

# Our Health & Safety Policy



Tower Point, HQ 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, 44 North Road, Brighton BN1 1YR

<b>Policy Owner:</b> Naomi da Costa	<b>Policy Administrator:</b> Alice Turner	<b>Version 10:</b> 22/09/2021	1
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## Policy Authorisation

This document is authorised by Equity's Head of People and Health and Safety, Naomi da Costa on behalf of the Board. This document is administered by the People Advisor.

## Policy Issue Control

This document has immediate effect and supersedes all previous versions of the Health & Safety Policy. Our Policy applies to Equity Inspiring Learning Ltd.

## Policy Review

In conjunction with the Board, the Director of People will undertake a holistic review of the Policy on an annual basis. If no changes to the Policy document are necessary, it has validity for two years from the date of authorisation.



**Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021**  
**Nicholas Goodwin, Director**

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## Policy Statement

Equity is committed to industry leadership in relation to our health and safety practices for the benefit of all customers, employees and representatives working on our behalf.

As an active member of the School Travel Forum, Equity ensures it meets or exceeds standards set down by their Codes of Practice through which it maintains its commitment to the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge accreditation.

In particular, Equity fully understands it has a responsibility to protect young people's welfare and safety. As a result, due care and attention is given to risk assessment of our adventurous activities and the safeguarding aspect of our trips. Our Safeguarding Policy and Procedure is published separately on our website.

The Board believes that the effective management of health and safety in the workplace is a shared responsibility between all employees with leadership support.

To this end, Equity encourages a proactive health and safety culture by providing the necessary training, guidance, communications and support to enable employees at all levels in the organisation to be effective stakeholders in their own and our customers' safety and to escalate any concerns at the earliest opportunity.

The aims of Equity's Health and Safety Policy and Procedures are to:

- Establish and apply best practice standards of health and safety in partnership with the School Travel Forum to promote welfare and safety of our customers, employees and representatives as a matter of priority.
- Effectively identify, assess and communicate or mitigate risks to prevent harm to our customers, people or visitors and secondly to property, animals and the environment through clear guidelines, processes and standards.
- Demonstrate our commitment to health and safety (and safeguarding) through clearly communicated strategies and goals with regular Board reporting.
- Ensure a planned and systematic approach to the management of health, safety and welfare arrangements with good feedback mechanisms, regular training and documented procedures to embed duty of care into our ways of working.

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To achieve the above aims, Equity will:

- Prepare and implement procedures and arrangements to deal with health and safety concerns, near misses, accidents, illness, injuries and emergency situations.
- Monitor our legal requirements and obligations, taking these into account when establishing, implementing, maintaining and continually improving our health and safety management systems including regular desktop and onsite audits as recommended by the School Travel Forum.
- Safeguard children by following stringent Safeguarding practices. *See the Equity Safeguarding Policy and Procedure on our website for further details.*
- Adequately communicate and put in controls for known risks for the benefit of others health, safety and welfare.
- Inform employees of their personal responsibility towards their own and others health and safety responsibilities and consult with them regarding any significant changes to the health, safety and welfare arrangements
- Ensure all our people receive suitable and sufficient training so that they have the necessary knowledge, competence and skills to fulfil their duties without risk to their health and safety.
- Provide accurate, clear jargon free information to support the delivery of our operations safely and make it easily accessible to those who need it.
- Ensure we accurately report all significant incidents, ill health and accidents to comply with RIDDOR as well as review of all our controls and risks for future preventative measures.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Our health and safety policies, procedures, related internal communications and training are led by Naomi da Costa, Head of People and Health and Safety in collaboration with Roland Andersen our Head of Worldwide Operations who is responsible for the implementation of our health and safety practices on the ground.

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## Board of Directors

The Board interrogate and scrutinize our practices to ensure appropriate risk management and protection of our excellent reputation when it comes to the health, safety and welfare of our customers, employees and third parties working on our behalf.

## Management

Our Head of Worldwide Operations and Overseas Operations Manager work collaboratively with the Operational Delivery Manager to ensure that all appropriate health and safety procedures are followed by their respective team members. It is also their responsibility to ensure that essential information is available to the Account Management and Customer Experience teams.

## Employees

All employees always have a responsibility for acting safely and responsibly in the course of their duties at work and for following safe procedures as communicated by management.

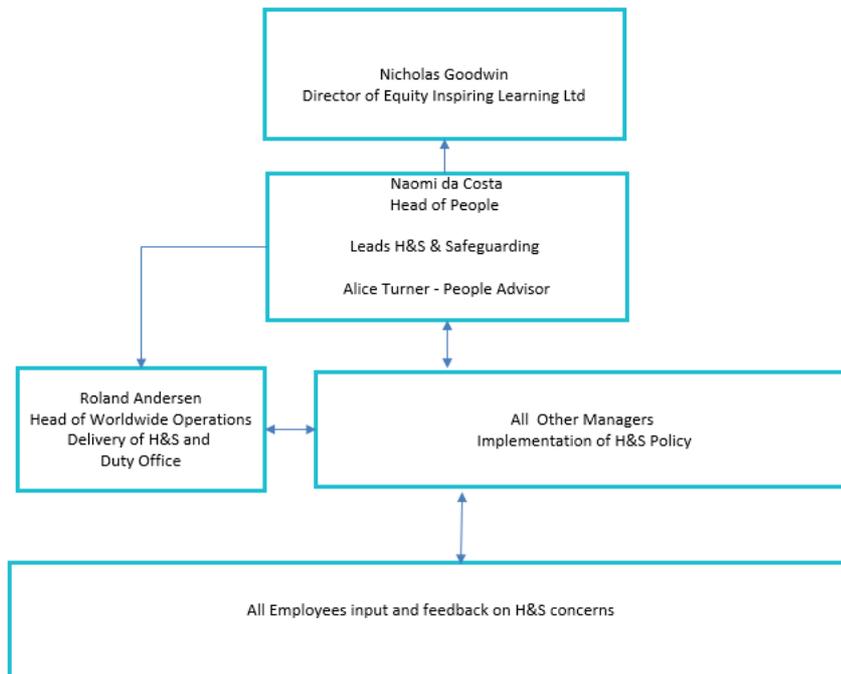
## Technically Competent Person(s)

Our People Director and Head of Worldwide Operations are both technically competent to set and implement our Health and Safety standards. They will both collaborate with other technical and competent persons both internally and externally to make appropriate policy and technical decisions and to advise the business and Board Directors accordingly.

Other competent persons will be regularly trained and assessed to be considered competent to carry out one or more specialist health and safety duties i.e. accommodation and coach auditing.

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## Organisation of Health and Safety



## Monitoring, Audits & Review of Practices

We will use the outcomes from significant incidents, site inspections, internal and external checks, inspections/audits and feedback from customers to monitor the effectiveness of our Health and Safety arrangements and where necessary / appropriate, the Director of People together with the Head of Worldwide Operations will review and improve our procedures, communications or training.

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# Equity Health and Safety Management Procedures

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# Health and Safety Management Systems

## Accident & Incident Reporting

Equity has case specific accident/incident reporting procedures in place for all UK and overseas operations.

All significant incidents in relation to any of our operations are reported and recorded whether it impacts our customers, people or representatives acting on our behalf.

All minor accidents or significant incidents are reported via an online form through the main website and training is given to all people and representatives on both the importance of completing this form promptly as well as key information required. Any updates are sent as appropriate to the incident via the same webform. Records of internal fire evacuations or drills of our Head Office are also logged via this method.

All serious accidents or major incidents are escalated to the Head of Delivery as detailed by our Major Incident Management Procedures known internally as our 'Grab Guide' and key documentation will be completed by a member of the crisis team as appropriate to the situation to document any key decisions made.

All incidents are given a classification from 1 to 4 with 1 being the most serious and 4 being the least for reporting purposes.

Where appropriate, incidents may be investigated further and/or used to support or verify insurance claims.

A formal review and reporting of all incidents is carried out monthly by the Director of People, and this information is reported to the Board quarterly.

## Auditing Procedures

Equity ensures that all relevant suppliers are audited and signed off as suitable by a competent qualified auditor prior to use and reviewed in line with the

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recommended time periods or significant changes in line with the School Travel Forum's Code of Practice as set out in the Member's Handbook.

## **Control of Contagious Illnesses including Covid 19**

Equity will take active steps to work with suppliers to ensure the right precautions are carried out in accordance with any regulatory, local, travel authority or medical guidance and to keep our customers informed of how they can support their groups health and welfare.

Further up to date guidance for our customers is available in our published guide for customers 'Health and Safety; Essential travel Information for your Equity Trip' available from our website.

## **Control of Visitors and Work Experience**

Equity has a defined sign in procedure which include communications with regards to fire evacuation and any other measures. Visitors to our premises will be managed whilst on our property.

There is a specific procedure for short-term Work Experience persons, who would either be under the care of a designated Manager who will give them an induction including a health and safety briefing.

## **COSHH – Control of Substances Hazardous to Health**

There are very few substances present that require a Risk Assessment for their use. In the case of lithium-ion laptop batteries and printer toner cartridges, IT are tasked with their management and any concerns should be escalated to them.

## **Health and Safety Information and Emergency Contacts**

Equity proactively communicates health and safety information to our customers, people and representatives working on our behalf.

For the wellbeing and safety of all our customers and people, we request they provide emergency contacts in event of any crisis or incident.

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We have tailored up to date communications for our customers *Health and Safety: Essential Travel Information for your Equity Trip* which is available on our website.

We will normally provide points of contact for all those travelling with us including how to contact our Duty Officer in the event of an out of hours emergency.

## Display Screen Equipment

All people working at a screen are provided with information, instruction and training as part of their induction which includes a mandatory self-assessment form. We carry out additional risk assessments for those home or hybrid working.

## Driving and Use of Vehicles

All UK and overseas rental vehicles are sourced through reliable and creditable companies. All vehicles are kitted out in accordance with the national requirements of the countries and relative to the environment they will operate in.

All our employees and representatives working on our behalf must adhere to the following basic safe system of work as follows: -

- Carry out a vehicle pre-use check and familiarize themselves with the controls
- Take all necessary steps to drive safely (seat belts etc.).
- Not drive whilst on a mobile phone.
- Abide by driving rules and regulations respective country including speed limits.
- Never to drive if too tired and when taking drives of more than 2 hours to ensure regular rest breaks.
- To advise their manager if they cannot drive as a result of any health issues, or as a result of being on any prescribed medication that may cause drowsiness or impact driving safely.

## Electrical Safety

The Head of People ensures that there are the appropriate safety checks carried out on electrics on Equity premises and that any concerns are reported and acted upon swiftly.

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## Emergency Evacuation Procedures

In the event of needing to leave any Equity premises because of an emergency situation, such as a gas leak or presence of a chemical / biological hazard, the Fire Evacuation Procedures for the building should be employed.

## Pregnant/Nursing employees

Expectant, new and nursing employees are subject to a bespoke Risk Assessment. Depending on the evaluation of the risks and their job role, it may be appropriate to agree amended duties.

## Fire Safety

Risk assessments to evaluate and assess fire prevention and evacuation safety is a core part of our audit procedures for all accommodation used by Equity. Guidance for our customers is available within the document *Health and Safety: Essential Travel Information for your Equity Trip* available from our website.

Equity has qualified (volunteer) employees to act as workplace Fire Marshals. The numbers of Fire Marshals appointed has been led by general guidance, based on number of employees, and cover for sickness and holiday absence however would normally be 2 people at any time.

A Fire Safety Risk Assessment is in place for the Brighton office to ensure best practice standards are regularly reviewed and maintained. Fire evacuation routes are in place and fire evacuation procedures and roll call lists are regularly kept up to date.

All fire equipment within our demise is tested and maintained including emergency lighting and fire extinguishers. Tests of our fire alarm are carried out weekly and practice drills take place at least annually.

## First Aid

Equity has appointed suitably qualified (volunteer) employees to support with any immediate first aid needs.

## General Facilities

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Equity actively promotes excellent hygiene and other measures to support a safe, secure and pleasant environment for its people as well as to promote a culture where concerns and feedback are welcomed for continuous improvement.

We operate a clear desk policy and it is requested that all our people take care of their immediate environment and alert us to any risks including spillages or trip hazards.

## **Harassment or ‘Bullying’**

Harassment or bullying behaviour in the workplace is unacceptable to Equity. When evident or reported it will be dealt with by the relevant member of the Exec team, supported by the Head of People in line with our Harassment Policy.

Although highly unusual, in the event of any situation where customer behavior is in any way disrespectful or threatening it will be dealt with by invoking the provisions of our booking Terms and Conditions with support/advice from ABTA or the relevant authorities.

## **Trained Auditors and Risk Assessments**

Equity ensures that sufficient numbers of trained and qualified health and safety auditors in accordance with the procedures and requirements on members set out in the School Travel Forum Code of Practice.

From time to time, and where particular specialist expertise is required, the services of third party Technical Advisor is used to assist with the hazard identification and Risk Assessment.

Whilst we provide information for customers to evaluate risks, it is their responsibility to carry out a risk assessment of their overall trip as this must be carried out in the context of their knowledge of those travelling.

## **Legionella Management Control**

The management company of our Brighton office makes any arrangements for water safety issuing us with the relevant certificate.

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## Lift Safety

The Head of People will work with the landlord of our Brighton office to ensure lift tests and inspections are taking place in accordance with the requirements set out in the LOLER Regulations (minimum 6 monthly inspection for equipment lifting a human load) and that all appropriate lift safety signage is displayed including a contact for our landlord available in our emergency contacts.

Party Leader guidance on the use of Lifts in their accommodation is available in *Health and Safety: Essential Travel Information for your Equity Trip*.

## Lone Working

Equity allows lone working in the Brighton office because of our need to contact parties in other time zones and manage serious incidents 24/7. Therefore, Equity ensures that lone worker arrangements are in place including accessible emergency contacts.

## Manual Handling

No manual handling should be required by those working in our Brighton office. Where employees/representatives working on our behalf overseas are managing/lifting equipment such as Ski's, we will check adequate training, support and equipment has been given for this task.

## Personal Protective Equipment

Face masks and any appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will be provided to employees at no cost to them where this mandatory or in situations where it is highly advisable.

We will keep our customers informed on any PPE required or advisable to reduce the spread of infection.

## Stress Management

Equity recognises that work-related stress is a workplace hazard and therefore needs to be reduced where possible and significant identifiable trigger factors (causes) risk

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assessed and control measures put in place. We therefore have specific stress policy including a procedure for reporting. Further information is available on our People portal, BambooHR.

## Training

Equity provides role specific training to all our people and overseas representatives ensuring they receive specialist training and qualifications required to perform their roles safely and effectively.

## Young Persons at Work

We do not employ people under the age of 18 however on occasions do support work experience students who may be younger. Those carrying out work experience at our offices will normally be subject to a Risk Assessment prior to them entering the workplace and will be closely supervised for the duration of their placement.

## Monitoring and Continuous Improvement of Equity's Practices

We seek feedback on as well as actively monitor the effectiveness of our Health and Safety procedures with the aim of continuously improving communications, guidance and training. Feedback can be given at any time to [hs@equity.co.uk](mailto:hs@equity.co.uk).

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