

## 1. Vision

Durham University's vision is to enable our community to proportionately and competently manage health and safety risks, facilitating a safe and healthy environment for work, research, education, wider student experience and visitors.

## 2. Aim

Our aim is to undertake, and provide, world-leading research, education and wider student experience that benefits the wider community. We aim to achieve this without adversely affecting anyone's health or safety; however, we recognise that elimination of risk is neither achievable nor at times, desirable. In practice, we try to achieve a reasonable balance between health, safety and our strategic objectives. We aim to promote a positive health and safety culture that facilitates a competent, engaged University Community, supported by strong and effective leadership, to collectively manage health and safety risks.

## 3. Our health and safety objectives

Our health and safety objectives clearly set out our priorities and we will commit to achieving these over the next five years.

They concentrate our work on areas of greatest health and safety challenge and where we can make the biggest contribution to benefit the University Community. Designed to challenge and facilitate continuous improvement of standards, they will inform our activity and approach to delivery of our work throughout the lifecycle of this strategy.

### 3.1 **Provide support for members of the University Community who are experiencing psychological health and well-being issues and effectively manage the potential psychological health and well-being risks that University activities could create.**

The most commonly reported cause of work-related ill-health in Great Britain is now psychological health including stress, depression, and anxiety ([HSE](#)). Over the past 10 years [UCAS](#) have recorded a 450% increase in the number of University applicants declaring a mental health condition. We will work to reduce the risk of this impacting the University Community and provide suitable support where the impact is realised. We will continue to build up and build on our understanding and ability to support the mental health needs of our staff and students. Using our collective resource to focus on this problem, we will deliver support, guidance and interventions that make a real difference.

### 3.2 **Increase and maintain trust to ensure members of the University Community feel safe where they live in university premises, work, study and visit**

We will continue to work collaboratively with the University Community, to ensure that health and safety risks are effectively managed, building on and building up, the health and safety competencies of our community. We will provide safe infrastructure and equipment that supports our strategic objectives.

### 3.3 **Enable the University to innovate in a safe and healthy way that facilitates world-leading research, education, and wider student experience**

We will provide structured, competent, and proportionate information, instruction and training that facilitates healthy and safe world-leading research, education, and wider student experience.



## 4. Our key themes

Sitting under these health and safety objectives are six key themes, which will guide our activities.

### 4.1 Providing relevant, proportionate guidance

We aim to ensure the guidance provided, to effectively manage health and safety risks, facilitates the University achieving its strategic objectives and is proportionate to the risks we face.

### 4.2 Providing a positive health and safety culture

We aim to encourage a culture where individual mistakes are not punished and are instead surfaced and analysed against the process to review any inconsistencies with the health and safety systems across the University (a 'Just Culture'). This will facilitate wider learning from a community that actively engages with the management of health and safety risks and reports health and safety observations, near misses and incidents, creating a more informed and competent University Community.

### 4.3 Providing a people focused health and safety management system

At the centre of our health and safety risk management processes is competent people. We aim to ensure active engagement in proportionate risk management across the University Community ensuring that members of the University are provided with the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to competently complete health and safety related tasks and roles they are responsible and/or accountable for.

### 4.4 Collaborating with internal and external stakeholders to achieve the best outcomes

As both a learning and people focused organisation, we aim to ensure collaborative working, to arrive at the best solutions to proportionately manage our health and safety risks to the benefit of our community. We will achieve this by actively engaging with relevant stakeholders, including our regulators, to ensure a clear understanding of; opportunities for improvement, expectations, requirements and the best solutions to support our community.

### 4.5 Providing accessible materials and support for the University Community

We aim to embrace our diverse community and ensure all can access and understand the expectations placed on them by the University, to deliver their health and safety roles and responsibilities.

### 4.6 Integrating health and safety risk management into what we do

We aim to ensure that managing health and safety risks is an integrated part of how we deliver our strategic objectives.