

United Learning Health and Safety Policy Statement, Organisation and Arrangements for:



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UNITED LEARNING HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT, ORGANISATION AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR: 1

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. SCOPE | 5 |
| 2. UNITED COMMUNITIES CORE MISSION..... | 5 |

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT 7

ORGANISATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES 8

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. OVERVIEW | 8 |
| 2. TRUSTEES AND EXECUTIVE OFFICERS..... | 8 |
| 3. CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER..... | 8 |
| 4. DIRECTOR OF ESTATES | 8 |
| 5. THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITIES..... | 8 |
| 6. HEAD OF HEALTH AND SAFETY..... | 9 |
| 7. THE HEAD OF OPERATIONS | 9 |
| 8. SENIOR DEVELOPMENT LEAD | 10 |
| 9. FUNDRAISING AND DEVELOPMENT LEAD..... | 10 |
| 10. SENIOR YOUTH AND COMMUNITIES LEAD | 10 |
| 11. COMMUNITY HUB LEAD | 11 |
| 12. COMMUNITY HUB CO-ORDINATOR | 11 |
| 13. EMPLOYEES (AND VOLUNTEERS)..... | 11 |
| 14. EXECUTIVE BUSINESS MANAGERS (UNITED LEARNING SCHOOLS) | 13 |
| 15. HEAD TEACHERS/PRINCIPALS | 13 |

ARRANGEMENTS FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY 13

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. OVERVIEW | 13 |
| 2. ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS | 13 |
| 3. CONSULTATION | 13 |
| 4. COMMUNICATION | 14 |
| 5. DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT | 14 |
| 6. DEFECT REPORTING | 14 |
| 7. DRIVING FOR WORK | 14 |
| 8. EMERGENCY PLANNING | 14 |
| 9. EVENT MANAGEMENT | 14 |
| 10. FIRE SAFETY | 15 |
| 11. FIRST AID | 15 |
| 12. FOOD SAFETY | 15 |
| 13. HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES..... | 15 |
| 14. INSURANCE | 15 |
| 15. LONE WORKING AND VIOLENCE AT WORK | 15 |
| 16. MANUAL HANDLING..... | 16 |
| 17. MONITORING | 16 |
| 18. NEW AND EXPECTANT MOTHERS..... | 16 |
| 19. NOISE AT WORK | 16 |
| 20. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING | 16 |
| 21. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) | 16 |
| 22. QUERIES/SUPPORT SERVICES | 17 |
| 23. RISK ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT | 17 |
| 24. SAFE EQUIPMENT | 17 |
| 25. SAFEGUARDING/CHILD PROTECTION | 17 |
| 26. SAFE WORKING ENVIRONMENT | 18 |
| 27. SCHOOL/ HUB SECURITY | 18 |
| 28. TRAINING/COMPETENCE..... | 18 |
| 29. WORK AT HEIGHT..... | 18 |





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1. Scope

- This document is United Communities Health and Safety Policy. It is applicable to all United Communities activities undertaken by United Communities staff - including those on secondment from United Church Schools Trust or any other United Learning Group entity - and volunteers. This includes activities undertaken in settings owned or controlled by United Learning Ltd and its subsidiaries and those where United Communities staff and volunteers undertake activities on other persons premises.
- The purpose of this document is to address United Communities strategic risk relating to compliance with health and safety legislation, sector specific guidance and the principles of good governance, as follows:
 - Statutory duties with specific focus on matters covered by The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, its subsidiary regulations, and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
 - Sector guidance published by the HSE and the Charities commission.
 - And with reference to the principles outlined in BS ISO 45001 '*Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems*' (Note United Communities is not certified to 45001, but the principles of the standard help develop a framework for effective health and safety management).
- The objective of this policy is to ensure that all employees, at all levels, understand their responsibilities and United Communities expectations in relation to the management of health and safety of staff, volunteers, pupils, visitors, contractors etc.
- The delivery of an effective safety management system requires buy-in and commitment at all levels. It is expected that all those working on behalf of United communities will show commitment to good health and safety practice.
- This Policy comprises a Health and Safety Policy Statement, and details of United Communities responsibilities and arrangements for health and safety to demonstrate its commitment to the health, safety, and welfare of all those working on its behalf and anyone who could be affected by its activities.
- Under a Memorandum of Understanding United Communities will be supported by and adopts relevant codes of practice of United Learning and where its activities are on United Learning premises the United Learning Group Health and Safety Policy should be read in conjunction with this policy.

2. United Communities Core Mission

- United Communities' core mission is to support schools to be strong community anchor organisations that contribute to the development of safe, thriving, and healthy neighbourhoods where everyone feels supported and valued. We recognise that achieving this vision starts with a deep commitment to the well-being, safety, and health of both our community members and dedicated staff.
- United Communities is part of the United Learning Group of Charities, with its community hubs forming an integral part of the organisation. Due to the close collaboration between United



Learning and United Communities, and the shared staff across both, the board has committed to aligning its Health and Safety policy with that of United Learning. This ensures a consistent approach to practice across all sites. As a result, this Health and Safety policy mirrors the United Learning policy and applies to all United Communities employees and locations.



Health and Safety Policy Statement

United Communities recognises and accepts its responsibilities with regards health and safety and are committed to ensuring that our workplaces, facilities, and practices are safe and healthy for employees, community hub users, visitors—including contractors—and anyone else who may be affected by our operations.

To achieve this, United Communities is committed to:

- Providing and maintaining safe and healthy working conditions, equipment, and systems of work for all employees, volunteers, and stakeholders.
- Identifying and assessing workplace hazards, implementing effective control measures to reduce risk, and ensuring compliance with relevant health and safety legislation.
- Consulting with employees and representatives on matters affecting their health and safety to promote active participation and engagement.
- Providing appropriate training, instruction, and supervision to ensure employees are competent to carry out their roles safely.
- Regularly monitoring and reviewing health and safety performance, implementing improvements where necessary, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

United Communities recognises that within a local community hub context, the person most able to ensure that this policy is appropriately outworked is the Community Hub Lead and/or Principal of the linked school. Therefore, day-to-day responsibility for health and safety within each hub lies with local management, ensuring that all activities align with our overarching policies. At a central level, there is shared responsibility for health and safety, with oversight and guidance provided to ensure compliance across all hubs.

Health and safety responsibilities include drafting and reviewing policies, conducting monitoring and audit activities to assess compliance, investigating significant incidents, and regularly reporting on adherence to safety protocols. United Communities follows best practice guidance in developing and maintaining its health and safety management systems, ensuring robust risk management processes are in place.

United Communities operates a devolved model of operational control, allowing flexibility within each hub while ensuring compliance with core health and safety policies. Trustees acknowledge that this approach may create some variance in risk levels across different hubs. However, should any instance of non-compliance be identified, United Communities reserves the right to intervene as necessary to prevent unacceptable risks to individuals.

Sir Jon Coles
Chief Executive Officer

Dr Rania Marandos
Chair of United Communities



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Organisational Responsibilities

1. Overview

- This section details United Communities organisation of health and safety roles and responsibilities across all employee groups and for specific roles where relevant.
- This policy should be read in conjunction with United Learning Group Health and Safety Policy to understand its responsibilities with relations to their obligations and responsibilities.

2. Trustees and Executive Officers

- The **Trustees** of the **United Communities** working with United Learning under the memorandum of understanding recognise and accept their responsibility, for all United Communities employees and those seconded to United Communities, to ensure a safe place of work with adequate welfare facilities and work practices which are safe and healthy for employees, volunteers, pupils, and visitors, including anyone else who might be affected by its activities.
- The ultimate responsibility for health and safety at United Communities is vested in the Group Board. The Trustees and Executive Officers are responsible for ensuring that managers are aware of and fulfil their responsibilities for health and safety.
- The Trustees will hold the Chief Executive Officer and Executive Officers to account for their performance with the duties under this Policy.
- Trustees and Executive Officers will embody a positive health and safety culture in all their actions and decision-making processes.
- Across the wider Group, the Chief Financial Officer is the Executive Officer nominated as responsible for health and safety they will ensure appropriate Health and safety support, and competent advice is provided to United Communities.

3. Chief Financial Officer

- The Chief Financial Officer will:
- Ensure that United Communities has effective health and safety management systems in place and is fully supported in ensuring the health safety and welfare of its employees and anyone who could be affected by its activities.

4. Director of Estates

- The Director of Estates is responsible for the oversight of the group's estate (schools and central office) in which United Communities will predominantly operate, they will ensure United Learning buildings are in safe and suitable condition.

5. The Director of Communities

- The Director of Communities is responsible for the senior leadership of United Communities Charity. In relation to Health and safety they will:



- Ensure suitable health and safety management systems are in place which are regularly reviewed to ensure continual improvement.
- Ensure appropriate consultation on matters of health and safety health and safety within the Charity.
- Ensure so far as is reasonably practicable such information, instruction, training, and supervision as is necessary to ensure, to ensure the health, safety, and welfare at work of the charities, and wider groups employees who are seconded to the charity.
- Hold their managers to account regarding their United Communities health and safety performance.
- Ensure appropriate insurances are in place for Employers liability, public liability, professional indemnity, and transport as appropriate.

6. Head of Health and Safety

- United Learning's Head of Health and Safety reporting to the Chief Financial Officer, will support the development and implementation of United Communities health and safety management system (policies and procedures).
- Acting as the group's competent advisor on matters of health and safety they will provide support and advice to United Communities. They will:
 - Develop and publishing health and safety policies and codes of practice
 - Develop and implement systems and processes for the measurement and/or monitoring of health and safety performance within United Communities and the wider United Learning Group.
 - Investigating significant accidents or health and safety incidents at central office locations and schools relating to the activities of United Communities to prevent a recurrence and ensure lessons are learned.
 - Promoting a positive health and safety culture across all United Communities' operations.
 - Reporting to the Trustees, via the Chief Financial Officer, on the above or any current or emerging health and safety issues that may have a significant impact on the Group including United Communities.

7. The Head of Operations

- The Head of Operations will ensure that the day-to-day operations of United Communities are safe and without risks to health and safety. They will:
 - Ensure compliance with this policy and associated group codes of practice.
 - Ensure activities are properly planned and risk assessed and that the necessary controls and resources for safe implementation are available. This is to ensure safe systems of work and a safe working environment, so far as is reasonably practicable.
 - Ensure that Leads/ coordinators have the necessary competences to allow their health and safety duties to be competently discharged.



- Ensure all accidents and incidents are appropriately managed, recorded, reported, and investigated to prevent a recurrence and ensure lessons are learned.
- Undertake proactive and reactive monitoring of health and safety and review practice where required to ensure continual improvement.
- Develop new procedures for any new activities based on their risk profile.

8. Senior Development Lead

- The Senior Development Lead will:
- Ensure appropriate safety measures are in place prior to the establishment of any new hub which forms part of United Communities.
- Ensure appropriate communication, consultation, and cooperation with regards health and safety as first point of contact for schools and hubs in relation to United Communities activities.
- Ensure risks are accurately assessed and suitable controls and safe system of work implemented.
- Ensure appropriate instruction training, and supervision in relation to health and safety of those they line manage.
- Report any concerns in relation to health and safety to the Head of Operations, Director of Communities as appropriate where issues cannot be resolved locally.
- Have in place systems for accident and incident reporting and investigation at each Hub to ensure United communities abides by its statutory duties as applicable to its size and undertaking.

9. Fundraising and Development Lead

- The Senior Fundraising and Development Lead will ensure all steps are taken to ensure safe practice when undertaking fundraising activities.
- They will ensure that activities are properly risk assessed and evaluated to understand their impact on local communities and ensuring a positive impact on the health, safety and wellbeing of students, families, and the broader society and promote a sense of civic responsibility and strengthen social fabric.
- They will ensure effective event planning taking account of any health and safety needs and any additional needs of people who may be vulnerable by any protected characteristic to ensure where possible inclusion.
- They will ensure continual professional development to ensure practice is up to date and in line with national guidance.

10. Senior Youth and Communities Lead

- Senior Youth and Communities Leads are responsible for the strategic and operational leadership within a given region. They will:



- Provide leadership on matters of health and safety to those they line manage in line with this policy and the relevant Group codes of practice as appropriate.
- Ensure all community hubs within their remit are operated in a safe and sustainable manner by undertaking regular proactive and reactive monitoring and reviewing of practice and delivery of activities undertaken by the Hub.
- Ensure suitable and sufficient health and safety management systems and records in relation to health and safety are maintained to demonstrate duty of care.
- Ensure that all those working on behalf of United Communities within their remit are aware of the action to take in the event of emergencies, these may be fire evacuation or invacuation or lockdown for security reasons.

11. Community Hub Lead

- Community Hub Leads are responsible for the strategic and operational leadership of one community hub, including activity delivery and safety management. They will:
- Undertake appropriate due diligence for all community hub activities – including on those providing a service or activity for the community hub - to ensure that all activities are properly risk assessed as required and appropriate safety measures are in place.
- Undertake appropriate due diligence of any hub locations that are not owned or controlled by the United Learning Group.
- Ensure all responsibilities listed under the Community Hub Co-ordinator role are in place, and in the absence of a Community Hub Co-ordinator, assume responsibility for carrying them out.

12. Community Hub Co-ordinator

- Community Hub Co-ordinators will ensure:
- Appropriate planning and organisation of activities in relation to health and safety.
- Safe delivery of activities within the Hub
- Staff and volunteers supporting activities are given appropriate instruction training and supervision.
- Those undertaking activities are given safety information including any emergency procedures.
- Appropriate resources are available to deal with any accident injury or emergency situation.
- Appropriate health and safety management systems, checks and risk assessments are maintained to demonstrate duty of care.

13. Employees (and volunteers)

- All those working on behalf of United Communities will take reasonable care of the health and safety of themselves and of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions. This includes:



- Cooperating fully with their line manager or other responsible person on all matters pertaining to their health and safety at work.
- Not recklessly or intentionally interfering with, or misusing any equipment, safety devices etc that have been provided in the interests of health and safety at work.
- Reporting promptly, in the first instance to their line manager, any accident, injury, significant near miss, incident of violence and aggression or case of work-related ill health.
- Reporting to their line manager, any defect, hazard, damage or unsafe practices or other items that could give rise to an unsafe place of work or cause injury or ill health to others.
- Wearing any protective clothing or equipment and using any equipment that has been provided for their health and safety while at work.
- Observing safety rules, complying with this policy, the Group Health and Safety policy relating to the schools in which they work, group codes of practice, and adhering to safe working procedures at all times.
- Acquainting themselves, and complying with, the procedure to follow in case of a fire or other emergency.
- Challenging any unsafe acts or conditions that they see. If they feel that any task allocated to them is unsafe, they may stop work and raise their concerns with their line manager.
- Showing respect for fellow workers and managers by accepting constructive intervention in a positive manner when any member of staff, regardless of position, takes action to stop an unsafe act.



14. Executive Business Managers (United Learning schools)

(Refer to United Learning Group Policy for full list of responsibilities)

- Given that United Communities will operate from school premises, where there is an Executive Business Manager (EBM) in post, they will ensure schools within their remit in which United Community Hubs operate are safe and without risk to health and safety as per the United Learning Group Health and Safety Policy.

15. Head Teachers/Principals

(Refer to United Learning Group Policy for full list of responsibilities)

- Head Teacher / principals will ensure appropriate consultation, communication and co-operation between the school and Hub leaders to ensure the continued safe running of either the school or any community hub that operates on their site.

Arrangements for Health and Safety

1. Overview

- The arrangements for the implementation of this health and safety policy are outlined below. These should be read in conjunction with the United Learning Health and Safety Policy where appropriate.

2. Accidents and incidents

- ARMS is the Groups Accident Reporting and Management System. It is hosted on United Hub and serves as the group's de facto accident book. It is used for the recording of accidents, dangerous occurrences, and occupational diseases (matters covered by the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Occupational Diseases Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013).
- All employees have the ability to create records and registered superusers can monitor and report on their hubs data. Events of potential significance are automatically escalated to the Head of Health and Safety for consideration and reporting under RIDDOR if required.
- United Communities follows the guidance outlined in United Learning's *Accident Management – Code of Practice*.

3. Consultation

- United Communities undertakes to consult with its workforce on any matters that may affect their health and safety, through regular meetings with managers and safety representatives.
- United Communities follows the guidance outlined in United Learning's *Consultation (HS) – Code of Practice* as applicable.



4. Communication

- This policy provides all those working on behalf of United Communities with the information necessary to allow them to understand local arrangements for health and safety management and the expectations placed upon them with regards to their individual health and safety duties.
- These arrangements for health and safety are only effective if they are clearly communicated. To that end United Communities shares this policy with all staff at the beginning of each year, and again at any other time where a material change has occurred.

5. Display Screen Equipment

- For those employees identified as display screen equipment (DSE) users (those who use DSE for continuous periods of an hour or more), training on safe use to prevent musculoskeletal disorders has been provided and their workstations have been assessed.
- These assessments are reviewed at least every two years or sooner if there is reason to believe they are no longer valid.
- Records of these DSE assessments are held centrally.
- United Communities follows the guidance outlined in United Learning's *Display Screen Equipment – Code of Practice*

6. Defect Reporting

- United Communities staff will familiarise themselves with the defect reporting procedures within each location they operate to ensure a safe working environment.

7. Driving for Work

- Those who regularly drive on behalf of United Communities for work business or who transport pupils have their licences checked annually to ensure they are remaining suitable to drive.
- Staff are required to bring to the attention of their line manager any endorsements or restrictions placed on their licences that may affect their ability to perform these duties.
- United Communities follows the guidance outlined in United Learning's *Driving for Work – Code of Practice*.

8. Emergency Planning

- United Communities will have a business continuity plan in place to anticipate and mitigate the foreseeable risks of disruption that may affect its operations. Hubs that operate within Schools will follow their emergency plans when operating on their sites.

9. Event Management

- Where United Communities organises events, fairs, outdoor activities, they will ensure they are properly planned and managed to ensure they are safe and without risk to those managing them or those who attend.



10. Fire Safety

- United Communities staff will familiarise themselves with the fire safety arrangements within the schools and buildings in which they operate.
- A fire briefing will form part of the introduction to any activity to ensure persons on premises know the action to take in the event of a fire emergency.

11. First Aid

- A first aid needs assessment will be developed to ensure that appropriate resources are available in each United Communities Hub and staff are able to respond to first aid incidents in an appropriate manner at any time that the site is operational or staff are present, including outside of normal school hours where activities carry on beyond this.

12. Food Safety

- Any foods supplied by United Communities will be in line with food standards agency guidance and legislation. It will be appropriately labelled for any allergens to prevent untoward events and sourced from reputable suppliers.

13. Hazardous Substances

- All hazardous substances used during United Communities activities will be managed in accordance with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH). Namely, their risks are assessed and suitable safe working practices devised to support safe use.
- Where biological agents/ infections pose a risk to the health of those participating in events United Communities will follow guidance from the UKHSA with regards suitable infection prevention and control measures.

14. Insurance

- As part of the United Learning Group of Charities, United Communities is covered by the group's policies for employer's liability compulsory insurance (ELCI), public liability, buildings, contents, and vehicle insurance policy. Staff are insured for driving private vehicles for work purposes on an 'occasional use' basis.
- Further details on the group's insurance arrangements are available via United Hub and the Company Secretarial team.

15. Lone Working and Violence at Work

- In recognition of the risks presented from lone working and potential violence at work, all lone working will be risk assessed by United Communities to ensure appropriate risk controls are in place. It is not foreseen that a significant amount of lone working will be undertaken.
- Where determined as necessary by risk assessment, staff will be provided with additional information, instruction, and training to manage the risks associated with lone working.



16. Manual Handling

- United Communities recognises the risk of musculoskeletal disorders that can be caused by poorly managed manual handling activities. To manage this risk, all manual handling activities will be risk assessed, and suitable controls will be put in place to prevent injury.
- Staff will receive trained accordingly in safe manual handling practices.
- United Communities follows the guidance outlined in United Learning's *Manual Handling – Code of Practice*.

17. Monitoring

- Monitoring of health and safety performance is a foundation of an effective safety management system. It helps to highlight deficiencies before harm occurs and identify areas of potential improvement.
- In support of this objective, United Communities will undertake proactive and reactive health and safety monitoring activities which will be reviewed by its senior management.
- Monitoring will include but is not limited to audits, investigations, and data reviews to help monitor performance and ensure continual improvement.
- United Communities the guidance outlined in United Learning's *Monitoring (HS) – Code of Practice*.

18. New and Expectant Mothers

- New and expectant mothers are vulnerable to risks to their health and safety that require specific consideration under health and safety law. The work of United communities is relatively low risk, but this does not mean that it is risk-free.
- Any employee disclosing to their line manager that they are a new or expectant mother will receive a specific risk assessment that seeks to reduce their risk exposure, where possible.
- United Communities follows the guidance outlined in United Learning's *New and Expectant Mothers – Code of Practice*.

19. Noise at work

- To manage the risks from exposure to Noise at work i.e. when carrying out garden activities United Communities will follow the guidance in United Learnings *Noise at work – Code of Practice*

20. Occupational Health and Wellbeing

- All United Communities and seconded United Learning employees have access to occupational health and wellbeing services through their local HR team. Further details on this provision are available from local HR Advisors and on United Hub.



21. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- United Communities will ensure risk assessments are undertaken to determine the need for personal protective equipment as part of activities planning.
- PPE will be selected in relation to specific risks, it will be suitable for use and the wearer will be trained in its safe use, maintenance, cleaning/replacement, and storage as appropriate.
- United Communities follows United Learnings Personal Protective Equipment – Code of Practice.

22. Queries/Support Services

- Where employees have queries regarding health and safety requirements or arrangements, the relevant United Learning Codes of Practice should be reviewed in the first instance and if the answer cannot be found there, the query directed to the line manager.
- If the line manager is not able to resolve the query and it relates to the school in which the United Communities hub operates, this should be escalated to the school's Health and Safety Coordinator, or cluster health and safety lead, as applicable.
- Where it is not possible to resolve queries locally, these can be referred to the Head of Health and Safety for advice and support.

23. Risk Assessment and Risk Management

- Risk assessment is central to effective risk management and forms a cornerstone of how United communities ensures the safety and health of staff, students, and others.
- Risk assessments will be carried out by those in control of any given activity, as they are the person(s) who understand the task best and how to carry it out safely.
- Alongside this schools in which United Communities operate will have 'whole school' risk assessments, to ensure activities are properly and adequately managed.
- Risk assessments are reviewed at least every two years, or sooner if there is reason to believe they are no longer valid.
- United Communities follows the guidance outlined in United Learning's *Risk Management (HS)* – Code of Practice.

24. Safe Equipment

- United Communities will ensure their equipment is suitable for the task, maintained in safe working order and used in accordance with manufacturers guidance. This includes equipment checks and portable appliance testing as required.

25. Safeguarding/Child Protection

- Safeguarding and child protection arrangements for United communities and at the schools in which they operate at are the subject of a dedicated policy with support and monitoring provided by United Learning's Safeguarding team.



- The Safeguarding Lead for United Learning will act as United Communities Designated Safeguarding Lead.

26. Safe Working Environment

- United Communities will ensure consultation and co-operation with United Learning schools in which they operate who are responsible for ensuring the premises is safe.
- They will at all times ensure their activities follow relevant codes of practice and do not introduce risk into schools which could affect the safety of others or result in damage to the premises.

27. School/ Hub Security

- Where applicable to United Communities activities they will work with each school and buildings manager in which they operate to ensure appropriate security measures are in place during United Communities activities.
- Each school has a school security policy and security arrangements are periodically tested to ensure they remain effective.

28. Training/Competence

- Having a competent workforce is essential to safe operation and effective delivery of United Communities activities.
- United Communities staff undergo a comprehensive induction process to ensure they understand its policies and procedures.
- Line managers identify and arrange additional training requirements that are necessary for the role and records of staff competencies are maintained.
- Ongoing competence is reviewed at appraisal stage and staff are encouraged to identify training opportunities that may help to increase or reinforce their competences.
- Records of induction and further training are held centrally by United Communities.
- United Communities follows the guidance outlined in United Learning's *Training – Code of Practice*.

29. Work at Height

- Falls from height often have serious consequences and therefore work at height needs to be robustly controlled.
- Work at height is only carried out where absolutely necessary and only following risk assessment, using suitable equipment and by suitably trained staff.
- For general office use, small step stools/step ladders have been provided. Staff must not use desks or chairs to carry out work at height of any duration.
- United Communities follows the guidance outlined in United Learning's *Work at Height – Code of Practice*.



30. Work-Related Stress

- Work-related Stress within United Communities will be prevented where reasonably practicable.
- Risk Assessments will be implemented where necessary and kept under review. Action taken in line with the guidance outlined in United Learning's '*Work-Related Stress – Code of Practice.*'
- Support for those suffering from stress is available from the United Learning Group HR Advisors and wider HR team, including occupational health where necessary.

