

# **Protocol for colleagues to remove themselves from a situation of serious and imminent danger**

## **Background**

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations requires employers to make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the health and safety risks of their employees whilst they are at work. This assessment identifies the general risks existing at work, but also the foreseeable events that present employees with serious and imminent danger, for example the outbreak of a fire. The Regulations also require the University to publish a procedure for employees to follow if such an event occurs. We do this by using our management standards and risk assessments but the following will assist in providing a step by step approach.

This procedure provides employees with a way to respond to events on campus that they consider puts them at serious and imminent danger. It presumes that a full risk assessment of the work area has been undertaken, and that appropriate control measures are in place. If you have any concerns about the risk assessment and the control measures identified you should speak with your manager at the earliest opportunity. This procedure gives employees a way to remove themselves from serious and imminent danger if the control measures are not correctly implemented, or if an unforeseen circumstance arose that presented a serious and imminent danger.

## **The procedure**

1. If an employee considers that the environment they are in puts them at serious and imminent danger. A non-exhaustive list of examples include:
  - a. Dangerous equipment or machinery, e.g. unguarded and exposing dangerous parts.
  - b. An environment which has a potential risk of fire and or explosion
  - c. Potential release of harmful or dangerous substances such as asbestos and gas.
2. The employee should inform others in the location of their intention to leave including the reasons, where is it safe to do so. They can then leave their location, and retreat to a place of safety, either elsewhere in the building or outside.
  - a. If the employee is responsible for equipment in use that needs to be made safe before it can be left, they should follow standard emergency procedures for leaving this equipment.
  - b. All building and risk assessment evacuation procedures should be followed.
3. Once safe, the employee should inform their manager that they have left a situation where they felt at serious and imminent danger, giving details of the circumstances and the actions they took.

4. The manager should inform the Head of Unit and the Unit Safety Officer that the incident has occurred. They should also inform the Occupational Health & Safety Service.
5. The Head of Unit should communicate with the others affected by the incident to inform them of what measures are being taken. If the incident has impacted upon the delivery of teaching or provision of a service to students then alternative arrangements should be made to re-schedule.
6. Dependent on the circumstances, an investigation will be undertaken including the review of risk assessment and control measures. This will identify any further controls required and ensure such a situation does not occur again.

Provided that the employee has a reasonable belief that they were in serious and imminent danger, and follows the above process, there is no reason for management action to be taken.