



# Strategic Health and Safety Plan 2021/22 – 2024/25

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## FOREWORD

Building on the achievements of previous years and emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic, this Strategic Health and Safety Plan has been developed to support our organisational [Objectives](#) ensuring that USHA remains a key part of reducing risk across the Higher Education (HE) Sector, its diverse communities (including students) and work and study environments both in the UK and abroad.

A key challenge for this Strategic Health and Safety Plan is to accelerate the progress made in recent years; hence, this plan has been influenced by the Members Survey 2021, Executive Board, National and Regional Groups [and forwarded to UCEA and UUK for consideration and comment].

## INTRODUCTION

Emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic, the sector is facing an unprecedented set of complex health and safety challenges in the immediate future in areas such as mental health, fire safety, hybrid working and uncertainty in global travel to name a few.

USHA is well positioned to support the sector in responding to those challenges, along with any new and emerging risks; therefore, this Strategic Health and Safety Plan is an agile document with built in annual reviews enabling a change in direction, if required.

## WHAT'S DIFFERENT

USHA's objectives remain positioned around Leading, Enabling and Guiding successful implementation of health and safety management within the sector for its members, institutions and those who deliver and support health and safety within those institutions. Influenced by its members, identified under each theme are a series of indicators that will support those principles and delivered by annual operational plans.

Through a survey, USHA sought insights on how it was meeting its objectives and could better serve its members by understanding their challenges and be more representative of their needs. Through Pulse Surveys, this approach will be repeated [every 2 years] to ensure the Strategic Health and Safety Plan remains relevant.

## ALIGNMENT WITH OTHER RELATED PLANS

With a view to progress the work of USHA, and its reputation, it is important that its work is aligned with similar related plans within the sector to develop a coherent health and safety message. To achieve this aim, the development of this Strategic Health and Safety Plan is aligned with the timing and publication of UCEA Health, Safety and Wellbeing Plan.

**Vincent King MSc CMIOSH**  
Chair of USHA

**Professor Neil Budworth BSc MSC CFIOSH FIIRSM Hon FFOM**  
Outgoing Chair of USHA

# STRATEGIC HEALTH AND SAFETY PLAN 2021/22 – 2024/25

## Leading

- USHA will continue to be recognised as the lead on all matters relating to the management of Health and Safety for the HE sector.
- USHA and its members will be recognised as key influencers on all matters relating to the management of Health and Safety across the HE sector, within institutions and Government.
- USHA will seek to use its internal expertise and knowledge by providing insights captured by way of member surveys and feedback requests to influence external standards and guidance that may impact the HE sector.

## Enabling

- USHA will provide platforms that enable best practice, challenges, and issues to be shared.
- USHA will have effective governance arrangements that will enable the Executive Board, National and Regional Groups, and its Specialist Groups to operate and collaborate effectively with various health and safety related associations.
- USHA will enable its members to effectively measure, monitor and, where appropriate compare their performance.
- USHA will provide clear opportunity for members to contribute to decision making processes and the ongoing success of the Association.

## Guiding

- USHA will actively support and guide its members, enabling them to develop and grow professionally.
- USHA will develop and maintain a range of sector relevant and subject specific guidance.
- USHA will listen to their members and be guided by their needs and feedback.

For the purposes of this Strategic Health and Safety Plan the ‘management of Health and Safety’ will relate to the frameworks and systems that align to the principles set out in best practice such as HASMAP, ISO45001, HSG65 etc, providing assurance that all relevant health and safety risks are being managed effectively and legal obligations, and where relevant, other requirements are being met.

It is recognised that technical knowledge and subject matter expertise, including [but not limited to], fire safety, radiation, biological risk, chemical safety, construction, asbestos, legionella etc. may exist outside the competencies of USHA and its members. However, where appropriate USHA, through members or specialist groups will liaise and collaborate with any relevant representative associations or groups (e.g., AUDE, HEBCON and ISTR etc.).

Where appropriate USHA will contribute to wider/overlapping agendas and subjects where our knowledge and expertise will be of use or where we can influence for the benefit of our members, such as ‘wellbeing’, ‘risk management’ and ‘compliance’.

# ANNUAL OPERATIONAL PLANS

## Leading

- USHA will continue to be recognised as the lead on all Health and Safety matters for the HE sector.
- USHA and its members will be recognised as key influencers on all Health and Safety matters across the HE sector, within institutions and Government.
- USHA will seek to use its internal expertise and knowledge by providing insights captured by way of member surveys and feedback requests to influence external standards and guidance that may impact the HE sector.

### 2021/22

- We will engage with the Vice Chancellor community to raise awareness of key challenges facing the sector and the pivotal role that USHA members play.
- Develop an accredited course and associated materials for delivery to senior leadership within institutions.
- We will identify, prioritise, and begin to strengthen relationships with key HEI professional bodies and associations.
- Develop a competency/skills framework to support and assist members in engaging with senior leadership, including delivery of learning, or signposting to relevant development programmes.

### 2022/23

- Review and evaluate success of engagement with VC community, identifying any further support to help or assist members.
- Review and evaluate success of senior leadership course, updating or adjusting as appropriate.
- We will engage with other senior leaders' groups/associations within Universities (including COOs, Registrars and Governing Bodies) to raise awareness of the pivotal role that USHA members play.
- Publish and promote the competency/skills framework.

## Enabling

- USHA will provide platforms that enable best practice, challenges, and issues to be shared.
- USHA will have effective governance arrangements that will enable the Executive Board, National and Regional Groups, and its Specialist Groups to operate and collaborate effectively with various health and safety related associations.
- USHA will enable its members to effectively measure, monitor and, where appropriate compare their performance.
- USHA will provide clear opportunity for members to contribute to decision making processes and the ongoing success of the Association.

### 2021/22

- We will develop, disseminate, and promote an accident reporting system that can be used to enable easy, effective, and efficient reporting of accidents on a local level (if required by members) and for sector wide benchmarking purposes.
- We will review current processes which compare performance to determine whether they remain relevant and beneficial for members.
- We will review our regional and specialist groups, ensuring that clear terms of reference and governance arrangements are in place (including where appropriate peer support and review opportunities) and appropriate support is accessible where required.

### 2022/23

- We will create an engaging and inspiring website that is user friendly and intuitive, providing a platform that enables members to easily access the information and guidance they require. The website will also display USHA's central role in the HE sector to external stakeholders.
- We will collate, analyse, and present data for comparison data in line with the 21/22 review.
- We will develop a range of example measures/indicators (both reactive and proactive) which members can use to help inform the performance of their management systems and highlight trends and themes.
- We will evaluate the effectiveness of our National, Regional and Specialist Groups to ensure they remain beneficial to USHA and its members.
- We will review HASMAP to ensure it meets the needs of members as an auditing and assurance tool.
- We will establish a clear and transparent succession plan that provides opportunities for members to develop and apply for Board and specialist group vacancies.

## Guiding

- USHA will actively support and guide its members, enabling them to develop and grow professionally.
- USHA will develop and maintain a range of sector relevant and subject specific guidance.
- USHA will listen to their members and be guided by their needs and feedback.

### 2021/22

- We will organise a range of events that meet the professional needs of members, including an annual conference and subject/sector specific seminars.
- We will identify and prioritise a range of sector relevant and subject specific guidance that requires development, with timescales for delivery (this may include mental health, risk profiling, compliance, hybrid working and global travel).
- We will identify and prioritise existing sector guidance that requires review and update, with timescales for delivery.
- We will define competency standards in relation to the management of fire safety including training, fire safety advisors and assessors.

### 2022/23

- We will organise a range of events that meet the professional needs of members, including an annual conference and subject/sector specific seminars.
- We will review and update our Leadership and Management guidance document.
- We will develop a range of short, targeted pulse surveys to gain an insight into members opinions on topical/key issues.
- We will progress a mentoring scheme for members which provides peer support.



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