

Health and Safety Policy

*Review History:		
Date of review	Reviewed by	Reason for review
October 2022	Compliance and Safeguarding Manager	Annual review
September 2023	Compliance and Safeguarding Manager	Annual review and changes to team structures, introduction of College Managers for overseeing the building management.
September 2024	Compliance and Safeguarding Officer Compliance and Safeguarding Manager	Annual review, terminology updates, changes to Duties & Responsibilities implementation of Health and Safety induction training and clarification on Mental Health First aid

**Policies will be reviewed annually or more frequently if there are any legal changes or as good practice requires.*

Introduction

BSC Education Ltd., herein referred to as BSC, is committed to ensuring the health and safety of our employees and to providing a safe environment for all those attending our premises or affected by our business activities.

Purpose

We are committed to maintaining safe and healthy working conditions and practices through the monitoring and control of the health and safety risks arising from our work activities.

As part of this commitment we will ensure the provision and maintenance of safe plant and equipment, ensuring the safe handling and use of substances, consulting with our team and providing appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision and taking steps to prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health.

Scope

This policy applies to all UK based full and part-time employees, regardless of length of service, including employees on a fixed-term contract.

Duties & responsibilities

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 is enforced by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). It is enforced by Local Authorities (LA) who cover such workplaces such as offices, shops etc. Every employer, including BSC, and employee working in the UK must adhere to this act. It is in place to protect those it covers from risks to their health and safety whilst at work.

All employers, including BSC, and employees working in the UK must understand their responsibilities for H&S at work. All employees have a shared responsibility for health and safety in the workplace and a duty to act in accordance with this policy and report any concerns about health and safety to a senior manager.

This policy applies to all levels within the company regardless of seniority or status. However, it is not contractual and does not form part of your contract of employment.

Managers are responsible for ensuring that employees and others (contractors, agency workers, temps etc) for whom they are responsible are clear as to our expectations regarding health and safety in the workplace. They are also responsible for ensuring that any issues are addressed promptly and in accordance with this policy.

In accordance with its health and safety duties, the Employer has a duty of care and is responsible for:

- Assessing risks to health and safety and identifying ways to overcome them (known as a Risk Assessment).
- Providing and maintaining a healthy and safe place to work and a safe means of entering and leaving our premises, including emergency procedures for use when needed.
- Providing information, dress code guidelines, instruction, training and supervision in safe working methods and procedures, as well as providing working areas and equipment that are safe and without risks to health.
- Ensuring all employees are given fire safety and health and safety training upon arrival.
- Ensuring that equipment has all necessary safety devices installed, that equipment is properly maintained and that, where appropriate, protective clothing is provided.
- Promoting co-operation between members of the team to ensure safe and healthy conditions and systems of work by discussion and effective joint consultation.
- Regularly monitoring and reviewing the management of health and safety at work, making any necessary changes and bringing those to the attention of all team members.

Employees also have a statutory duty to take reasonable care for their own safety and for that of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work. Therefore, you should:

- Take reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of yourself and that of others who may be affected by your behaviour and activities at work.
- Co-operate fully with us to ensure that any duties or requirements imposed by or under any relevant statutory provisions can be complied with and/or carried out.

- Refrain from intentional or reckless interference with anything provided in the interest of health and safety or to misuse anything so similarly provided.
- Correctly use all safeguards, protective clothing and equipment provided.
- Adhere to any risk assessment and safety procedures and comply with any relevant information provided by the assessment.
- Adhere to the company appearance policy
- Assist, where required, in the investigation of all significant accidents and incidents in to discover the cause and prevent any recurrence.
- Maintain good standards of housekeeping, tidiness and cleanliness, especially within your own working area.
- Report any accident and/or incident, hazard or near miss (whether or not personal injury results) to the local Health & Safety representative and in the accident book.
- Seek first aid treatment and report any injury (no matter how slight) to your manager.
- Report any defects to equipment without delay and not attempt repairs which you have not been authorised or are not specially qualified or trained to carry out.

Standards of workplace behaviour

Everyone is responsible for considering the health and safety implications of their acts and/or omissions and for taking reasonable care for their health and safety and that of others.

At each site we have appointed a local Health and Safety Representative in most cases this will be the College Manager unless the appointed persons have prior experience and skills in this area. His or /her details are set out on the Health and Safety posters on student information notice boards. You are free to discuss any general concerns with the local Health and Safety Representative and to put forward recommendations or suggestions as to how health and safety can be improved at any time.

Any specific health and safety concerns liable to affect the health and wellbeing of employees must be reported to the local Health and Safety Representative without delay and recorded in the log book. Failure to do so could be considered gross misconduct.

Employees have an obligation to co-operate with supervisors, managers and the local Health and Safety Representative on health and safety matters and comply with any and all health and safety instructions.

Individuals must take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others by observing safety rules applicable to them and following instructions for the use of equipment (including, where relevant, safety equipment and protective clothing).

Any health and safety concern, however trivial it might seem, including any potential risk, hazard or malfunction of equipment, must be reported to the local Health and Safety Representative.

You must co-operate in the investigation of any accident or incident that has led, or which we consider might have led, to injury.

Failure to comply with health and safety rules and instructions or with the requirements of this policy may be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

Equipment

All employees must use equipment in accordance with operating instructions, instructions given by managers and supervisors and any relevant training. Any fault with, damage to or concern about any equipment or its use must immediately be reported to your line manager.

Employees must ensure that health and safety equipment is not interfered with and that any damage is immediately reported.

No member of the team should attempt to repair equipment unless trained and designated to do so. Failure to report damage to or a fault with equipment or failure to use it as directed may result in disciplinary action.

Accidents & first aid

If you suffer an accident at work, you (or someone on your behalf) must report that fact to the local Health and Safety Representative or your manager as soon as possible. All accidents should be reported, however trivial so that details can be recorded in the Accident Book and additionally submitted via incident report form. All employees must co-operate with any resulting investigation.

Designated first aid facilities for each centre will be clearly signed and first aiders made known to all team members, students, visitors and contractors on arrival to the site. Details of first aid facilities and trained first aiders are available from the local Health and Safety Representative and are set out at various locations around the college building.

Any emergency situations must be reported to the trained first aiders and incident details to be recorded in the accident book, which is kept with the first aid equipment, additionally an incident report form must be completed.

A First Aid kit is to be kept appropriately stocked at all times, regularly checked and kept in the designated facility.

Team members are not permitted to administer drugs of any description to students or other team members. In the event of someone requesting medical attention, all requests should ideally be passed to be passed to the College Manager or ideally a trained first aider.

Should someone request medical attention, members of the office team will assess the situation and present the following options, depending on the situation:

- Book an appointment with a doctor.
- Call NHS 111.
- Visit an emergency health centre.
- Visit the nearest local hospital A&E department.
- Dial 999 to contact the emergency services and call an ambulance.

Depending on the circumstances, the office team may offer to pay for a taxi to the doctor's / hospital and may also offer to accompany the student or team member there. This will normally be at the discretion of the line manager or a member of the senior management team.

Mental Health First aid

BSC has provision for a network of Mental Health First Aiders through Nuco Training, operating under First Aid Awards. BSC provides opportunity for team members to complete Mental Health First Aid training and has future commitments to increasing Mental Health First Aid numbers across the business.

Mental Health First Aid support is highlighted during the induction process for team members and students.

Mental Health First Aid support is available in person in many of our Colleges however remote support via Team is always available to anyone wishing to access support, guidance and signposting to relevant support networks.

There is a 'Time to Talk' scheme which is promoted within the company and is run by Charlotte Powlesland and Sian Hanson in their capacity as Mental Health First Aid Trainers.

All BSC Team members have a duty to report mental health concerns to their respective Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Compliance and Safeguarding Manager to discuss further and on-going support needs. This must be done with student/team confidentially in mind and in line with GDPR standards.

Stress at work

We acknowledge the fact that stress in the workplace is a health and safety issue and we commit to help to identify, avoid and alleviate any unacceptable levels of stress experienced by our employees.

The Health and Safety Executive define stress as 'the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them'. This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress, which can be detrimental to health.

Symptoms of stress include: problems sleeping; dietary problems; mood swings; lethargy; inability to concentrate; fatigue; emotionalism; chest pains; palpitations; sweating and racing heart. If an employee suffers from any of these symptoms, they are advised to consult their GP without delay.

- Where appropriate, a risk assessment of stress in the workplace will be carried out under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- We will provide training in good management practices.
- BSC has provision for a network of Mental Health First Aiders through Nuco Training, operating under First Aid Awards. BSC provides opportunity for team members to complete Mental Health First Aid training and has future commitments to increasing Mental Health First Aid numbers across the business.
- Mental Health First Aid support is highlighted during the induction process for team members and students.

Procedure

- Anyone who considers that they may be suffering from stress for reasons connected with their working conditions or workload should first discuss this with their Line Manager, who will deal with the issue promptly and in the strictest confidence and make all reasonable efforts to reduce any work-related stress. Any employee noting symptoms of stress in a colleague should inform the employee's Line Manager who will act in strict confidence in accordance with the paragraph above.

- On return to work from any period of stress-related illness, we will take account of medical advice (if appropriate and available) and the needs of the business when determining which duties are most appropriate.

Display screen equipment

The Company has particular obligations where employees habitually use display screen equipment as a significant part of normal work. Workstations and work routines will regularly be reviewed to ensure that they comply with the law and to ensure that the employee has adequate breaks from the use of display screen equipment. It is noted that regular screen breaks are more beneficial than longer breaks after a long period of time, for example taking a 5-minute screen break every 50-60 minutes would be beneficial to employee's rather than a longer break after 2 hours. These breaks or changes in activity, to do other tasks such as attending a meeting or making a phone call should allow employees to move around and change their posture. Users should choose when to take breaks to allow them to stretch and change posture. Regular and proper training guidance will be given to minimise Health and Safety problems relating to DSE. Workstations and work routines relate also to hybrid or working from home instances, therefore for further guidance please refer to BSC Hybrid working policy.

Up to £20 can be claimed on eyesight tests which are available for those appointed to use display screen equipment and for those who currently use this equipment at regular intervals.

The Company will pay up to £30 for glasses prescribed for the use of an employee when operating display screen equipment but not for designer frames or for lenses other than those prescribed specifically for use in connection with the operation of display screen equipment. Further information is available in the Eye Care Policy.

Avoidance of lone working

Employees should take care to avoid lone working in the office, and where possible ensure that two people can lock up together. Team members are to ensure all windows within their college are closed, classrooms and hallways are clear from obstruction and lights and electrical items are switched off at the end of the day and after each use.

The below list outlines lone worker responsibility. Lone workers will:

- Be aware and follow the internal policies and procedures related to lone worker
- Take reasonable steps to ensure their own safety.
- Inform their line manager / assessor of any incidents or safety concerns.

For further guidance on lone working please see BSC Lone Working Policy.

Emergency evacuation & fire precautions

You should familiarise yourself with the instructions about what to do in the event of fire which are available from the local Health and Safety Representative and posted around the premises. You should also know where the fire extinguishers are and how to use them and ensure that you are aware of your nearest fire exit and alternative ways of leaving the building in an emergency.

Fire marshals are responsible for the effective evacuation of designated areas. In the event of a suspected fire or fire alarm you must follow their instructions.

Fire evacuation drills to be carried out at least twice a year in conjunction with partner colleges where necessary. A log is to be kept of drills. All employees will be made aware of assembly points and procedures during their initial induction, these assembly points are made clear on each floor level. All students will be made aware of procedures during on their first day induction first day orientation.

You should notify the college manager, the local Health and Safety Representative or your line manager as soon as possible if there is anything (for example, impaired mobility) that might impede your evacuation in the event of a fire.

This information is also asked of students on their application and induction if they have any impaired mobility or learning disabilities which may impede their evacuation and ascertain if there is a need for personal evacuation plans.

If you discover a fire you should not attempt to tackle it unless you have been trained or feel competent to do so.

Evacuation procedures

On hearing the fire alarm, you should remain calm and walk quickly following the exit arrows to quickly (not running) evacuate the building immediately following the instructions of the fire marshals. You will be instructed and directed to the college's assembly point which is located specifically to each centre and diagrams are available on each floor levels of the building. Do not stop to collect personal possessions, do not use the lifts and do not re-enter the building until you are told that it is safe to do so.

The Company will ensure all fire exits and signage to comply with legal codes of practice.

If you receive a bomb warning by any means or see any suspicious packages, you should inform management in the immediate area, and evacuate the building, if appropriate. For further details on emergencies not covered above please see our emergency evacuation plan policy.

Risk assessments & manual handling

General workplace risk assessments are carried out when required or as reasonably requested by members of the team or management. Managers are responsible for ensuring that any necessary risk assessments are undertaken and that recommended changes to the workplace and working practices are implemented.

Information on the regulation of manual handling can be obtained from the local Health and Safety Representative and each college has a trained team member in manual handling that can provide guidance and oversee practices within the college.

The Company will have completed Fire risk assessments undertaken by appropriate persons for each college as legally required which will be reviewed each year and updated every 3 years or more frequently if necessary or any significant changes are made to the building.

Health and Safety awareness and training

BSC Education implements a Health and Safety induction for team members which gives an awareness of Health and Safety in the workplace. College Managers undertake further Health and Safety awareness training to further support their knowledge. College teams are further supported by the Compliance and Safeguarding Manager and Facilities Director in areas relating to Health and Safety. College teams are also expected to attend risk assessment guidance training to support them in their duties to complete purposeful and robust Risk assessments relating to college activities.

Investigations

All employees have a duty to co-operate with any investigations into concerns about breached of health and safety and any other issues that may have an impact on the safety of the working environment. No employee will be penalised in any way for raising genuine concerns in good faith.

Concerns about health and safety and/or breaches of this policy may be raised in confidence at the highest levels within the Company. However, sufficient information must be provided to enable a thorough investigation to take place and all workers have a duty to co-operate with any investigations into complaints of or concerns about health and safety in the workplace. Failure to do so may be regarded as a failure to comply with a reasonable management instruction and could lead to disciplinary action.

You are referred to our Whistle-blowing Policy which applies to serious breaches of health and safety for guidance on how these should be addressed.

Employees who make complaints or who participate in good faith in any investigation conducted under this policy will be protected from any form of intimidation or victimisation as a result of their involvement.

Any worker who is, after investigation, found to have deliberately provided false information or to have acted in bad faith may be subject to action under the Disciplinary Procedure.

Recording information

Records will be kept confidentially and in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation.

Monitoring

BSC recognises the need to continuously monitor or update processes as and when necessary, to do this monitoring of work stations or areas around the centre will be the responsibility of all Team members to ensure a safe work environment and to record and report any findings. We will carry out regular checks of equipment and classrooms to ensure good working order and maintain high levels of team training and development. We take the health and safety of all of our students and our team seriously and acknowledge the need to adapt and develop in need with Health and Safety requirements.

The Company reserves the right to modify any part of this policy at its discretion and in accordance with any required legislation changes. We are committed to actively consulting with our employees, and any changes will be communicated, and will apply to both existing and new employees.