

The British Museum

Health and Safety Policy

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SUMMARY HEALTH AND SAFETY STATEMENT

The Board of Trustees of the British Museum accept the prime responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of staff at work and visitors to the Museum.

The Trustees have a direct concern for the health, safety and welfare of their staff and accord health and safety matters priority above all other management and Museum functions.

It is a requirement of the Board of Trustees that the Director, Director of Resources, Senior Keeper, Keepers, Heads of Departments, Managers, Supervisors, Employees and Volunteers, accord a similar priority to health and safety matters and that all British Museum staff, volunteers and contractors ensure that the intent of this policy is observed. The policy document will be regularly reviewed in consultation with those affected by it.

The Museum undertakes to comply with the requirements of all relevant European and UK statutory provisions and guidance to meet these obligations.

Signed.....

Chairman of the Board of Trustees

Date.....

POLICY

PURPOSE

This policy, in conjunction with local documents and procedures, will promote understanding of health and safety management across the museum and detail individual health and safety responsibilities. This document is divided into principles, organisation (people) and arrangements (systems) and gives a framework for health and safety management within the museum.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all British Museum staff and volunteers.

TRUSTEES

The trustees are ultimately responsible for the application of health and safety legislation, for achieving the objectives of its health and safety policy and for ensuring that adequate resources are made available to meet organisational health, safety and welfare needs. The Trustees delegate the work required to the Director.

PRINCIPLES

The fundamental aim of the Museum is to ensure that staff, volunteers, visitors, neighbours, contractors and any other stakeholders do not suffer an accident or an injury while on a BM site. In pursuit of this aim:

- The Museum declares that no activity is so important or urgent that it will be done other than with full regard to all issues of health and safety.
- The Museum is committed to improving health and safety standards and considers meeting European and UK health and safety legislation as a minimum standard.
- The Museum states that the necessary resources must be made available to meet the requirements of this policy.
- All staff and volunteers, employed by the Museum, paid or unpaid, will always pay maximum attention to the health and safety aspects of their work and exercise all care so as to eliminate or suitably control hazards to themselves and others.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The museum will adopt a planned approach to managing health and safety which will include:

- The identification of significant hazards.
- The assessment of risks from those hazards and the identification of those who may be exposed to the hazards.
- The identification of protective and preventative measures for those risks

- The introduction of those measures including appropriate training, information, equipment, instruction, enforcement of proper working practices by management, the incorporation of health and safety requirements into contracts and the enforcement of those conditions by the appropriate employee.
- The systematic monitoring of the operation of those measures.
- The periodic reviewing of policies and procedures in the light of information gained through monitoring.
- Written records of suitable and sufficient risk assessments will be maintained and be held by the departmental safety coordinator and kept available for inspection.

Foreword by the Director

I am sure that you will agree with me when I say that an excellent museum is a safe museum. At The British Museum we are committed to excellence and it therefore follows that minimising risk to people, equipment and objects is inseparable from all of our other objectives. The positive management of health and safety contributes to the museums overall performance by reducing injuries, ill health and damage to work equipment or objects.

We have a very good record for health and safety at The British Museum and the maintenance and improvement of that record is up to us all. I consider health and safety to be integral to all our work and believe in the principal that prevention is better than cure.

This health and safety policy sets out the organisation and arrangements for health and safety at the museum. It is important that we all adhere to it and also remember that the most powerful message we can give is through example by our own visible behaviour.

"Health and safety is everyone's business"

Signed.....

Neil McGregor, Director of the British Museum.

PROTOCOL ON ORGANISATION AND ARRANGEMENTS

ORGANISATION

The Director

The Director has the overall responsibility for ensuring that the Museum safety policy is applied across the whole museum and for ensuring that all relevant and appropriate matters are brought to the attention of the trustees.

The Director will also direct the execution of the policy on health and safety and ensure adequate resources available to enable continued improvement in health and safety performance.

Director of Resources / Senior Keeper

The Director of Resources and Senior Keeper are initially and ultimately responsible for ensuring the implementation of the museum health and safety policy within their directorates;

They will:

- By leadership and personal example foster positive attitudes towards health and safety throughout their directorate such that their beliefs and commitment to health and safety become the shared values of all staff.
- Ensure that their subordinate management know and fulfil their individual responsibilities regarding health and safety that they receive relevant information and training so they can be competent to carry out the health and safety tasks assigned to them. They will also ensure that their staff are given the advice and information and support such that the requirements of all relevant health and safety legislation and codes of practice are met. Also that the health and safety responsibilities of all employees in their directorate are incorporated into the employees job descriptions.
- Ensure adequate consultation with the appropriate specialist support services and employees representatives prior to the introduction of any change which may affect employee's health and safety.
- Make the necessary arrangements to ensure that safety representatives who may be appointed under regulations can effectively carry out their duties as required by statute.
- Be responsible for developing a directorate policy which details the organisation and arrangements for their directorate. This document will act as a link between the overall policy and departmental safety plans.

Managers

Department Heads, Line Managers, and Section Heads are responsible for ensuring that activities carried out under their control are in accordance with museum policy and procedures and in compliance with statutory provisions by:

- Setting a clear leadership example and promoting a high degree of health and safety awareness.
- Developing health and safety objectives and targets based on the British Museum health and safety policy.
- Preparing, implementing and monitoring their departmental health and safety plan.
- Ensuring compliance with the museum fire plan and allocating sufficient resources to meet the requirements of the plan in their area by appointing departmental and sector fire officers.
- Ensuring that staff are competent and capable of performing their duties to the required standard and adequate training is provided to ensure that competency is maintained.
- Disciplining any member of staff who does not comply with the requirements of this policy
- Selecting contractors who can meet our standards for health and safety and ensure contractors are monitored to meet those standards.
- Making suitable arrangements for consulting with staff on health and safety matters.
- Ensuring that all accidents involving or having the potential to cause injury or harm to persons or damage to property are investigated and reported and any corrective action is taken.
- Obtaining advice and support from the health and safety unit as needed.
- Ensuring suitable and sufficient risk assessments and safe methods of work are in place..
- Ensuring the appointment of a departmental health and safety coordinator.

First Line Supervisors

Ensure that:

- The departmental health and safety plan is implemented.
- Staff are aware of any actions required by them in an emergency.
- Staff understand their responsibility for health and safety and are assessed against these responsibilities as part of their staff appraisal.
- Workplaces are kept clean and tidy and all emergency routes and equipment are unobstructed.
- Equipment is maintained in a safe condition and in good working order. Unsafe equipment is signed and rendered unusable until repaired.

- Suitable precautions are taken when disposing of articles and substances to prevent injury, risks to health or the environment
- Hazards and accidents are properly investigated and corrective action taken based on risk assessment.
- Staff are encouraged to participate in maintaining and improving health and safety.
- Ensure all staff are involved in the development of effective procedures and methods of work based on risk assessments.
- Ensure that safe methods of work are adhered to.

Employees and volunteers

All employees carry a legal obligation to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and for that of others and to co-operate with their employer with respect to health and safety matters. In addition employees have a responsibility to:

- Report any significant hazard or malfunction (eg damaged chemical containers, trip hazards) to their supervisor and, where necessary, to the appropriate safety representative.
- Conform to all instructions, written or verbal given to promote personal safety and the safety of others.
- Be sensibly and safely dressed for their particular task, location and conditions and to use appropriately and effectively all safety equipment and any other safety equipment that may be provided.
- Conduct themselves at all times in an orderly manner in the workplace and refrain from horseplay.
- Avoid improvisation in any form which could create unnecessary risks to health and safety (eg climbing on a chair to reach heights)
- Maintain supplied tools and equipment in good condition, reporting any defect to their supervisor
- Not bring into the workplace without the appropriate authority any tool, substance or piece of equipment of their own which is potentially hazardous to the health and safety of themselves or others.
- Report to their supervisor all accidents, whether injury was sustained or not, including any incidents of violence and aggression.
- Attend and participate in training as required
- Acquaint themselves with all processes, materials and substances used by them and with safe practices and methods of work specified for the minimisation of risk. For example an employee who may use many different chemicals being aware of the hazards and control measures associated with each one before it is used.

- Be aware of the emergency evacuation procedures, positions of fire alarms, equipment and exits. Know who the Departmental Fire Officer, Sector Fire Officer and First Aider are for the area where they are working.

The Health and Safety Manager

The Health and Safety Manager is responsible for advising the museum, its management and employees on all aspects of health and safety including the implementation of relevant health and safety legislation, statutory regulations and approved codes of practice..

The Health and Safety Manager will:

- With advice as necessary from the Secretariat, interpret all UK and EC legislation relating to health and safety matters, including statutory regulations, approved codes of practice, and advise appropriately of their implications
- Ensure policies and guidance notes are prepared on health and safety for adoption within the museum.
- Assist managers in their duties to carry out risk assessments and advise upon measure to prevent or protect against identified hazards.
- Monitor and review, in conjunction with department heads, the health and safety management performance within departments in accordance with a programme agreed by the museum management board.
- Accompany, together with those staff concerned, members of the enforcing authorities when they visit museum premises.
- In conjunction with other staff initiate sampling of environmental conditions, including where necessary liaison with specialist laboratories to obtain analyses of hazards and initiate proposals for improvement.
- Compile and analyse data on accidents, including near misses in order to monitor trends and advise accordingly.
- In association with department heads, ensure a full and precise evaluation of specific accidents or incidents in order to make appropriate recommendations to prevent a recurrence.
- Liaise with and support department safety co coordinators in their duties and responsibilities.
- Participate in the health and safety committee to promote its effectiveness and to formulate and instigate recommendations where necessary.
- In consultation with the training unit assist in the identification of training needs and the provision of health and safety training.

- Maintain and provide accessible information systems on relevant legislation, guidance, developments in health and safety management and ensure information flows throughout the museum.
- Represent the museum in liaison with outside bodies and individuals on relevant health and safety issues
- Develop and maintain the master copy of the museum health and safety “green volumes” through the publication of specific policy and guidance.
- Develop and integrate risk management strategies in conjunction with other officers in the museum.

Safety Representatives

Safety representatives are appointed by trade unions recognised by the museum and have a duty and a legal right to represent their members.

The main functions of a safety representative include:

- Investigation of potentially significant hazards and dangerous occurrences at the workplace and to examine the causes of accidents
- To investigate complaints by any person they represent relating to that persons health, safety or welfare
- To make representations to management on matter arising from the two above actions.
- To carry out inspections of the workplace, having given reasonable notice to management, at intervals not more frequently than three months, unless otherwise agreed.
- To receive information from health and safety inspectors and others on behalf of employees whose health and safety they represent.

Health and Safety Coordinators

Coordinators are appointed by the departmental head and their main duties are to:

- Attend quarterly coordinators health and safety meetings and other health and safety meetings as required.
- Monitor progress of risk assessments and safe methods of work and report on that progress to their department head and the health and safety manager.
- Ensure that any health and safety information passed to them is disseminated across their department.
- Carry out other health and safety duties as directed by their departmental head.

Radiological Protection Supervisors.

The radiation protection supervisor ensures that the area where they work complies with the relevant legislation. Specific responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that anyone using the x-ray facilities are provided with a copy of the local rules and they have read, understood and will comply with them.
- Carry out a programme of periodic checks
- Ensuring the issue and return of periodic radiation dosimeters and keep the dose reports as supplied by the approved dosimetry service.
- In the event of a suspected accidental exposure of any person to implement the contingency plan
- Consulting with the Radiation Protection Advisor on matters of radiation safety as and when needed.

ARRANGEMENTS

Documentation

The museum occupational health and safety documentation is divided into a series of "green volumes" which are held with the departmental safety coordinator. These volumes will also be available on the intranet. The contents are as follows;

Volume one – Holds the British Museum policy which is issued to each member of staff. Specific health and safety policy will also be added as it is developed.

Volume two - There are two books in this volume that hold guidance on specific health and safety topics such as risk assessment, use of ladders and lone working.

Volume three – This volume hold a copy of the directorate policy, departmental plan and other health and safety information pertaining to that department.

Directorate Safety Statement

The directorate statement acts as the link between the British Museum policy and the departmental health and safety plans and policies.

This document will set out the framework for managing health and safety within the directorates and will be supported by detailed departmental health and safety plans which will specify local organisation and arrangements for health and safety.

The directorate health and safety statement it is not intended to duplicate existing or proposed British Museum policy statements, procedures or guidance notes, or local arrangements detailed in departmental health and safety plans, but provides a link between these tiers and states a commitment to managing health and safety within the directorates.

Departmental Safety Plan

Each departmental head will establish a structure for managing health and safety within their department and prepare and maintain a departmental health and safety Plan.

The purpose of the plan is to outline the organisation and arrangements in place for managing health and safety at a local level within their department. This plan should also include the arrangements in place for the planning, organising, control, monitoring and review of preventative and protective measures.

The plan should be proportionate to the size and complexity of the department or section and be peculiar to the activities undertaken by the division or section.

The plan should detail as a minimum:

- The Department's / Sections statement of intent on health and safety
- Department / section organisational chart
- Names of individuals with line management responsibilities for health and safety
- Names of individuals with specific responsibilities for health and safety, e.g. risk assessment, radiation supervisor, etc.
- Arrangements for risk assessment and associated assessments
- Arrangements for health and safety training
- Arrangements for fire safety and first aid
- Arrangements for consultation and communicating health and safety, e.g. local briefing, notice boards, etc.
- Arrangements for accident/incident reporting, recording and investigation
- Arrangements for active monitoring, e.g. health and safety inspections
- Arrangement for the provision and use of plant and equipment
- Arrangements for the provision and use of personal and respiratory protective equipment.
- Safe methods of work.

The aim of the plan is to provide a framework for managing health and safety at a local level. The plan is also to act as a sign post, making reference to other documentation such as safe working procedures, risk assessments and written instructions. It is not intended to duplicate the museum or directorate health and safety policies.

The departmental health and safety plan will form part of the directorate health and safety policy. The department head will be responsible for ensuring that departmental health and safety plans are developed and maintained.

Safety Committee

The Health and Safety Committee is a joint consultative committee comprised of the directors or their representatives and representatives of recognised trade unions which meets quarterly.

The prime function of the committee is to review measures taken by the museum to ensure health and safety of employees by:

- studying accident reports, dangerous occurrences, trends
- consider safety audits and note where improvements can be made
- consideration of reports from the enforcing authority
- consideration of reports by safety representatives
- Assisting in the development of health and safety safe methods of work.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of health and safety communication and publicity
- Evaluating safety policy and participating in its revision
- Evaluating the effectiveness of safety policy and safe methods of work.
- Considering the findings of joint safety inspections

Assurance

In order for this policy to be effectively implemented there needs to be an assurance process. Assurance will be established by:

- *Documentation.* Departmental safety plans including copies of risk assessments and safe working methods will be written down and copies lodged with the Museum Safety Manager. Training requirements will be logged and signed off by staff when completed. Maintenance records will be kept for the required periodicity.
- *Reporting.* All incidents including near misses will be investigated by departmental supervisor / line manager and a report sent to the BM Safety Manager including remedial action taken. The health and safety unit will monitor reported accidents and incidents to identify trends that will be fed back to museum management. Full records of incidents will be maintained, including management's response to the particular issues in terms of additional training, improved practice or other methods of risk mitigation.
- *Independent Review.* The Health and Safety Manager will audit or ensure audits are carried out in Departments. Department Heads will ensure that active monitoring is carried out in their department, based on the departmental plan. In addition inspectors of the enforcing authorities and health and safety representatives appointed by recognised trade unions will conduct independent inspections and audits. Management welcomes this and sees it as an integrated part of the museum's safety and health assurance program.

On the basis of the above the Health and Safety Manager will produce an annual report to the Trustees' Audit Committee giving his independent view on the state of safety across the Museum including performance and a statistical analysis of incidents over time. This will be presented together with management's response to any health and safety issues requiring policy review or change in Museum procedure. The Audit Committee will then recommend to the Board revisions to this Policy and or procedures as appropriate.

Commitment

This policy identifies the full commitment of Museum management to all matters of health and safety and to the provision of the resources needed to ensure that the responsibilities to employees (whether direct or indirect, for example, consultants and contractors) and visitors are fully met.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 27 June 2003

To be reviewed 1 June 2005