

**FURTHER EDUCATION SAFETY AND HEALTH FORUM (FESH)
SEVENTEENTH MEETING
16 NOVEMBER 2012
EIS EDINBURGH**

Present:

Kathy Bow (Scotland's Colleges H&S Communities of Practice)
Steve Cooper (UNISON)
David Green (AMIE)
Stephen Green (AoC)
Phil Mackie (ColegauCymru/CollegesWales)
Dave McGinty (EIS)
Ian Rowe (ColegauCymru/CollegesWales)
Ruth Sleigh (HSE)

Apologies:

Penny Neish (Scotland's Colleges) has withdrawn from the group. It looks unlikely that another person from Scotland's Colleges will replace Penny

1. Welcome and introductions

DG, as chair, welcomed members. All thanked DM and EIS for hosting the meeting.

It was noted that there had been no UCU representation for several meetings

Actions: SG to contact UCU to request that they nominate a representative

2. Sixteenth Meeting 24 May 2012 – matters arising

The notes of the sixteenth meeting were considered and agreed as accurate.
Matters arising:

SC did mention the Assessment Tool at a recent UNISON conference.

DM pointed out that Scottish Colleges were undergoing major reorganisation, which may have hampered take-up of the Assessment Tool.

3. FESH Assessment Tool

SG reported back to the group on AoC's survey on use of the Tool. The number of returns was low but the Colleges that did send in returns were performing well.

SC informed the group that there is reluctance by College senior managers to allow returns unless they have been internally scrutinised (despite the promise of anonymity). UNISON has put the Tool on its website and workshops have been held in the South West.

IR and PM said that there have been 11 returns from 16 Welsh Colleges.

They will push (at their December meeting) to get the others to complete.

KB reported that she has delivered a workshop on the Tool and has added it to the Communities of Practice website.

All agreed that Colleges should be recommended to put the Tool on H&S Committee agendas and meetings of Safety Representatives.

SC commented that College leaders need to be convinced that the Tool is there to help, not to punish!

RS mentioned that perhaps the word "Assessment" is off-putting – it implies being examined. She added that the HSE is not driving the Tool, but could see that it should lead to useful gains being made in the colleges and in terms of helping FESH to prioritise areas where it can provide national H&S input. SC disagreed with a change of title since the key issue is compliance with the law.

RS added that future surveys might benefit from an additional question: "did you find the Assessment Tool useful?"

SG commented that, perhaps, College senior managers see the Tool as Trades Union driven

DM said that EIS originally saw the Tool as a HSE device, and that other areas of concern, like reorganisations, were pushing the Tool further down College agendas.

KB said that the Tool could facilitate a move by Safety Representatives towards being part of higher-level H&S management.

IR suggested that Colleges in Wales may have a higher return rate for the Tool because they have become used to working to a Code of Practice that looks at H&S systems.

DG asked how FESH could reach and encourage Colleges that are reluctant to be involved.

SG replied that momentum could be improved by adding the Tool to AoC regional meeting agendas.

KB suggested that FESH could set up a webinar. RS supported this idea and added that it could tie in with the European H&S initiative.

All agreed that AOC could ask Colleges to include the Tool in KPIs

KB suggested that Colleges could carry out peer benchmarking in order to help share good practice

RS suggested that IOSH's Education group could be useful in spreading a positive message about use of the Tool.

RS added that HSE would not require action beyond legal compliance. So HSE has provided the link on its website but can't require colleges to use the tool.

DG summarised that the group is aiming to:

- Achieve 50% take-up of the Tool
- Circulate a message about KPIs and statutory duties
- Encourage Safety Reps to add the Tool to meeting agendas
- Publicise the Tool via events and conferences

Actions: SC has produced wording regarding use of Tool in KPIs:
The aims, objectives and goals of the FESH assessment tool could be used as KPIs when colleges are establishing SAR parameters for health and safety.

4. AOB

KB asked if FESH could develop a H&S guide for FE

DM pointed out that workers can now no longer rely on statutory breaches to bring civil liability claims. He wondered what effect this will have in Colleges.

SC commented that some may see this change as a “loosening” of the need to comply.

SG mentioned a proposed Leading Safety training course. If this comes to fruition then he will try to ensure that the Tool is mentioned in the training.

KB pointed out that a New College Learning Programme funded by Skills Development Scotland requires two physical (H&S) vetting visits for each work-experience placement irrespective of risk profile - this may lead to a loss of some placement providers.

SG mentioned the recent document on work placement (produced by the Colleges of the ACER group).

RS stated that HSE responded to AoC/ACER on this matter to advise that it would not be pertinent to respond on the content of the actual document as there are expected changes in legislation and guidance on work placements due next year that are likely to affect any guidance produced within the FE sector.

DG informed the group that ATL has produced a toolkit leaflet, relating to the HSE Management Standards for work-related stress.

RS mentioned a new HSE leaflet on “Fee for Intervention”. She added that there have been no major issues, so far, and will keep the group informed of any future cases of note, or other developments, particularly after the first invoices are sent out in January 2013.

Action: Item for next meeting: “Future Activities”

5. Date of next meeting

Friday 28 February 2013, at AoC, London