken by the Head of Human Resources.

6. COMMUNICATION OF THE HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

South Thames Colleges Group (STCG) is committed to ensuring that all staff, students, contractors, and visitors are aware of the Group's Health and Safety Policy and their responsibilities within it.

The Policy will be:

- Available on STCG Online for all staff, students, and relevant stakeholders.
- Communicated during induction for new staff, students and contractors.
- Highlighted in training sessions and refresher courses where applicable.
- Shared with contractors and external partners working on College premises.

Regular updates and reminders will be provided through internal communications, staff briefings, health and safety meetings, and noticeboards. All staff are expected to familiarise themselves with the Policy and apply its principles in their day-to-day work.

7. HEALTH & SAFETY TRAINING

Health and safety training is provided to all employees and must be completed within the first six weeks of the probationary period, when responsibilities change or when new risks are introduced.

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Those employees with a particular role to play, for example conducting risk assessments, fire marshals, first aiders, will receive additional specific training. Training requirements are identified between employees, line managers, senior managers and the Health & Safety Advisor. Refresher training is offered regularly to maintain awareness. Records of all training are maintained and monitored to ensure compliance.

8. MEASURING, REVIEWING PERFORMANCE AND REPORTING

South Thames Colleges Group (STCG) is committed to continuously improving its health and safety practices. To ensure that policies and procedures remain effective and a safe, compliant environment is maintained, STCG will systematically measure, review, and report on health and safety performance through proactive and reactive monitoring.

8.1 Proactive Monitoring

The Group uses proactive monitoring to identify and address health and safety risks before incidents occur. This approach ensures a preventative, rather than reactive, safety culture across all campuses.

Key proactive monitoring activities include:

- Each term, a specific area or activity within the Group will be selected for a planned health and safety inspection, these Thematic Inspections and prioritised based on risk and are coordinated in advance by the Health and Safety Advisory Team to ensure thorough preparation and participation.
- Recognised trade union health and safety representatives will be invited and encouraged to take part in these inspections, supporting transparency and collaborative safety management.
- Findings from inspections will be recorded, reviewed, and used to inform local and Group-level health and safety improvements.
- Review of risk assessments to ensure they remain current and effective.
- Monitoring of training completion to ensure staff and students are equipped with the necessary health and safety knowledge.
- Annual Report produced for Autumn Term, which is an annual audit of Health and Safety performance of each department.

These activities are logged, reviewed, and used to inform termly health and safety reports.

8.2 Reactive Monitoring

Reactive monitoring involves reviewing accidents, incidents, near misses, complaints, and health and safety concerns as they arise. These events are investigated by the Health and Safety Advisory Team to identify causes and implement corrective actions to prevent recurrence.

To ensure the Policy remains effective, a termly report is produced by the Director of Facilities, which reviews relevant health and safety data, including incidents, inspections, audits, and feedback. This report will highlight key issues, trends, and actions taken, and will be submitted for consideration to:

- Group Health and Safety Committee
- Safeguarding, Wellbeing & Equalities (SWE) Committee
- Group Leadership Team (GLT)
- Annual report produced for Autumn Term

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Through these processes, STCG ensures ongoing improvement, prompt response to emerging issues, and transparent communication with stakeholders.

9. REVIEW OF THE HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

This Policy will be reviewed annually or wherever a significant change to either legislation or procedures occurs which is liable to affect the health and safety of employees, students, contractors, or visitors to the College's premises.

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