Safety Office Functions

- Mandate is guided by Policy # 34 and the Health, Safety and Environment Management System (HSEMS)
  - Provide consultation and support services on matters relating to environmental and occupational health and safety.
    - Laboratory Safety & Hazardous Waste
    - Incident and Emergency Management
    - Environmental and Occupational Health
    - Workers Compensation Claims Management
    - Workplace Violence Program
    - Training

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Health & Safety Responsibilities

- Internal Responsibility System (IRS)
- Occupational Health & Safety Act (OHSA) establishes duties for workplace parties
- HSEMS outlines which roles fulfill these duties in our governance structure
- Other safety legislation
  - Environmental
  - Nuclear, biohazardous materials
  - Dangerous goods
  - WSIB

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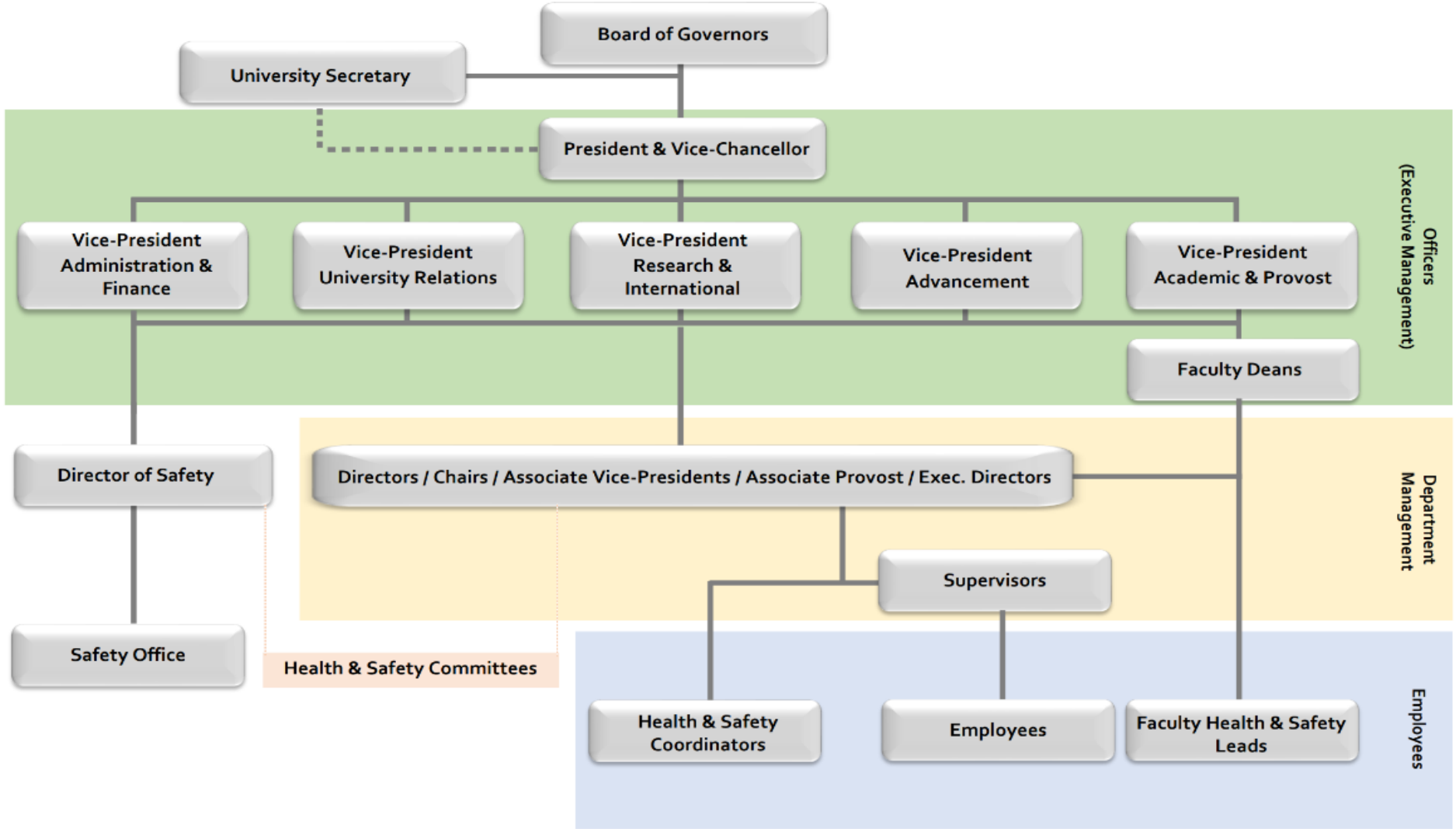
Effective Date: June 2024

Health Safety & Environment Management System Organogram



Integrated into the University's governance structure.

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HSEMS – Chair's Responsibilities

1. Appoint competent supervisors.
2. Assign a Health & Safety Coordinator (HSC) for the department.
3. Understand applicable health and safety legislation that applies to your department.
4. Implement measures to identify, assess and control risks, including risk assessment, standard operating procedures, workplace inspection, and incident reporting and investigation programs.
5. Ensure all incidents (including near miss and property damage) are recorded, investigated, and that corrective measures are implemented promptly and communicated to applicable stakeholders.
6. Take corrective action when you become aware of non-compliance or unresolved HSE risks. Escalate issues as necessary to your senior leader.
7. Maintain appropriate records, review annual HSE performance reports, and participate in periodic monitoring and auditing programs.

In a Nutshell - Due Diligence

- Due diligence is the level of judgement, care, prudence, determination, and activity that a person would reasonably be expected to do under particular circumstances.
- When applied to occupational health and safety, due diligence refers to the reasonable precautions taken by employers to prevent harm.
- This duty applies to all situations, including those not addressed specifically in legislation.
- "Due diligence" is important as a legal defence for a person charged under the OHSA. If charged, a defendant may be found not guilty if they can prove that due diligence was exercised.

(CCOHS, 2025)

1. Appoint competent supervisors.

A competent person is defined in the OHSA as someone who is:

- qualified because of knowledge, training and experience to organize the work and its performance
- is familiar with the OHSA and the regulations that apply to the work, and
- has knowledge of any potential or actual danger to health or safety in the workplace.

How does a supervisor demonstrate competence?

- Has completed all mandatory training
- Demonstrates ability to identify, assess and control hazards related to work they oversee
- Applies safe work procedures appropriately and corrects safety issues or non-conformance
- Supervises the work from a safety perspective
- Ensures workers are trained and competent

2. Assign a Health & Safety Coordinator (HSC) for the department.

Supporting your HSC:

- Act when needed:
  - Address non-compliance and ensure corrective actions are completed in a timely manner
  - Assist HSC to escalate issues to the Dean/Faculty Health & Safety Lead as necessary
- Connect regularly on compliance
  - Ensuring HSC has capacity and resources to fulfill responsibilities.
  - Keeping departmental Hazard Register current
  - Training and onboarding
  - Inspection frequency and effectiveness
  - Trends and identifying root causes

3. Understand applicable health and safety legislation that applies to your department.

- How can you stay on top of this?
  - Ensure you have a good understanding of the OHSA and the HSEMS – these are the fundamental principles that underly specific regulations, standards and programs.
  - Risk Assessment and Hazard register – hazards identified matched with applicable legislation (e.g. WHMIS)
  - Maintain an awareness of work occurring in the department - new equipment, processes, materials may create new obligations.
  - Subscribe to the Safety Office newsletter!
  - Contact the Safety Office if you have questions.

4. Implement measures to identify, assess and control risks, including risk assessment, standard operating procedures, workplace inspection, and incident reporting and investigation programs.
5. Ensure all incidents (including near miss and property damage) are recorded, investigated, and that corrective measures are implemented promptly and communicated to applicable stakeholders.

These foundational safety programs are applicable in all departments.

- Risk Assessment:
  - Departmental Hazard Register complete and up-to-date?
  - Establish expectations for supervisors to assess risk in processes and establish SOP's
- Workplace Inspections:
  - Ensure that departmental inspections identify gaps in supervisory inspections
- Incident reporting and Investigation
  - Review all incident reports and ensure root causes and corrective actions have been identified/implemented.
  - Communicate the corrective action to applicable employees (e.g. new procedure, hazard control, etc.)

6. Take corrective action when you become aware of non-compliance or unresolved HSE risks. Escalate issues as necessary to your senior leader.

- When is action required? What is required of you as the department head?
  - Incident
  - Inspection
  - Hazard Report
  - Change to regulatory requirement
- Role of HSC and Faculty Health & Safety Lead (FHSL)
- Role of the Dean

7. Maintain appropriate records, review annual HSE performance reports, and participate in periodic monitoring and auditing programs.

- Maintain records of incident reports and inspections
  - Including records of what corrective actions were taken and how they were communicated
- Ensure SOP's are maintained – store in shared location if possible
- Ensure worker orientation and hazard-specific training is documented (i.e. by supervisors)
- Document safety-related performance/corrective discussions or discipline.
- Outline where procedures, documents, etc. are stored in the Departmental Safety Manual.

❖ *'If it's not documented, it didn't happen!'*

Due Diligence - Proactive AND Reactive Steps
Plan, Do, Check, Act

Plan / Check

- Establish and communicate expectations
  - Supervisor risk assessments
  - SOP's
  - Supervisor inspections
- Worker orientation and training
- Identify, assess and control hazards
  - Department Hazard Register
- Monitor compliance

Do / Act

- Follow up when becoming aware of an issue
  - Ensure corrective actions get done
  - Control immediate risk until resolved
  - Document corrective actions
- Escalate issues to the Faculty Health & Safety Lead and/or Dean
- Worker communication

Resources

- Health, Safety & Environment Management System (HSEMS) landing page.
  - Department Head/Chairs Onboarding Manual
- Risk Assessment Program – risk assessment tools and resources
- HSE Training

- Contact the Safety Office – safety@uwaterloo.ca

Workplace Violence and Harassment

- Risk assessment and prevention – same rules apply under the OHSA
- Training obligations
- Actions/investigations following an incident/complaint
  - Source of violence – student/employee/other
  - Policy #34/Policy #71 – violence
  - Policy #33 – harassment/bullying
- Domestic violence – employer obligations
- Interim measures
- Corrective actions
- Violence risk assessment
  - Threat assessment protocol

Work-Related Injuries – WSIB Obligations

- Employer and worker obligations
  - Timely reporting
  - Participation
- Duty to accommodate and return to work
  - Obligation to offer modified work
  - Financial impact of work-related lost time injuries

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