



Health and Safety Policy

September 2023

Version 1.0

Approved by the Board of Governors

Vantage College's Health and Safety policy has been produced to enable the College to comply with its legal duties and responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) and relevant statutory provisions.

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*The document owner is responsible for maintaining and updating the content of this document and ensuring that it reflects current practice at the College.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Vantage acknowledges and accepts its legal responsibilities for securing the health, safety and welfare of all its employees, of sub-contractors working on its behalf and all others affected by their activities under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
- 1.2. The Company will provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions so far as reasonably practicable.
- 1.3. Vantage will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable: -
 - i. The provision and maintenance of plant and systems of work that are, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe and without risks to health;
 - ii. arrangements for ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, safety and absence of risks to health in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances;
 - iii. the provision of such information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety at work of his employees;
 - iv. so far as is reasonably practicable as regards any place of work under the employer's control, the maintenance of it in a condition that is safe and without risks to health and the provision and maintenance of means of access to and egress from it that are safe and without such risks;
 - v. The provision and maintenance of a working environment for his employees that is, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe, without risks to health, and adequate as regards facilities and arrangements for their welfare at work.
- 1.4. The College will at all times provide adequate control of the Health and Safety risks arising from its activities.
- 1.5. The College ensures that all its employees are competent to carry out their tasks and are given adequate information, instruction, training and supervision.
- 1.6. The College will encourage all employees to be actively involved in maintaining safe operating conditions and practices.
- 1.7. The College will ensure that staff in student supervisory roles understand their duty of care to students and are cognisant of this policy.

- 1.8. The College will ensure its student induction programmes cover in sufficient detail, themes of health and safety, including emergency procedures, and will signpost students to staff members with special safety training (i.e. first aiders).
- 1.9. This policy and the College's Health and safety plans will be regularly reviewed to ensure that these standards of health and safety are maintained.

2. Responsibilities under this Policy

- 2.1. The CEO has overall responsibility for health and safety in the Company, and will:
 - Ensure suitable financial provision is made for health & safety obligations;
 - Provide a safe environment for all employees, students, contractors, volunteers and members of the public;
 - Ensure that the health and safety policy is effectively implemented throughout the company;
 - Provide appropriate information, instruction, training, and supervision to employees
 - Ensure work is planned to take into account health & safety issues
 - Provide adequate welfare facilities for their employees in accordance with the Workplace, (Health, Safety and Welfare) regulations 1992
- 2.2. All employees and students shall at all times take reasonable care of themselves and have due regard for the health and safety of others who may be affected by their work activities.
- 2.3. Employees are reminded that they have a legal obligation under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 to inform their manager of situations where they see serious and imminent danger to health and safety, OR any matters where they see a shortcoming in our arrangements for health and safety protection.
- 2.4. Students are informed that they are responsible for their own safety and that of others and that breaches of health and safety requirements are likely to be considered grounds for dismissal from the College.
- 2.5. All staff, both teaching and non-teaching are responsible for ensuring that students behave in a responsible manner and for reporting any breaches of health and safety requirements.

3. Arrangements

- 3.1. Health and safety is considered in all aspects of our work. The following, outlines the principal ways in which we implement health and safety, it applies to all staff and for students and visitors for whom they are responsible.

Communication

- 3.2. The contents of this policy will be brought to the attention of all employees upon their induction to the College. Employees will be further consulted on any matters arising that may affect their health and safety.
- 3.3. Students receive a Handbook when they enrol, and this contains details of health and safety information they should be aware of. This is also part of their induction programme

Supervision of students

- 3.4. College supervision protocols will be imparted to student-facing staff and must be followed. Staff should ensure that in the event of an emergency they have a record of students present and of their responsibility for any visitors they may have.
- 3.5. Activities arranged for students outside college premises should be accompanied by an appropriate number of staff. Before each visit, staff should familiarize themselves with the premises or location and any transport arrangements involved and carry out an assessment to ascertain any particular risks to which students might be exposed. Students should be briefed accordingly.

Contractors

- 3.6. Contractors will comply with the College's Health & Safety Policy and, where they have a statutory requirement to have a Health & Safety Policy in place, shall make it available to the College before work is carried out.
- 3.7. All contractors must carry out work in accordance with statutory provisions, have appropriate insurance cover and work at all times in accordance with industry Regulations, Codes of practice and best practice.
- 3.8. All plant and equipment must be safe and in good working order and all operators must be in possession of and use required PPE.
- 3.9. Electrical equipment operating at greater than 110 volts should be provided with an RCD.
- 3.10. The contractor is responsible for the provision and use of any devices or equipment needed for the protection of other users of the building and must notify the Operations Manager of any hazardous material being used or brought onto the site.

Visitors

- 3.11. Members of the Public who may visit our site are informed of any specific hazards that may exist on the premises and are adequately supervised whilst they are on the premises. Procedures for evacuation in the event of a fire are also made known as well as the exits pointed out.

Training

- 3.12. Training needs will be identified and employees will be given training appropriate to their responsibilities. Training is specifically provided for work with hazardous substances, use of equipment, use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and manual handling. Additional training required because of new work activities and the use of new equipment or substances will be provided when needed. Training achievement of all employees will be recorded.

Risk Assessments

- 3.13. Risk assessments are a legal requirement under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. Regulation 3 states: -
- *Every employer shall make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to the health and safety of his employees to which they are exposed whilst they are at work;*
 - *Every employer shall make a suitable and sufficient assessment of persons not in his employment arising out of, or in connection with, his undertaking.*
- 3.14. The objective is to examine all work areas and procedures to assess or determine if a risk or potential risks exist, and categorise the severity of the risk with a view to elimination, substitution, reduction or control of the risk to help create a safe working environment.
- 3.15. The College ensures operators are provided with appropriate instruction and training on risk assessments. Assessments are reviewed annually, when the work activity changes or if an accident occurs relating to that assessment.

Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

- 3.16. Display screen operators may suffer from postural difficulties and visual fatigue. Although display screen equipment does produce some radiation, the levels produced are no more than those from the environment in many other areas.
- 3.17. Postural hazards result from poor ergonomics and working environment. The following may produce fatigue-related conditions:
- sitting in an immobile position for long periods
 - high rates of repetitive finger movements, with the wrists bent
 - poor circulation to the legs
 - Pressure from the seat/chair upon the thighs caused by incorrectly adjusted seat.
 - Visual fatigue may result from the following:
 - poor screen display, such as low contrast or flickering
 - high levels of ambient light compared to the screen display
 - reflections or glare
 - The need for a document holder.

These can produce eye strain, headaches or other related symptoms.

- 3.18. It is the College's policy to exceed, where possible, the minimum health and safety requirements of the law. We aim to provide a working environment that is both comfortable and maximises the effectiveness of employees. Although the Regulations only apply to DSE users or operators (an operator is a self-employed DSE user), we will try to apply the principles to all DSE workstations regardless of the category of user.
- 3.19. In order to achieve our goals, we will put in place arrangements and procedures for the assessment of risks from the use of DSE. The risk assessment will be followed by the provision, maintenance and monitoring of appropriate control measures to minimise any risks identified.

Welfare

- 3.20. Welfare arrangements are provided in line with the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992.
- 3.21. Vantage ensures that the Workplace Approved Code of Practice is met by ensuring that the minimum number of sanitary conveniences is provided.

Equipment

- 3.22. All equipment is subject to routine maintenance, taking into account various factors, including:
- Statutory testing – such PAT for electrical appliances
 - Type of equipment
 - Amount of use
 - Consequences of failure
- 3.23. Staff and students are not permitted to bring personal mains operated electrical equipment into the College, with some exception given to personal electronic devices where.

Personal Protective Equipment

- 3.24. The Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 1992 requires employers to supply suitable and sufficient PPE to their employees wherever there are risks to health and safety that cannot be adequately controlled in other ways. PPE is provided as appropriate for the work activities. It should always be considered as the last resort and used only where other precautions cannot adequately reduce the risk of injury. Every employee has a duty to use the PPE provided and to report any loss of or obvious defect in the equipment.

Hazardous substances

- 3.25. The law requires employers to control exposure to hazardous substances to prevent ill health. They have to protect both employees and others who may be exposed by complying with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH).
- 3.26. The risks associated with hazardous substances are considered for all work activities by obtaining information from the relevant Safety Data sheets where possible. Alternative, less harmful substances are used if available. In case of risks to health, PPE is provided and used by employees. Unidentified potential hazardous substances, such as asbestos, encountered during the course of a work activity are referred to the client and/or advice taken from the H&S adviser, as appropriate.
- 3.27. Any substances hazardous to health that are encountered by employees e.g. cleaning agents such as bleach are assessed using appropriate COSHH assessment forms.

First Aid & Accident Reporting

- 3.28. Basic first aid kits containing recommended minimum materials is kept on the premises. An appointed person is selected from within the office to maintain the contents of the first aid kit and to phone for emergency assistance if required.
- 3.29. The College will arrange for at least two members of staff to be appointed First Aiders and receive training from a recognized organization.
- 3.30. All accidents are reported to the office and those defined in the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR) are reported to the appropriate enforcing authority or to the incident contact centre on telephone number 0845 300 9923.

Manual Handling

- 3.31. The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 state:

Each employer shall –

- a. so far as is reasonably practicable, avoid the need for his employees to undertake any manual handling operations at work which involve a risk to their being injured.*
- b. Where it is not reasonably practicable to avoid the need for his employees to undertake any manual handling operations at work which involve a risk of their being injured:*
 - i. Make a suitable and sufficient assessment of all such manual handling operations to be undertaken by them.*
 - ii. Take appropriate steps to reduce the risk of injury to those employees arising out of their undertaking any such manual handling operations to the lowest level reasonably practicable.*
 - iii. Take appropriate steps to provide any of those employees who are undertaking any such manual handling operations with general indications and, where it is reasonably practicable to do so, precise information on: (a) the weight of each load; and (b) the heaviest side of any load whose centre of gravity is not positioned centrally.*

- 3.32. If employees are required to use any manual handling equipment they should, as a minimum, be shown how to use it safely and warned of any dangers. If the equipment is
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complex or the risks are higher, then such information should also be conveyed in writing. This could be done, for example, by providing staff with a copy of the suppliers' operating instructions.

- 3.33. The main aim of the Manual Handling Operations Regulations is to avoid injury to employees, this can be achieved by avoiding moving loads altogether, but in most circumstances this will be impracticable. The second stage in the hierarchy of control is to try and automate or mechanise the manual handling operations i.e. by using forklift trucks, conveyor belts etc. Lastly if this is not possible the employer will be required to carry out a manual handling assessment, this may be a simple assessment or it may require a more detailed assessment.

A detailed assessment needs to take into account of: -

- The Task; is there twisting, stretching, stooping etc. involved
- The Individuals capability; does it require unusual height, strength, training etc.?
- The Load; is the load, hot, heavy, sharp, difficult to grasp etc.?
- The Environment; are there slippery floors, stairs, confined spaces etc.?

- 3.34. Our employees are advised not to manually handle loads, which they feel incapable of moving safely.

Working at height

- 3.35. In accordance with regulations, a risk assessment should be carried out before any operation which requires the use of equipment which enables work to be reached. As a general guide step ladders should not be used for heights above two metres.

Fire safety.

- 3.36. Exposure to fire can result in burns and inhalation of smoke, either of which can be sufficiently serious to be fatal. Fires can cause massive destruction to the building structure, services, equipment, goods in storage, also information and records can be destroyed or damaged. We are legally obliged to safeguard our employees against exposure to the hazards associated with fire.
- 3.37. For these reasons, we undertake to put in place arrangements for the assessment of risks from fire and appropriate control measures to minimise the risks identified. These measures will include the following arrangements, procedures and controls:

- risk assessment of the premises for fire safety annually

- fire detection equipment to be installed and inspected regularly
- any fire alarms will be regularly tested
- fire suppression apparatus will be inspected regularly
- emergency lighting will be provided as appropriate
- fire extinguishers will be placed at clearly labelled fire points
- emergency exit routes and signs to be kept clear at all times
- we will train staff in the use of extinguishers, procedures for fire drills and evacuation and appoint Fire Wardens
- Records of training, induction, drills, alarm tests, fire certification to be kept on the premises and up to date in the fire log book.
- supervision and monitoring of visitors, including contractors will be carried out by the Operations Manager
- These arrangements will be reviewed at least annually and on any significant change in the business or the premises.

Housekeeping

- 3.38. The College buildings will be cleaned under the supervision of the Operations Manager.
- 3.39. Materials, equipment and any other items will be kept in appropriate storage areas. Where this is not possible for temporary reasons staff will ensure that no hazard results and movement of all users of the buildings is not impeded
- 3.40. Stairs, corridors, cloakrooms and exits (especially Fire Exits) will be kept clear of obstructions including electrical cables
- 3.41. Staff should check classrooms on a daily basis and report any hazards to the Operations Manager.

Lifts

- 3.42. The college will ensure that the lifts are maintained according to the manufacturer's schedule.
- 3.43. The security staff will receive instruction on procedures to use in case of any emergency situation.
- 3.44. Students and staff will receive specific instruction to avoid overcrowding and maximum loading will be clearly displayed.

Food, drink and hygiene

- 3.45. To avoid encouragement of vermin and for general hygiene reasons consumption of food and drink is not permitted in classrooms. In other areas food and drink, waste should always be disposed of in designated bins.
- 3.46. For electrical safety, reasons drinks are strictly forbidden in the vicinity of mains operated computing equipment.

Alcohol and drugs

- 3.47. The abuse of alcohol and drugs is a safety and health hazard and if there is any suspicion that a member of staff, student or visitor is incapacitated this must be reported to the senior manager present

Smoking

- 3.48. In accordance with the provision of the Health Bill which became law in England in July 2007 and in view of the danger of fire and to health, no smoking is permitted anywhere on the premises this includes the building itself and any outside areas deemed to be part of the premises except in the outside area specifically designated for smoking. This regulation includes 'electronic cigarettes'.

Violence

- 3.49. Should such a situation arise security should be alerted and the police should be immediately called (dial 999 on an outgoing line). Staff should only attempt to restrain a violent individual if it is apparent that they are likely to cause injury to themselves or others

Stress

- 3.50. Counselling arrangements can be made via the Senior Manager. The College will carry out periodic assessments of possible stress amongst employees and maintain a policy of informing and discussing with staff any planned changes or developments, which might affect them.

Equality and Diversity Statement

Vantage strives to treat all its members and visitors fairly and aims to eliminate unjustifiable discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, political beliefs or practices, disability, marital status, family circumstances, sexual orientation, spent criminal convictions, age, or any other inappropriate ground.

The Health and Safety Committee

- 1) The Health and Safety Committee meets quarterly to review health, safety, environment, and property safety issues. The core membership is the director of operations, Assistant head of operations, operations managers, Health & Safety Officer, student union representation, academic areas and others deemed suitable to be co-opted onto the Committee.
- 2) The core membership of the Committee is supplemented by Vantage management representatives from operational departments. Other Directors and staff may attend the Committee periodically. The members of the Committee are required to attend except in exceptional circumstances in which case the Chair must be informed in advance and an alternative attendee must be agreed.
- 3) The Committee may call upon specialist staff, or experts as necessary to the areas being discussed.

The function of the Health and Safety Committee is to:

- 1) Identify health and safety issues that require a generic approach throughout Vantage, in relation to health and safety, fire safety, security and environmental protection, and to develop and implement policies and strategies for approval and ratification;
- 2) Monitor safety standards achieved throughout Vantage and report on any key areas of concern and recommended actions to the Executive Leadership Team;
- 3) Inform the Executive Leadership Team of changes, legal requirements, good practice and recommend and implement an appropriate course of action;
- 4) Provide specialist advice relating to matters within the remit of the Committee;

- 5) Identify and review via the health and safety officer or director of operations, as appropriate, the health and safety implications of any proposed changes in relation to business activity undertaken, and major changes in organisational structure.
- 6) Receive reports identifying necessary actions to ensure adequate standards are maintained while keeping the Executive Leadership Team informed;
- 7) Review health and safety incident statistics and trends reporting relevant and appropriate information to the Executive Leadership Team;

REFERENCES

- The Health and Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974 – Section 2(3)
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999,
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 – Article 11
- The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
- The Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998
- Health and Safety Executive and Institute of Directors Guidance Document "Leading Health and Safety at Working 417:2011