

Imperial College
London

Health & Safety Matters

BIANNUAL NEWSLETTER OF SAFETY
AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

DECEMBER 2018 / ISSUE 2



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**Welcome to the
December edition**

Welcome to the December edition of Health and Safety Matters

Occupational Health department webpages

The Occupational Health Department webpages contain useful information that is easily accessible and is provided to support a safe and healthy workplace.

These pages help us to show our commitment to supporting a safe and healthy workplace, working together to promote a culture where physical and psychological health of staff, students and others involved in the College is respected, protected and improved whilst at work.

www.imperial.ac.uk/human-resources/about-us/occupational-health

Mental Health webpages

Your mental health is as important as your physical health. Promoting good mental health and wellbeing can help you feel empowered and more resilient to cope with life's stresses.

www.imperial.ac.uk/health-and-wellbeing/mental-health

In recent years workplace wellbeing has gained increased prominence amongst those with an interest and responsibility for people at work. At Imperial College London, Health and Wellbeing is central to the College Strategy. Occupational Health works in partnership with The Learning and Development Centre (LDC), Equality Diversity, and Inclusion Centre (EDIC), Human Resources, Chaplaincy and Sport Imperial amongst others to promote the wellbeing agenda.

The success of Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is an indication of the interest across our community - the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has recently broadened their guidance on undertaking a First Aid Needs Assessment to include mental health and suggested MHFA. We use national campaigns such as Stress Awareness Day and Mental Health Awareness Week to open the discussion and challenge management culture as well as helping people manage their own wellbeing.

The staff Health and Wellbeing pages are updated regularly and have lots of information - we are working hard to make the healthy choice the easy choice!

Colleagues with a responsibility for Health and Safety are often called upon to provide practical advice to assist disabled staff and students undertake their work in office and laboratory environments. In this issue, in addition to sharing important messages about safety management and celebrating successes of our colleagues, we have taken the opportunity to highlight the newly published Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy along with resources and support available for disabled students and staff. Initiatives such as Active Bystander give us tools to challenge unacceptable behaviours in a wide range of situations including workplace safety.

Claire O'Brien,
Director of Occupational Health



We've recently relaunched our online stress resources

Taking control of workplace stressors

In 2012 a two part stress management resource was developed for staff and managers, the foundation was the HSE's management standards for Stress and took the form of an online questionnaire designed to assist somebody work through the potential issues identified in the Management Standards to create a shortlist, creating the opportunity for reflection and to help prepare for a structured conversation with a manager or Human Resources.

We have recently revitalised this resource, it is now a web enabled PDF form which can be completed either online or as a paper exercise. It remains unchanged but the line

manager resources have been compiled into a single document, structured to be a record of the conversation and to provide the basis of an action plan. This can be found in the Resilience and Stress section of the college health and well-being pages. www.imperial.ac.uk/health-and-wellbeing/resilience-and-stress

We encourage staff to look at these materials and if they are concerned about the health effects of stress, mental health first aiders are a useful starting point as is Confidential Care, the employee assistance program. It is also possible to self-refer to Occupational Health for advice on self-help; reports to management are not generated from self-referrals.

College resources for disability

Imperial is committed to providing dedicated support to its staff and students in order to ensure they maximise their potential and progress regardless of their disability. Awareness of this along with the support available is critical to maintaining a safe and inclusive workplace. Disability History Month runs across November and December so there's no better opportunity to share an overview of the support available at Imperial. See our comprehensive feature on pages 8 & 9 in this issue to see how to access support available for staff and students.

HEALTH Snippets



Raise Your Hands and unite for Raynaud's Awareness Month

February 2019 is Raynaud's Awareness Month.

Raynaud's Syndrome is a common condition affecting up to 10 million people in the UK. If you often have cold hands and feet, could you be living with this condition? Take the test at www.sruk.co.uk/raynauds/raynauds-test

The winter months can be particularly problematic resulting in pale fingertips, pain and loss of dexterity. It is important for people who work outdoors to have good quality footwear and hand protection.



The condition can also affect people working in sedentary roles. Workplace adjustments can make life easier for those with this condition:

- Voice recognition (dictation) software minimises the use of fingers to operate the keyboard and mouse.
- A larger flatter style mouse can reduce gripping to improve circulation.
- Heaters
- Heated mouse
- Heated gloves
- Fingerless gloves
- Light, soft touch keyboard
- Ergonomic pens

SAFETY Snippets

Provost's Award for Excellence in Health and Safety



These awards honour members of the College whose endeavours have resulted in significant improvements in Health and Safety throughout the last twelve months.

The Provost's Awards for Excellence in Health and Safety are made to individuals and teams for their outstanding commitment to improving the safety of students, staff and visitors to the College.

The awards serve to recognise colleagues who have gone above and beyond their duties to manage, innovate and promote safer ways of working, and to create a safer work environment.

These awards also allow the College to express thanks to those who help us foster the culture of excellence in safety to which we all aspire.

Further information on the awards and how to nominate can be found at:

www.imperial.ac.uk/staff/college-staff-recognition-awards

Imperial staff news

Say hello...



The Safety Department welcomed **Ana Pedrero Llamas** who joined the team on 14 November 2018 as Deputy Safety Director & Biorisk Manager. Ana previously worked at LGC, a chemical manufacturer and life sciences company, where she was responsible for the strategic development and implementation of Safety Policy, Training and

effectiveness monitoring across the Group. Ana will continue to develop our Safety Management System and work closely with Faculties to continuously improve our safety culture.

Sarah Antoine joined the Safety Department on 23 April 2018 as Administrator for Biological and Radiological Safety. Sarah previously worked at City & Guilds as a Customer Service Advisor for 8 years, dealing with qualification, exam and certificate enquiries.

Sarah Cooney joined the Safety Department on 10 October 2018 from the College Registry Department where she provided administrative support. Sarah is currently providing administrative support to the Safety Department.

...wave goodbye

Farewell to **Sangita Kerai** - after eighteen years as Departmental Administrator to the Safety Department, Sangita has spread her safety wings to fly upstairs to floor 5 to join Estates Operations as their new Health and Safety Advisor. Sangita will now be reporting to Denis Murphy, the Head of Health and Safety for Estates Operations.

We wish her well in her new role, and anticipate a close and busy working relationship with both Sangita and Denis.

Sarah Joomun also left the Safety Department in November to join the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine as their new Health and Safety Systems Co-ordinator, again we wish her all the best.

Graduation success

Warm congratulations to Jon Fear, one of our Radiation Protection Officers (RPO), who recently graduated following the successful completion of his NEBOSH National Diploma in Occupational Health and Safety.

Jon studied part time for three years to achieve the award, and hopes the broader understanding of health and safety it has given him will

compliment his role as College RPO. Jon explains "My aim was to expand and improve my health and safety knowledge to make me more competent in my role. The expertise and practical skills gained covered topics that I had little experience of, but encountered on a regular basis across College."

Jon graduated in June in front of his wife and daughter.



Blended First Aid Training

A resounding “thumbs-up” for the new College course from long-term employee Lesley Rawlinson...

Welcome to i-First Aid



Please log in with the user name and password you were given.

I have volunteered as a First Aider throughout my 22 years of working for the College, re-qualifying every three years as required by the HSE and whilst the role of First Aider is rewarding, carving time out of an increasingly busy schedule to attend a 3 day course has sometimes been difficult. That is why I was delighted to discover the new format of the “First Aid at Work + AED (blended)” course recently introduced by the College.

The new course differs from previous formats in combining both online and classroom elements. The online course, which should be completed before attending the 2 days of practical, covers subjects such as the recognition of symptoms associated with common illnesses like diabetes, epilepsy and stroke. The module is made available to participants 1 month prior to attending the practical sessions. Setting up your user account is easy and once registered you can choose how to study online, completing the whole course in one go

where time allows or breaking it down into segments where that better fits your work schedule.

There is a continuous assessment element to ensure you have understood and absorbed the information and a multiple choice assessment at the end. The course should be completed before attending the practical session.

As well as flexibility, the online element serves as a refresher for those who have previous experience whilst also allowing the first timer to come to the practical session with baseline knowledge. This improves the level of engagement between participants and allows for more complicated scenarios to be addressed. I found the trainer to be engaging, informative and friendly and overall it was one of the most enjoyable courses I have attended.

Imperial College
London



**Educating the future
is what we do but we
must learn from the past.**

How can we increase reporting
of near misses at Imperial?
Tell us your thoughts.

safetydept@imperial.ac.uk

First Aid Snippets

In Case of Emergency (ICE)

www.incaseofemergency.org

Most people have a mobile phone but also have a password on the phone to prevent unauthorised access. However, in an emergency situation access may be required by first aiders or the emergency services.

Most devices, via the “emergency call” on the lock screen, have access to the ICE contact and Medical Information. This can be updated in settings, however, some devices may differ.

It is strongly advised you investigate this on your phone and update the ICE contact details and Medical Information so the emergency services or a medical professional can access this if needed.

This can hold details of any allergies you may have, any medication you are on as well as a loved one’s number so they can be contacted for you, if you are unable to. Update all the information that is relevant to help you.



Getting to know you – staff spotlight



Our newly-appointed Chief Fire Officer Sean Fanning may not be new to College but our series of probing questions give us an insight into his life, loves and interests...

Where were you born? North Middlesex University Hospital, N18.

Where do you live/who do you live with. I live in SW1, opposite Westminster Cathedral, with my wife.

Describe your work in general and what you are currently working on. My role is to promote fire safety awareness, to prevent fires occurring and to protect people. I report into the Director of Estates Operations and manage the fire safety team. I'm currently providing fire safety guidance on a number of new build and renovation projects across the various College campuses.

What aspect of your job excites you most? The people I work with and the variety of complex fire safety

challenges that the faculties and the Business School generate.

What are your hobbies? I enjoy tinkering with my classic car, spinning and cycling.



What book would you recommend taking on holiday? I wouldn't take one, I'd take a Kindle and load it up with the Shardlake series by C J Sansom, historical mystery novels set in the 16th century. For some light relief, I'd read Under the Paw by Tom Cox.

What are the little things in life that make your day better? Coffee, chocolate and contactless.

What would be your Desert Island Disc? Desert Island discs allows 8 choices; therefore, I would choose the following: Simple Minds, Alive and Kicking; Faithless, Salva Mea; Level 42, Something About You; The Prodigy, Fire Starter; Human League, Don't You Want Me; Simply Red, Holding Back the Years; Baz Luhrman, Everybody's Free to Wear Sunscreen; and Rag'n'Bone Man, Human

What would be your superpower? Time travel, I'd love to go back to 16th century London



Do you have a funny, or interesting, or embarrassing story you can share?

As a fire behaviour instructor, I was rescued by my students having suffered from heat exhaustion whilst training in a hot fire rig. Not ideal to be rescued by your students when your role was lead safety officer! I think this was called realistic training!

Do you have pets? Not at the moment, but a rescue cat is definitely on the cards.

What's your favourite meal? Indian cuisine, current favourite place Quilon, SW1E.

Describe yourself in three words. Pragmatic, pedantic, garrulous

When you were young, what did you want to be when you grew up? A firefighter

What phone app would you recommend? LastPass, secure password keeper.

What's your perfect day? After a busy week, the perfect weekend day would be a lazy start, going to a country pub for a leisurely lunch and not having to be anywhere at a particular time.

Share a fascinating fact. The Apple computer company was founded on April Fool's Day (1976)

What's the most exciting or interesting thing you have ever done? I was part of a team that rode the entirety of the Western Front in 5 days which included a number of classic Tour de France climbs. We were raising money for The Royal British Legion and the Firefighter's Benevolent Fund.

Yammer – are you connected?

Occupational Health have begun to use Yammer, a work place social media platform on the Windows 365 suite to communicate and connect with others.

Chris Allan, senior Occupational Health Advisor and Mental Health First Aid Instructor has been using it for over 18 months. Chris explains

“Yammer is part of our communication strategy to support our excellent community of volunteer Mental Health First Aiders since mid-2017. The work these MHFAiders do for the College community cannot be overstated and finding new ways to support them has been my mission for a few years now. In addition to the opportunities for information dissemination I find there is no better tool than Yammer to start and support a conversation with people in the College”.

For National Stress Awareness Day held on 7 November 2018 Claire O’Brien and colleagues from ICT collaborated on a YamJam – a live Yammer Forum. Claire reports

“I was a bit nervous about how it would go but it was a fun way of opening the conversation about managing tech and stress in the workplace.

It was a very positive experience and one we would look to repeat in the future.”



More recently Mili Mehta and Nuala Kearney have started up forums for the groups they support.

“We thought creating a First Aid Co-ordinator Yammer group would be a good opportunity to connect and support the departmental First Aid Co-ordinators. It is a positive and supportive environment to help with work as a First Aid Co-Coordinator. Articles can be shared on the group to provide knowledge to those within the Yammer group. Support is at hand and

advice can be sought by yourself, so you are never alone”.

“The Computer Health Assessor (CHA) Yammer group has been created to provide a platform where CHA’s can keep in touch, and stay in the know about all things Computer Health related. The group members can contribute useful computer health information, share experiences and find the answers to queries they may have. So far it is proving to be a great way to encourage and boost engagement”.

NOTES FOR THE DIARY

College Safety Forum

The next College Safety Forum will be held on 10 December. This exciting and interesting event is open to all safety personnel and those who have an interest in safety or have safety as part of their role within College.

Please contact Sarah Cooney at s.cooney@imperial.ac.uk for further details.



RSPB big garden bird- watch 26-28 Jan 2019

For nearly 40 years, RSPB have been asking you to count the birds in your garden – and you’ve been brilliant at it.

Big Garden Birdwatch is the world’s largest garden wildlife survey, click below to join in!

www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch/everything-you-need-to-know-about-big-garden-birdwatch

A guide to disability support at Imperial

Under the Equality Act 2010 a disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities. This includes:

- specific learning difficulties, e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD
- enduring mental health condition, e.g. depression,

- OCD, generalised anxiety disorder
- visual, hearing or other sensory impairment
- long-term medical condition, e.g. IBS, ME, diabetes, epilepsy
- social/communication difficulty, e.g. autistic spectrum/Asperger's syndrome
- mobility or dexterity issue, wheelchair user
- progressive and life limiting conditions

People automatically meet the disability definition from the day they are diagnosed for the following conditions: HIV infection, cancer or multiple sclerosis.

Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy launched

Earlier this term, Assistant Provost for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Professor Stephen Curry launched the College's new strategy to improve the diversity and experience of under-represented groups at the College.

The following objectives have been included to support disabled staff and students.

- Establish a formal and effective mechanism for recording requests for support for disability by staff and students, and monitoring responses to ensure that they are timely and effective.

- Ensure that all staff with line management responsibilities are trained to deal sensitively and appropriately with disability cases, and that they understand how to access expert support.
- Increase the number of trained volunteer mental health first aiders across all College campuses to 1 in 50 people.
- Develop a plan to improve facilities that are used for College-wide events but that are not yet equipped to be fully accessible (e.g. wheelchair ramps/lifts; hearing loops).
- Adopt as general practice strategies to benefit disabled students (e.g. use of

microphones, lecture recording, advance provision of reading lists and course materials).

- Apply to be a Disability Confident Leader within two years.



Occupational Health

The Occupational Health team (OH) at Imperial support, assess and advise staff with active health problems which may be considered a disability. Managers have the opportunity to refer for advice on workplace adjustments to support staff. Staff can self-refer for advice. OH work in partnership with Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Centre (EDIC) and Disability Advisory Service (DAS) on a referral basis to support staff and students who may have issues with safety critical work, lone working and office/ lab ergonomics.

Disability Advisory Service

The Disability Advisory Service (DAS) offers advice and support to all students at Imperial. A team of experienced Disability Advisors advise students and the staff who support them, on the reasonable adjustments required to remove any barriers to effective study. This includes recommendations for appropriate examination support or adjustments. DAS offer flexible and tailored support for a wide range of disabilities.

DAS manages a dedicated budget to enable the purchase of equipment and support recommended as a

reasonable adjustment. In addition DAS advisors are able to screen students for indicators of Specific Learning Disabilities (SpLD), referring them on for further assessment, where appropriate.

Students can be referred to SpLD and autism specialist tutors for support any time during their academic career. Referrals can also be made to Study Mentors (mental health) for other appropriate support. DAS staff liaise closely with the Departmental Disability Officer network in regards to support for individual students as well as arranging monthly information and training sessions. DAS is based on the South Kensington campus but can arrange to see students at any other Imperial College site.

Able@Imperial

Able@Imperial is the staff network that works to promote a positive culture around disability. New members are welcome; join to encourage the greater representation of staff with a disability at Imperial.

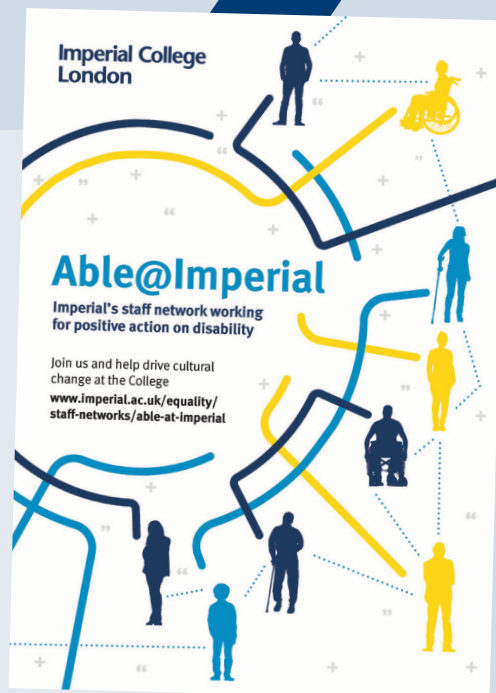
Take part in networking to support your personal and professional development.

Able@Imperial is open to all disabled staff, staff who support disabled dependents, and staff who have an interest in disability in the workplace. Able@Imperial discuss issues relating to disability in the workplace and

contribute to planning events such as Disability History Month (22/11/18 - 22/12/18).

Support positive action and consideration of reasonable adjustments in the workplace.

For further information visit www.imperial.ac.uk/equality/staff-networks/able-at-imperial



ICT Software Store

Check out the ICT online software store at www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/ict/store/software - for a range of inclusive software, free to download for members of the College. You don't have to be disabled to benefit.



Software for Staff

Free and discounted software for staff



Software for Students

Free and discounted software for students

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Centre

The Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Centre (EDIC) provides information, advice and guidance for staff and their managers. One area where we are regularly approached for our help is regarding reasonable adjustments. These are usually changes to the work environment that allow staff with a disability to work safely and productively.

We can also provide support for staff making Access to Work applications. Access to Work (AtW) is a publicly

funded employment support programme that aims to help more disabled people start or stay in work. It can provide practical and financial support for people who have a disability or long term physical or mental health condition. Support can be provided where someone needs help or adaptations beyond reasonable adjustments. An Access to Work grant can pay for practical support to help staff with a disability stay in work.

EDIC also has a screening and assessment process for staff who think they may have dyslexia or other specific learning differences. All discussions are held in confidence

and we have two dedicated members of staff who you can contact for support and advice.

Kalpna Mistry, k.mistry@imperial.ac.uk and Kani Kamara, k.kamara@imperial.ac.uk are based in South Kensington and can be contacted by phone, email or in person.



Active Imperial

Leisha Wegg, Active Lifestyles Manager at Sport Imperial tells us a little about herself and the resources available through Active Imperial

Safety Department Webpages

The Safety Department has been working hard on revamping and updating our webpages making it easier to find the information you need.

These pages help us to share our knowledge and experience with all members of College to support all of our research and business colleagues.

Any issues with these pages, please get in touch.

www.imperial.ac.uk/safety

Safety Department on Twitter

The Safety Department has a Twitter account and the live feed can now be viewed on the front page of the Safety Department website.

We welcome more followers and we will look towards keeping our feed fun and interesting.

We have a group of dedicated tweeters, join in the debates!.

....@ICLSafety

I fulfil the Active Lifestyles Manager role here at Imperial College and have been settling into my job at the Ethos Sports Centre for a few months now.

I graduated from the University of East Anglia with a 2:1 in Applied Sport Health and Exercise Science. I went on to work for Canterbury Christ Church University as a Playsport Officer developing sports across three campuses in Canterbury. From there I worked for Norwich Football Club as their National Citizen Service Delivery Coordinator delivering sport and residential training by working with health teams, schools and external partnerships. Soon after I find myself working at Imperial as Active Lifestyles Manager. My roles and responsibilities include managing the Active Lifestyles Team, delivering mass participation events and managing the Sport Activator team. Upcoming events in our calendar include the Reindeer Relay and Healthy living week (see dates below).



Active Imperial

Active Imperial is the recreational physical activity programme for staff and students that includes five key areas; Active Play, Active Leagues, Active Social, Active You and Active Fit. For £15 per term this programme gives you, your friends and colleagues the opportunity to get and stay active through variety of activities. This is your chance to get involved with a new sport, fitness class, try new everyday local activities and play in semi competitive internal leagues whilst having fun and enhancing your experience of sport and physical activity.

www.imperial.ac.uk/sport/be-active/active-imperial

Future Events

Reindeer Relay

Wednesday 12th December

Healthy Living Week

Monday 28th January –
Friday 1st February

New active gym challenges

each month – Ethos gym
Brand new gym Sign up to Ethos

www.imperial.ac.uk/ethos/memberships

Sign up to classes and activities
www.imperial.ac.uk/sports/bookings



Imperial first UK university to gain international animal welfare accreditation

Imperial's animal research facilities and staff have received international recognition for their standards of animal care and welfare.

Anna Napolitano reports...

The College's Central Biomedical Services (CBS) division - which cares for the animals used by the College for research - is the first animal care facility within a UK university to receive the prestigious recognition from the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care (AAALAC International).



Research involving animals forms an important element of Imperial's work but animals are only used in research programmes where their use is shown to be necessary and unavoidable. Good welfare and adherence to the 3Rs (Reduction, Replacement, Refinement) underpins this research.

High standard of care

Imperial scientists who work with animals are supported by the CBS team who are responsible for providing state of the art facilities and maintaining high levels of animal welfare. Staff training and facilities are all geared towards delivering scientific excellence whilst minimising the suffering of animals. Now the department has been recognised by AAALAC for the high standard of its care.

Professor Ian Walmsley, Provost at Imperial, said: "I'd like to congratulate Rob, Mandy, their teams, and everyone involved in this important

achievement, as well my predecessor James Stirling, for his outstanding leadership. Research involving animals can lead to important breakthroughs in science, and it's vital that we ensure the highest standards of care and welfare. This award is recognition of a great deal of hard work that I know will continue at the College."

AAALAC International was founded in 1965 by leading international veterinarians and researchers to enhance life sciences and quality animal care around the world. It promotes the humane treatment of animals in science and is the only organisation that accredits animal care and welfare programmes

Comprehensive review

Rob Floyd, who led on the College's AAALAC application, explained: "We conducted a comprehensive review of the existing animal care and welfare programmes, aligned and standardised them across all Imperial College London facilities and produced a new programme which operates to higher standards."

Imperial will now need to submit a report every year detailing improvements made to the animal care and welfare programme during the previous year. To maintain accreditation, subsequent site visits are held every three years.

Mandy Thorpe, the Director of CBS, said: "This is fantastic news and a great achievement. This is the start of a journey of continuous improvement and monitoring of our animal care and welfare programme towards best practices and operational excellence."

HEALTH Snippets

A recent survey by St Johns Ambulance of 1000 employees revealed that one in four has quit a job over mental health problems.

As part of health and well-being at the College there is renewed emphasis on mental health, resilience, stress management and physical health including comprehensive Active Imperial programmes. These offer a range of support and development opportunities:

www.imperial.ac.uk/health-and-wellbeing



Professor Alice P. Gast, President of Imperial noted:

"In our College Strategy we recognise the importance of wellbeing of all of our people and we are actively promoting good mental health and a healthy work-life balance."

College Safety Culture...

...an opportunity to have your say!

Over the last few years we have been implementing a number of new initiatives to raise the profile of safety across the College.

We would now like to understand how we can expand on the good work done to date and start to focus on building a stronger culture for safety and wellbeing that is self-sustaining and long lasting. For this reason we have appointed 'Tribe Intelligent Culture Change' to help us understand the present culture that exists for safety and expose where there is excellence and where there are opportunities for improvement.

The findings and recommendations will then help us to create a set of practical behaviours for people at all levels and help create a roadmap of communications, training and engagement.

If you would like to take part in College safety discussions please contact safetydept@imperial.ac.uk

Watch out for our new poster campaign in 2019 on having your say!



safetydept@imperial.ac.uk

University Boat Club wins Safety Award



Imperial College Boat Club (ICBC) is the latest tidal Thames rowing club to win the most improved club prize at the Port of London Authority (PLA) annual Rowing Safety Awards.

The annual awards were introduced to encourage clubs to adopt the Code of Practice for Rowing on the Tideway when it was introduced in 2006. The Code of Practice for Rowing was developed by the PLA and the Thames Regional Rowing Council (TRRC). The Safety award is given to the club that has made the most improvements in its safety when on and around the river.

The decision was based on the huge improvements which have taken place at ICBC over the last 12 months, where the panel were impressed by the seriousness with which Imperial took a number of issues which had previously occurred on the water.

Hard work from new Head Coach Peter Hardcastle, backed up by Boathouse Manager Mark Chatwin (Rowing Safety Advisor), has resulted in clear and concise rules around rowing in difficult conditions both during the day and in hours of darkness.

Mark Chatwin commented "This is down to the hard work and consistent approach which Pete (Hardcastle) has applied to safety on the water since he has started at Imperial. It is also fair to say that the students have continued to follow these rules and Pete's leadership, so everyone should be thanked for that."

"The rules of the river can at times be confusing and frustrating, but both

coaches and athletes continue to take this seriously and it is great to see this being honoured. It is a testament to the students, previously lead by Alex Ball and now lead by Jack Walsh"

Some of the changes which Pete has brought in, include testing in pre-season training to confirm who can and cannot steer boats in hours of darkness. Additionally the standard rule is that you must have one light on the bow and stern of your boat. Pete makes all boats have two lights so as to act as a backup in case one fails. Safety of athletes and coaches is not an option, it is the number one deciding factor when planning an outing.



Active Bystander

The Active Bystander training programme aims to empower staff and students across the College community to challenge poor behaviours and bring about cultural change through the reinforcement of messages defining the boundaries of unacceptable behaviour.

If we constantly reinforce messages about behaviour that is unacceptable, this puts considerable pressure on

people to re-think their behaviour. So any level of inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour should not be ignored. Many individuals with problematic attitudes are likely to think their behaviour is normal if no one confronts it, and this can often be reinforced by cultural messages. Some might not care their behaviour causes harm to others, but some might not even realise.

Working collectively we can bring about change and create a safe and supportive community for all.

Laser Eye Strike



A recent incident involving a high-power laser resulted in a researcher experiencing post exposure optical effects. While ophthalmic examination confirmed there was no permanent injury, the incident investigation identified opportunities for improvements in laser safety within the College and underlined the importance of planning alignment procedures carefully and wearing eye protection.

What happened?

Two researchers were running a scan to optimise the position of a barium borate (BBO) crystal on a laser table incorporating a pulsed 790nm Class 4 Laser. The cover of the normally enclosed laser had been removed to allow the procedure to be carried out. Protective eyewear was available in the laboratory, but was not worn by either of the two researchers present. While one researcher was standing alongside the laser table observing the motorised movement of the BBO crystal, a red beam was seen to enter their left eye. The researcher turned away from the laser beam and was immediately aware of a persistent flash image in their eye.

As is normal practice with a suspected laser eye strike, the researcher was taken to the Western Eye Hospital for an ophthalmic examination. No permanent eye injury was detected, but a persistent after-image prompted the researcher to return for a further examination 3 days later. On the second visit, the researcher's vision had improved, but it was suspected that photo-bleaching of the retinal pigment had occurred. No long-term impairment of the researcher's vision is expected, however further

ophthalmic examination will be carried out.

What did we learn?

During normal use, high powered lasers should be enclosed to prevent any harmful exposures. However, during maintenance or beam alignment work this may not always be possible. These operations are high risk, and as such further safeguards are required. These may include additional administrative controls or operating at reduced power, but the use of protective eyewear is mandatory; a requirement which was not complied with on this occasion. Protective eyewear is the final line of defence and its use in this instance would have prevented a potentially serious eye injury.

On the laser table in question, the characteristics and behaviour of the beam were thought to be well understood and no stray beams had been observed by the current research team. It was identified, however, that the presence of a stray beam had been observed from the same optical component in 2006. While action had been taken at the time to address the issue, the possibility of stray beams had not been communicated to the current research team.

Stray beams can occur from optics and other components on laser tables, therefore each time a laser is used, particularly during alignment procedures, a comprehensive survey to identify all stray beams or reflections is undertaken. Appropriate beam blocking or other measures must then be implemented. These details need to be included in the laser risk assessment and operational protocols to ensure they are fully understood by all personnel. As considerable knowledge and skill is required to complete the monitoring task effectively, it should be carried by researchers having received suitable training or instruction.

What actions need to be taken?

While a number of specific actions need to be taken by the laboratory in

question, there are points of a general nature that need to be acknowledged by all users of high-power lasers.

- When total laser enclosure is not possible, methods to reduce exposure risks during alignment or servicing must be considered as part of the risk assessment process. For example: aligning at a lower power, using co-alignment beams that are not hazardous or using remote viewing techniques (i.e. via a camera)
- When working with open-beam high power lasers, where other risk reduction techniques are not possible, protective eyewear is compulsory - experience or familiarity with a laser system does not allow any relaxation of this requirement.
- Monitoring for stray beams is an essential task, which must be carried out by skilled and experienced practitioners. Training is available for all laser users and practical laser safety training is currently available for researchers in the Faculty of Natural Sciences.
- Observations with safety implications must be recorded, shared and acted upon - details of stray beams and mitigation should be included in risk assessments and protocols to ensure communication to all relevant personnel.



Useful training videos for Laser Beam Alignment (Module 3) and Laser Safety Eyewear (Module 4) may be accessed via the College laser safety webpage.

www.imperial.ac.uk/safety/safety-by-topic/laboratory-safety/laser-safety

Learning and Development

Learning is a strategic necessity for organisations and those organisations learn through individuals. Safety training enables the College community to acquire skills, knowledge and together with experience enable individuals to become competent in the safety aspects of their work.

An important step is changing behaviour and improving safety culture. There is a renewed emphasis on Safety Leadership Training focused

at academics, principal investigators, senior managers and supervisors as leaders of the College community. This training is provided by Eversheds Sutherland Solicitors who specialise in the defence and prosecution of health and safety offences, and will focus on individual health and safety duties and responsibilities.



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If you have any comments, articles or suggestions for inclusion in the Newsletter, please contact the editor **Alison Church**
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www.imperial.ac.uk/staff-development/safety-training/safety-courses-/safety-leadership-training-

The Learning and Development Centre must find innovative ways of learning. As part of this renewal we are engaging in “creative destruction” teaching where old ways of learning are discarded. Learners want a more flexible, responsive and adaptive approach. Blended e-learning is forming a greater part of our

foundation courses which will improve accessibility, interaction and reporting. The e-learning is accessible to all College staff and students with an email address.

With the expansion of White City Campus and the move of Chemistry, the LDC will pivot more events there for the academic year including: Fire Prevention and Fire Safety at Work (practical) at Stadium House; Emergency First Aid at Work (EFAW) at iHub and Gas Safety at Hammersmith.

Improve your communication

The summer College Safety Forum noted that safety officers would benefit from presentation and communication skills to carry out their role. Many of these softer skills are explored as part of the LDC portfolio: Decision Making; Making Effective Presentations; Train the Trainer; Collaborative Working; Influencing and Negotiating Skills. All of these courses are designed to improve individual skills and confidence. Having attended or observed many of these courses we would recommend exploring these events.



www.imperial.ac.uk/staff-development/learning-and-development-centre/courses

Bunsen Burner wire gauzes that may contain asbestos

A recent HSE bulletin highlighted concerns about the use of asbestos Bunsen burner mats. This was prompted by a company accidentally importing some mats containing asbestos. The substance has been banned in the UK for this purpose since at least the early 1990s.

Although steps have been taken to prevent further supply by the so-far known suppliers, this will however have implications for College. Any gauzes that contain asbestos should not be used, and they must be safely disposed of as asbestos waste. As a precaution, if you are unclear as to what any gauze coating is made of then you should assume that it contains asbestos and follow the instructions below.

While there is a small chance you may have purchased some of the imported asbestos mats, it is more likely that it is the older ones that will be contaminated (pre 2000).

Should you or anyone within your respective sections come across any such mats, please contact us and the in-house asbestos team, Adams Environmental (s.burbeck@imperial.ac.uk) **immediately**.

A HSE spokesperson said:

“While we assess the overall risk of exposure to be low, we have taken swift action. We have ensured that both of the supply companies concerned immediately ceased supply of the gauze mats and are overseeing arrangements to contact affected customers and provide precautionary advice on how the mats should be disposed of safely.

We are working closely with Department for Education, education departments in Scotland and Wales as well as CLEAPSS (Consortium of Local Education Authorities for the Provision of Science Services). This will help us ensure that schools, colleges, local regulators, and others who may have supplied or purchased similar products are directed to our advice.

We are also investigating how these particular gauze mats came into circulation. Breaches of the restrictions on the supply of asbestos are taken very seriously by HSE.”



LEARNING FROM INCIDENTS

Learning from incidents is an essential element of safety management.

As such, we plan to make this subject a regular feature of future editions of Health & Safety Matters.

This will act as a means of publicising particular cases, and will attempt to focus on those issues that have College-wide implications

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