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**Health, Safety and Environment Committee**

**Subject: Report on an advisory visit to the University by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)**

**Origin: Deputy Health, Safety and Environment Manager**

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**Purpose of report:** To inform the Committee of an advisory visit to the University by the Health and Safety Executive and to update Committee on the action taken as a result.

**1.** The University was subject to an advisory visit by the HSE on 11 July 2011. The visit resulted from an injury which was reported to the HSE under Riddor. The injury was caused by a slipping accident which occurred on 14 March 2011 in a catering facility.

The purpose of the visit was to check imago Services, policies, systems and procedures with respect to preventing slipping accidents in kitchens. The emphasis was on promotion of the HSE’s “Stop slips in kitchens” campaign and the provision of advice and information.

Key messages included:

* Selecting the right floor types. In order to reducethe risk of someone having a slip accident in a kitchen, employers should look at floors, decide what common slip issues are associated with it and to take action to prevent slips.
* Floor cleaning. Using the right floor cleaning techniques to reduce the risk of slips, and,
* Slip-resistant footwear. Employers should take care when choosing footwear on the basis of brochure descriptions, as footwear marked as “slip-resistant” may not perform well where it is intended to be used. Footwear trials are recommended before purchasing. Footwear must be suitable for the prevailing conditions, e.g. Footwear that performs well in wet conditions might not be suitable where there are food spillages.

**2. Actions**

* imago services intend commissioning additional slip resistance testing in order to check that the right floor types are provided in the right locations. HSE guidance recommends that employers assess their flooring in order to discover what the likelihood of a slip on the floor is, and, what can be done to stop slips happening.
* Risk assessments and safe working practices in respect of floor cleaning have been reviewed and updated. Training provision is being reassessed and is an ongoing issue.
* At the time of the visit, imago Services were about to look at purchasing safety footwear and it was felt that it was an opportune time to relook at the way safety footwear was selected. As a result of the advisors visit, imago Services decided to initiate a safety footwear trial. imago Services Health and Safety Co-ordinator arranged for their footwear suppliers to provide a number of different types of safety footwear, different designs, tread patterns etc. The trial was to take place in Edward Herbert kitchens and six staff members took part. They were selected because of their differing jobs, work locations, floor types and the different sorts of contamination found on the floors in those work locations. The trial began at the beginning of October and has been ongoing since then. It is due to finish at the end of October and the feedback from the staff will be used to inform the purchasing decisions of imago Services.

Research is continuing into the provision of reusable slip resistant overshoes for use by casual / part time and short term contract workers. The provision of slip resistant / non slip footwear shoes for such persons is not financially viable. The reusable nature of such footwear makes it more viable.