

Monitoring and Measuring Performance

# Health and Safety Formal Observational Tours

Guidance Information

## What is an observational tour?

An observational tour is a kind of formal walkthrough where the Vice-Chancellor or a member of Senior Leadership Team (SLT) (the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Group made up of Deputy-Vice Chancellors, Pro-Vice Chancellors, and other senior managers and directors) pay an unannounced visit to a University area to check that health and safety standards are being met. The observational tour demonstrates SLT members' commitment to health and safety leadership and makes a quick assessment of a specific area; it does *not* aim to be a full inspection or audit.

The process is facilitated by Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service. The tour team should be selected by the Vice-Chancellor and Associate Director, Health, Safety and Wellbeing. It should include at least a member of SLT to lead the team, a Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager to guide the team, nominated health and safety representatives and appropriate specialists (e.g. for Hazard Containment).

## Suggested process for carrying out an observational tour

### Suggested Step 1 - Prior to the visit

- **5 working days before the tour (where possible)** – the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager notifies the team of the faculty / service to be visited, the date and time. Note the time slot for the SLT member will already be diarised.
- **24 hours before the tour (where possible)** – the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager notifies the Dean/ Academic Head of School (Department)/ Service Director of the location to ensure that any Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) or access requirements are met. However, the location/ activity must be left in its natural state and not interfered with before the visit.
- **One hour before the tour (where possible)** - the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager notifies the team explaining where to meet for the tour. They also contact the local line manager of the location or activity (if available), to invite them to join the tour. The location/ activity must be left in its natural state and not interfered with before the visit.

### Suggested Step 2 – The spot-check

- The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager meets the team at the tour location and briefs them on any outstanding issues, concerns or items to note.
- The team checks the location or activity and may ask for relevant paperwork such as risk assessments, safe working procedures, records etc.
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager gives the team's feedback to the local manager, particularly on the general level of health and safety; identifies areas of good practice, those needing improvement and sets out any further action that may be needed.
- If any significant concerns are identified, action will be taken by the team, on the advice of the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager, immediately.

### **Suggested Step 3 – Communicating and recording the findings**

- The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager produces a report summarising the key findings, good practice and recommending follow-up timescales.
- The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager sends this to the team members and Associate Director – Health, Safety and Wellbeing.
- The Head of School/Department should ensure that any required actions are implemented, and must keep records for three years.