Code of Safe Working Practice for Contractors
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1 Introduction & Legislation

Although contractors have their own responsibilities under health and safety legislation, those who employ contractors also have a responsibility for their contractors' health and safety since in most cases it is the employer who controls the workplace and in many cases dictate the working practices.

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act, etc 1974 (HASAW), employers have a duty under Section 3 to conduct their undertaking in such a way as to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of those not in their employment. This is particularly relevant to the management of contractors.

The management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 carry several specific requirements in relation to an employer’s duty towards contractors, these include the duty to:

- Carry out an assessment of the risks to the health and safety of their own employees and persons not in their employment such as contractors;
- Ensure co-operation with other employers, who have employees working in the same premises, on health and safety arrangements;
- Supply any necessary health and safety information to the employers of any visiting employees;
- Inform any such employees of any qualifications or skills necessary for them to carry out their work safely;
- Inform contractors of any health surveillance arrangements and to inform any employment agency of any qualifications or skills necessary for that employment agencies staff to carry out their work safely, and of any specific health and safety features of the work to be carried out.

For contractors undertaking construction work, in addition to the general duties described above, there are specific duties contained in the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM 2015) which apply to all construction projects and place specific duties on contractors.

Lews Castle College is committed to ensuring the health and safety of staff, students, visitors and contractors by taking all reasonably practicable steps to provide and maintain safe working conditions, equipment and systems of work, detailed more fully in the College Health & Safety Policy.

This Code of Practice (COP) details those procedures relative to College activities with which contractors and sub-contractors must comply when operating on its premises. It provides a brief summary of how the College manages its health and safety and gives advice and information on how to deal with a range of hazards.

Where the term “operative” appears in the COP, it means all contractors’ personnel.

If further clarification on the following is required, contact should be made with the Estates and Maintenance Section or the Health and Safety Adviser.
2 Your Responsibilities for Health and Safety

It is important that all operatives make every effort to avoid risks to themselves and to others by acting in a safe and responsible manner.

In particular you must:

- follow the relevant College health and safety procedures, systems of work and management instructions;
- make yourself aware of the contents of this COP;
- report any hazards and unsafe conditions to your supervisor or the College Estates and Maintenance Section and College Health and Safety Adviser;
- follow instructions and guidance relating to the wearing of personal protective equipment, manual handling, using chemicals and operating electrical equipment;
- know and carry out procedures relating to the emergency evacuation of the College, safe working and first aid.

3 Contractors

Lews Castle College defines a contractor as an individual or company who is not an employee of College, but who has been commissioned on a temporary basis to carry out a set task, whether on a formal contract basis or not.

Complying with the procedures in this COP does not negate any legal or contractual obligations or any requirements to provide relevant safety documentation relative to the work they are undertaking. The contractor is responsible for making sure that all subcontractors and their employees are conversant with this COP.

If a contractor or sub-contractor breaches or fails to comply with any of these rules, the College may require them to leave the site and ultimately terminate the contract.

Although this code refers to specific existing acts, regulations and British Standards, contractors will also have to comply with all current acts, regulations and British Standards current at the date of tender or instruction.

4 Starting Work

The Estates and Maintenance Section and Health and Safety Adviser must be informed before work starts on each contract or work order.

All operatives must receive a Contractor's Induction Programme when first attending to work on College premises, the Health and Safety Adviser or College Estates and Maintenance Section will provide this.

Prior to commencing any work regardless of its duration, all contractors' operatives, must report to Reception to sign in and obtain a Contractor's identity badge. This badge must be worn at all times and returned upon leaving the site.

The contractor must provide full and adequate site supervision during the progress of the work and keep a competent and authorised person available at all times during work processes.
Where the works are subject to the requirements of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations, 2015, the CDM Principal Designer appointed by the employer will notify the local office of the Health and Safety Executive as appropriate.

5 Risk Assessment

Although contractors have their own responsibilities under health and safety legislation, those who employ contractors also have a responsibility for their contractor’s health and safety since in most cases it is the employer who controls the workplace and in many cases dictate the working practices.

Construction activities subject to the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 require risk assessment to be carried out under separate arrangements.

The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 carry several specific requirements in relation to an employer’s duty towards contractors, these include a duty to:

• Carry out an assessment of the risks to the health and safety of their own employees and persons not in their employment, including contractors;
• Ensure co-operation with other employers, who have employees working in the same premises, on health and safety arrangements;
• Supply any necessary health and safety information to the employers of any visiting employees;
• Inform any such employees of any qualifications or skills necessary for them to carry out their work safely;
• Inform contractors of any health surveillance arrangements;
• Inform any employment agency of any qualifications or skills necessary for that employment agency’s staff to carry out their work safely, and of any specific health and safety features of the work to be carried out.

In order for Lews Castle College to comply with these requirements it is essential that all contractors identify all activities and processes requiring risk assessments and submit suitable and sufficient risk assessments prior to the commencement of all works.

6 Permit to Work

In the case of especially hazardous work, or where operations have to be especially co-ordinated with those of College activities to ensure safety, the work will need to be governed by a formal “permit to work” system. These permits allow safe access to restricted areas.

Please refer to the Lews Castle College Permit to Work Policy.

Only the Estates and Maintenance Section will issue permits to work. Except for Term Contractors, permits to work will be issued on a job by job basis. Term Contractors who have received the Site Safety Induction and signed the Permit to Work declaration will be granted a one year Permit covering all operations within their trade specialisation. Work must not start until all relevant personnel have completed and signed the College Induction Record.
Examples of the types of work that require permits to work before starting:

- hot/flame work (see section 17);
- electrical isolation;
- confined spaces;
- asbestos;
- fume cupboards;
- overhead work;
- work at height.

This list is not exhaustive. Operatives must obtain permission for any work that will create special hazards and may require special precautions.

7 Permit to Work Procedure

The Estates and Maintenance Section issues permits to work. If you need a permit, you should arrange this before you start work. Please give at least 5 working days notice.

Operatives, in conjunction with the Estates and Maintenance Section, must assess any potential hazards of the work and detail the precautions they intend taking to minimise any risk.

No work may start until all documents have been completed and signed by all relevant personnel.

Relevant personnel will receive a copy of any permit to work issued.

During the work, contractors must make sure they display clearly relevant safety signage.

8 Fire/Emergency Procedures

Using flame or applying heat (as in welding or burning) is prohibited in all areas of College. Operatives must seek appropriate permits to work for these activities.

When working in the vicinity of smoke sensors on activities that may cause them to activate, for example because of smoke or dust, the operative must arrange temporary isolation of the fire alarm zone and/or protect the detectors with suitable covers – this must be approved by the Estates and Maintenance Section.

Any temporary protection must be removed immediately on completion of the operation and at the end of each working day.

The College provides fire fighting equipment suitable for hazards normally found in a given area. If contractor's work introduces unusual fire hazards into an area, they will be responsible for providing the appropriate type of fire fighting equipment and should consult the Estates and Maintenance Section before starting the work. All operatives must be conversant with the use of such equipment.

Smoking is prohibited in or adjacent to any College buildings and only permitted within the one designated smoking area located at east end of Block C.
When arriving on site all operatives should make themselves aware of:

- the nearest means of escape in case of fire;
- the location, type and method of operation of the fire fighting equipment;
- the location, type and method of operation of the nearest fire alarm;
- the procedure they should follow if there is a fire or the fire alarm goes off.

Notices are displayed prominently in all areas and at suitable vantage points within the College to show fire or emergency procedures.

All operatives must obey emergency signals while on College premises. Following evacuation on an alarm signal, the contractors should identify themselves and report to the appropriate member of staff in charge.

Fire alarms are tested at Lews Castle College as follows:

- An Contan (Creche) Lews Castle College, Stornoway – no set time;
- Lews Castle College, Stornoway – Tuesday 08.45am;
- Lews Castle College, Benbecula – no set time;
- Lews Castle College, Barra – no set time.

During test, the fire alarm runs for approximately 30 seconds.

The fire alarm evacuation signal is a strident continuous siren.

**What to do if there is a fire or emergency**

You must familiarise yourself with the fire action instructions found on noticeboards and at each fire alarm call point. In particular, check the green and white directional arrows to the fire exits from your place of work. The fire alarm evacuation signal is a continuous alarm siren.

**If you discover a fire:**

- Immediately operate nearest alarm call point;
- Follow arrows to nearest escape exit;
- Do not use lifts;
- Contact the Person in Charge at the assembly point and tell them that you raised the alarm;
- Remain at the assembly point beside the Person in Charge in case they need further details.

**On hearing the alarm:**

- Leave the area immediately making sure doors are closed and unlocked;
- Follow arrows to nearest escape exit;
- Do not use lifts;
- Proceed to designated assembly points – contractors who have signed in at Reception must report to Assembly Point 2 (LCC Stornoway).
9 Accidents and Dangerous Occurrences

All contractors should be aware of the requirements of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013.

While contractors are responsible for recording and reporting to the HSE any injuries to their own employees and dangerous occurrences arising from the contracted work, they must also report details of such incidents to the College Health and Safety Adviser.

An LCC Accident Report Form must be completed and returned to the Health and Safety Adviser before the end of that working day.

What to do in the event of an illness or injury

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and First Aid at Work Regulations 1981, contractors are required to provide suitable first aid facilities for their employees.

However, in the event of any illness or injury, you can contact our trained First Aiders by using any internal telephone.

A list of First Aiders can be found on notice boards throughout College buildings. Reception will also provide this information.

Give the following information:

- Location of the injured or ill person (Building and room number);
- Details of any injury or illness (for example, faint, chest pain, broken bone);
- Extension number from which the call is being made and name of caller. The person making the request must remain with the casualty until assistance arrives;
- Inform Reception if the emergency services have been summoned.

10 Access to Roof Areas

Contracted operatives must inform the Estates and Maintenance Section before accessing any roof areas. A permit to work on roofs must be obtained prior to the commencement of any work.

11 Building Operations

All external and internal working/storage areas must be properly fenced/barriered or boarded off.

Operatives must erect appropriate signage indicating alternative fire escape routes if the works affect fire corridors. In consultation with the Estates & Maintenance Section, contractors must agree all aspects of fencing/protection and alternative routes in advance.

They must agree to a safe system of work before starting work.

12 Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

It is the duty of the contractor to complete a COSHH Assessment for any hazardous substance they bring onto the premises. They must give this assessment to the College Health and Safety Adviser.
13 Demolition

Demolition work is notifiable to the Health and Safety Executive under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations, 2015. This will be the responsibility of the CDM Principal Designer.

All demolition work must conform to requirements of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations, 2015.

Contractors must fence off all demolition sites, or take other steps to prevent people coming near or warn them that the work is dangerous. Special precautions will apply if the demolition involves handling any materials suspected of containing asbestos.

The operatives must make sure that they store any materials and debris in a proper manner to prevent floor overloading.

14 Disposal of Waste

Operatives are responsible for properly disposing of all waste they have created during their work. In particular, contractors must not deposit any chemicals, oil or other waste materials into drains on College premises.

Contractors must not use College skips or bins for the disposal of contractors waste and must provide their own means of disposal.

They must remove all building materials and waste from College premises at the end of the contract (subject to any contractual agreement to the contrary). Contractors should bear in mind the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the Control of Pollution Act 1974, the Deposit of Poisonous Wastes Act 1972 and Regulations made under these Acts.

Contractors should not put waste skips anywhere on College grounds without prior consultation with the Estates and Maintenance Section who will determine where contractors can site their own skips.

All skips and bins must be located at 10 METRES away from any buildings.

Fire exit doors, corridors and staircases must be kept free of obstructions at all times. Rubbish or debris must not be deposited in these areas.

15 Electricity

Contractors must have a permit to work for any electrical isolation work.

Portable electrical tools and equipment must be efficiently earthed or double insulated. Wherever possible, low voltage equipment incorporating an isolating transformer or an earth monitoring device is recommended.

Attention is drawn to the provisions of the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989, especially relating to the condition and maintenance of portable power tools.

Anyone carrying out work on or associated with an electrical system must do so in strict accordance with the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989. Anyone working on electrical equipment or systems must be competent to do so.
Operatives working on electrical distribution systems must post warning notices in accordance with College procedures for such works. These will be provided at the time of issue of a permit to work (see Section 7 of this code of practice).

All operations must be familiar with and comply with the Lews Castle College Electricity at Work Policy.

16 Entry into Confined Spaces

Operatives must have a permit to work before entering any tank, pit, chamber, pipe flue or similar confined space where there may be dangerous fumes or lack of oxygen. If the College issues such a permit, contractors must carry out work in such places using procedures and precautionary measures that comply with the Confined Spaces Regulations 1997. All operatives must be competent and formally trained to conduct confined space work.

17 Excavations

Contractors must have the Estates and Maintenance Section’s permission before breaking ground on College premises. The Estates & Maintenance Section holds records of known underground services. Anyone who is going to excavate must be told the location of any known underground utilities.

Contractors must make and keep the work site safe by using shoring, barriers and warning notices at all times. In the case of roadworks and places to which College staff, students or members of the public have access, they must provide amber warning lights during hours of darkness or periods of poor visibility.

When work is complete, contractors must make good the site and restore any markers, protective covers and warning notices. They must constantly bear in mind the safety of children and board over excavations when work is not actually proceeding. On larger excavations where boarding-over would not be reasonably practicable, a protective fence is required.

The Estates and Maintenance Section must give permission before any College roadway or footway is closed.

Please refer to the current edition of the HSE Publication HSG 47 “Avoiding danger from underground services”.

18 Flame Producing Equipment

No work that uses flame producing equipment can start without a permit to work.

Where contractors are carrying out hot work such as welding, burning or brazing, and they are using equipment such as blowlamps, they must observe the following precautions:

- Remove any litter or combustible materials from the vicinity of the work;
- Protect fixed combustibles with non-combustible materials such as a fire blanket, and protect floors from hot slag;
- Take special care to prevent flames, sparks or molten metal from reaching combustible material along or down ducts and channels;
- Use non-combustible materials when temporarily plugging holes;
- Keep the work area well ventilated to make sure fumes are adequately extracted;
- It is mandatory to use flashback arrestors when welding gas lines.
Apparatus must not be left unattended. Immediately after completing any work, contractors must closely examine the area to make sure that there is no smouldering or incipient fire. They should pay particular attention to cavities, voids, cupboards, ducts and other concealed areas.

19 Fume Cupboards & LEV Outlets

College building roofs may have fume cupboard or LEV outlets that may discharge toxic or flammable fumes. Anyone needing access to these roofs must get a permit to work before starting work.

20 Good Housekeeping

Slips, trips and falls are still the major cause of accidents. e.g.

- Don’t leave things lying around;
- Clean up spills straight away;
- Keep work areas and gangways tidy and clear;
- Minimise the amount of dust you generate to keep it below a safe, acceptable level.

Contractors must remove all building materials and waste from College premises at the conclusion of works (subject to any contractual agreement to the contrary). They must also keep fire exit doors, corridors and staircases free of obstructions at all times.

21 Highly Flammable Liquids and LPG

Anyone storing and using flammable liquids must do so in compliance with the Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations (DSEAR) 2002.

22 Lifting Equipment

If a contractor uses a crane, hoist or other item of lifting equipment, it must be constructed, used and maintained in accordance with the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998. This includes any associated ropes, chains and other ancillary equipment.

Contractors are not permitted to use lifting equipment owned by Lews Castle College. This includes the counterbalance forklift truck and mobile elevating work platforms.

23 Manual Handling

Where work involves transporting loads by hand or bodily force, and there is a risk of injury, contractors must carry out a manual handling assessment under the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992.

Where practicable, people should use mechanical aids to avoid and reduce the risk of injury. Where the operation is unavoidable, they should split the load or get others to share the load.
24 Noise

Contractors should take measures to minimise the effect of construction noise by applying the recommendations in British Standard 5228: 1984, Noise Control of Construction and Demolition sites.

Plant likely to cause a disturbance to the College community or activities should only be used within times previously agreed by Estates and Maintenance and then only when using the most effective noise reduction measures available. Contractors should be conversant with the provisions of the Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005.

25 Personal Protective Equipment

The contractor is responsible for providing their employees with such personal protection as may be required for the work in hand, such as eye, head, and foot protection, respirators and breathing apparatus.

The contractor should comply with the requirements of the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992.

26 Plant, Tools and Equipment

Any plant, tools, tackles and equipment that operatives use on College premises must be suitable for the operation, and must comply with the requirements of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998.

Contractors should only use pneumatic drills in and around occupied buildings with due regard to noise control.

Contractors are not permitted to use items of plant, tools or equipment including access equipment and ladders owned by Lews Castle College unless a formal written prior agreement has been made.

Before using cartridge operated fixing tools on College premises, contractors must have the Estates & Maintenance permission. Even then, contractors may only use such tools in compliance with the standards set out in HSE Guidance Note PM14 entitled: “Safety in the Use of Cartridge Operated Fixing Tools”.

Contractors must not use College owned plant, tools, tackle or equipment.

27 Reporting a Hazard

If operatives discover a hazard or a potential hazard to their own or other people’s health and safety, they should inform the Estates and Maintenance Section and the College Health and Safety Adviser.

28 Safe Use of Access Equipment Above Ground

When a contractor's work involves erecting a scaffold or any structure allowing work above ground level, the contractor is responsible for its safety. They must construct and maintain all scaffolding in accordance with the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations, 2015.
The contractor will need to address issues surrounding walkways, “fans”, guard-rails, toe boards, warning signs and lights, together with a safe means of access to the work that they should remove each day when work stops. The contractor is fully responsible for all aspects of scaffolding including choosing competent sub-contractors for this work.

Work on flat or sloping roofs often entails particular hazards, especially if work on or near fragile materials is involved. Contractors are responsible for providing suitable crawling ladders, crawling boards and edge protection.

Before carrying out any work near glazed rooflights or similar fragile materials, contractors should appropriately protect them from damage by falling objects.

Ladders must be of sound construction and, when in use, extend at least one metre above the upper landing unless there is an alternative handhold at this height. Unless required for only a short period of time (in which case it should be footed), ladders should be securely fixed near the upper end.

When contractors erect and position ladders, scaffolding and cradles for an extended period, they should provide and maintain a barrier to prevent unauthorised access. Entrances in barrier should be closed when they are not in use and locked when the site is unattended.

Where scaffold or roof work is directly over doors or public access ways, contractors should provide fans. These should be of adequate construction and have unbroken boarding or sheeting abutting the fabric of the building, and project as far as the barrier fencing.

Practical guidance on these requirements are in HSE Construction information Sheets CIS49 - General Access Scaffolds and Ladders and CIS10 - Tower Scaffolds.

Contractors must not use ladder, platforms, MEWP’s or any other access equipment owned or hired by Lews Castle College. In exceptional circumstances permission to use such equipment must be given by Health and Safety Adviser.

29 Safeguarding of Machinery

Contractors must not remove safety guards while the machinery or plant is in motion or use. They must replace and secure the safety guards as soon as they finish the work and before the machinery or plant restarts. Contractors must securely fence any machinery and plant they bring onto College premises.

30 Safety Signs

Contractors are responsible for providing and displaying any safety signage required.

31 Security

Contractors are responsible for the security of plant, machinery and building materials they bring onto College premises to use in connection with their contract.

Buildings with scaffolding or other access equipment are more vulnerable to security problems than normal. Contractors should consider additional security measures either individually or in combination to adequately deter intruders. These measures should be planned and agreed before works start.
32 Services

Contractors must not interfere with or connect to College electricity, gas, water or other services without the specific permission of the Estates & Maintenance Section. This excludes normal use of standard plugs to connect portable electrical equipment.

They must get a permit to work to carry out any work within an electrical substation or switch room.

33 Traffic Control and Road Safety

The College environment may present unusual dangers in terms of road safety. We expect drivers of vehicles to exercise a high degree of responsibility and restraint.

Contractors and their employees should bear in mind the large numbers of young people on site and remember that the College is essentially a pedestrian precinct to which vehicles are allowed access only for loading, unloading and parking, subject to College parking restrictions.

The contractor must take precautions to eliminate or reduce, so far as is reasonably practicable, the dangers to staff and students from any of their vehicles on site, including at entrances and exits.

This should include separate access to the site for contractors’ personnel, plant and equipment for the whole duration of the work, and a traffic system that eliminates or reduces reversing. Contractors should agree this in advance with the Estates & Maintenance Section.

There should be a conspicuous warning notice at all entrances being used by contractors’ vehicles. The contractor is responsible for making sure that all employees comply with College parking restrictions and the strictly enforced 10 mph speed limit on the campus roadways.

Contractors should contact the Estates & Maintenance Section in advance if they require special arrangements to accommodate their vehicles.

34 Completion of Work

When work has been completed on notifiable projects under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 a health and safety file must be handed over to the College.

This file should contain the information needed to allow future construction work, including cleaning, maintenance, alterations, refurbishment and demolition to be carried out safely. Information in the file should alert those carrying out work to risks, and should help them to decide how to work safely.

The health and safety file should contain:

(a) A brief description of the work carried out;
(b) Any residual hazards which remain and how they have been dealt with (ie surveys or other information concerning asbestos, contaminated land, water bearing strata, buried services etc);
Key structural principles (i.e. bracing, sources of substantial stored energy – including pre or post tensioned members) and safe working loads for floors and roofs, particularly where these may preclude placing scaffolding or heavy machinery at that location;

Hazardous materials used (i.e. lead paint, pesticides, special coatings which should not be burnt off etc);

Information regarding the removal or dismantling of installed plant and equipment (i.e. any special arrangements for lifting or other special instructions for dismantling);

Health and safety information about equipment provided for cleaning or maintaining the structure;

The nature, location and markings of significant services, including underground cables, gas supply equipment, fire-fighting services etc;

Information and as-built drawings of the structure, its plant and equipment (i.e. the means of safe access to and from service voids, fire doors and compartmentalisation etc).

2 Lifting Equipment

Wherever any work involving lifting equipment is carried out, such work must comply with the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER). To comply with this Regulation, Lifting Equipment must be thoroughly examined to ensure correct installation and operation after it has been installed and before being put into service for the first time or after it has been relocated if its safety is dependant on its installation.

A Report of Thorough Examination of Lifting Equipment must be provided for this purpose.

3 Pressure Systems

Wherever any work is carried out on pressure systems, such work must comply with the Pressure Systems Regulations 2000.

To comply with this Regulation at the completion of work prior to systems being pressurised of Report of an Examination of an Item within a Pressure System must be provided.

4 Electrical Work

Wherever any work involving electrical installation, alterations or modification is carried out such work must comply with the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989.

To comply with this Regulations at the completion of work an Electrical Installation Certificate must be provided and in particular with the requirements for electrical installations – BS 7671 (IEE Wiring Regulations).

When minor electrical work which does not include the provision of a new circuit a Minor Electrical Installation Works Certificate must be provided.
5 Gas Installations

Wherever any work is carried out on gas systems or appliances such work must comply with the current Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations.

To comply with this Regulation at the completion of work a Gas Installation/Safety Record Certificate must be provided.

35 Lewis Castle College Employees

Other than assigning contracts and demonstrating the scope of the required work at the beginning of the contract and checking that all work has been completed in a satisfactory manner at the end of the contract LCC employees are prohibited in participating in any work activity with contractors.

Where this may be necessary in exceptional circumstances a prior arrangement must have been agreed by the Principal and Health and Safety Adviser.