

# Health and Safety Policy

Version 1.1  
February 2009

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## Introduction

Ensuring the health and safety of all our employees and consultants is one of Quest highest priorities. In order to maintain this commitment, health and safety will be considered, promoted, communicated and managed through the organization in the same way as all other aspects of the business. Every effort is made to provide safe working conditions and to prevent fire or other damage.

Quest is committed to the following principles:

- All incidents are preventable and that all risks can be safeguarded, also that all incidents demand prompts investigation and timely remedial actions when and where appropriate. That all employees, consultants and clients have responsibilities for health and safety and therefore will be provided with appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision to enable them to work safely and efficiently.
- Active co-operation between management and workforce is an essential element in promoting and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace and that all employees and consultants should be involved in the development of safe operating procedures derived from a comprehensive risk assessment process.
- Company safety standards are established and maintained corporately and must therefore be complied with by all parts of the business and that specialist health and safety advice will always be available when and where required.

## Legislation

It is the policy of the Quest to comply fully with the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, and with those statutory regulations, made under the Act, which apply to each and every aspect of our work. It is an absolute duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act for the company to have a Health & Safety Policy and every member of our team must comply with its terms.

All new staff and consultants will be directed to read Quest corporate handbook, where full Health & Safety Policy is included. You will be asked to sign a statement confirming that you have done so and that you know how to access the full Policy on the web site.

## Employee and Consultant's Responsibility

No safety policy is likely to be successful unless it has the co-operation of all employees and consultants. You have a duty, whilst at work, to take reasonable care for the health and safety of yourself and of other people who may be affected by your acts or omissions and to co-operate with Quest in fulfilling its statutory duties. You must not interfere with, or misuse, anything provided in the interest of Health & Safety (The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974).

Due to the fact that most of your working time will be at Quest client's sites, you must ensure that you are familiar with all emergency procedures, including actions to take on discovery of a fire, bomb or other hazard. If you are unsure about or unfamiliar with the client's emergency procedures you must speak to your line manager.

If you see a situation in which a potential accident could occur or where an injury could be sustained by anyone in the building you should report it immediately. All accidents, injuries, and cases of ill-health caused by, or affecting, your work must be reported without delay to the company. If you are injured, no matter how slight your injury may appear, you must always report it to your line manager and to Quest. In addition, you must report immediately any damage to Quest's property.

Quest employees, who sometimes are based at home have a responsibility to ensure that they are working safely and not putting themselves at risk, have appropriate space to work in and use the correct equipment.

You must not work if you have taken medication or any other substance which could adversely affect your ability to work safely.

## Fire Safety

### **FIRE ACTION: ON DISCOVERING A FIRE**

- Operate the nearest fire alarm call point.
- Leave the building by the quickest safe escape route. If the building have lifts DO NOT use them.
- Go to the designated assembly point for your building.

#### **Notes:**

1. If the designated fire steward, for the office you are in, is not present and you are the senior person present, you must be prepared to act as a fire steward for that office. Instructions for fire stewards appear in a later section.
2. If you discover a fire when the building is largely unoccupied and fire stewards are not present, telephone the Emergency Service (dial 911 or 112). Tell them that there is a FIRE, the name and the address of the building, and your name. Stay at the designated assembly point until the Emergency Services arrive.
3. NEVER attempt to fight a fire using the fire extinguishers or other appliances unless the fire is small; you can do so at no risk to yourself or others; and you have been trained in the use of extinguishers.

### **FIRE ACTION: ON HEARING THE FIRE ALARM**

- Prepare to leave the building immediately.
- Close your window and shut the door as you leave your room.
- DO NOT take anything with you and DO NOT use the lifts.
- Follow the quickest safe escape route to the designated assembly area for your building.
- Comply quickly and fully with all instructions given to you by the designated fire stewards, the site Security staff, and the Fire Brigade.

**Notes:**

1. The company guideline for emergency evacuation of all its premises is to achieve complete clearance of the building within two minutes.
2. If the designated fire steward, for the office you are in, is not present and you are the most senior person present, you must be prepared to act as a fire steward for that area. Instructions for Fire Stewards are set out below.

## **Fire Stewards**

Fire stewards are assigned to all areas of all the buildings occupied by Quest. Fire Stewards **MUST** take the following action:

- Check all rooms in your area are vacated including internal rooms.
- Close the doors of rooms you have checked.
- Make your way to the assembly area encouraging persons in corridors and on stairways to proceed there in an orderly but speedy manner.
- Move people away from the exit to the safe assembly area, usually on the opposite side of any roadway used by emergency vehicles.
- Report to Fire Brigade on the evacuation state of the building.

**Notes:**

1. If you are elsewhere in the building **DO NOT** attempt to return to your area unless you can do so quickly and it is completely safe to do so.
2. When a Fire Steward and deputy are absent, their duties must be carried out by the most senior person present in the area.

## **Fire Detection & Fire Fighting Equipment**

Quest main office has an automatic detectors (e.g. smoke and heat detectors) and automatic smoke exit. The fire alarm system will be tested monthly at 11 am on the first Friday of the month.

- **DOES NOT** use fire fighting equipment unless the fire is small and unlikely to escalate, you have been trained in the use of extinguishers, and there is absolutely no risk to yourself or others by attempting to extinguish the fire
- **DO NOT** position anything in a corridor which will obscure the position of a fire point. Fire points are located so that they can be seen easily
- **DO NOT** use fire extinguishers for any other purpose, e.g. propping doors or windows open.

## **Fire Precautions**

- ✓ Familiarise yourself with the quickest safe escape route between your working area and the assembly area which is used in the event of an emergency evacuation of the building you are in.
- ✓ Locate all alternative safe escape routes and exits.

- ✓ Familiarise yourself with the position of fire alarm call points in the areas where you will be working.
- ✓ DO NOT use the lifts in the event of an emergency evacuation.
- ✓ DO NOT restrict circulation routes in shared offices with furniture, boxes, or other possessions (including bicycles).
- ✓ DO NOT leave or store combustible materials (e.g. cardboard boxes, paper) or flammable liquids on emergency exit routes.
- ✓ DO NOT block fire exits or restrict the width of corridors or emergency exit routes with furniture, boxes, or other items (including bicycles).
- ✓ DO NOT block access to call points, fire fighting equipment, or electrical switchgear.
- ✓ DO NOT wedge or prop open any fire door or door fitted with a self closing device.
- ✓ DO NOT fix notices to the glass panels in fire doors.

All office areas should be kept reasonably tidy. You should not allow unnecessary quantities of loose paper or other combustible material to accumulate in the area where you work. Fire practices are held at least once a year. You **MUST** leave the building in a fire practice. Our aim is to evacuate the building within two minutes.

## Fire Prevention

- SMOKING is not permitted in any part of any building occupied by the Quest. If you smoke outside the company's buildings please move away from the entrances when doing so. Smoking is not permitted in any outside roofed area which is enclosed on more than two sides.
- SMOKING is not permitted in any vehicle owned or hired by Quest.
- CLOSE your windows when you leave at the end of the day. CLOSE the door to your office and the doors to any staircase enclosures you pass through on your way out of the building.
- Ask the Health & Safety Adviser to arrange disposal and replacement of any items you have which do not conform.
- Personal kettles and coffee makers may be used only in designated kitchen areas or office designated areas.
- FLAMMABLE LIQUIDS and COMBUSTIBLE MATERIALS must be kept well away from SOURCES OF IGNITION.
- DO NOT use naked flames or keep flammable liquids and gases in your office. Offices must not be used for food preparation.
- SWITCH OFF electrical equipment when not in use and outside normal working hours.

## Electrical Safety

All portable electrical equipment is either:

- Class 1: Fitted with live, neutral, and earth wires.
- Class 1 equipment must be earthed.
- Class 2: Double insulated.

All portable electrical equipment **MUST** be properly wired and fitted with the correct fuse as specified by the manufacturer. All portable electrical equipment, including personal items such as kettles, **MUST** be tested for electrical safety.

**Visual Checks:** It is the responsibility of all staff to carry out visual checks of the portable electrical equipment they use in all the locations where they work. Checks should be carried out at weekly intervals.

### **Please report immediately:**

- Discolouration or other obvious damage to socket.
- Damage to plugs or discolouration.
- Exposure of wires within cables.
- Damage to equipment casings or loose casing.
- Sparking, smells, or any other indication of malfunction.
- Any cause for concern you may have about the safety of equipment or the electrical installations in our buildings.

**ALL FAULTS MUST BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY TO:** Kris Stevich, [kstevich@questit.ltd.uk](mailto:kstevich@questit.ltd.uk).

A technician will carry out initial and routine repeat electrical testing of all portable electrical equipment in the Quest's offices as specified by the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989. Test tags are attached to all equipment and must not be removed. Electrical equipment **MUST** be tested prior to use in any Quest's building or on any company business.

### **Manual Handling**

Manual handling tasks in Quest are avoided so far as is practicable. For tasks which cannot be avoided, all possible steps are taken to reduce the risk of injury to the lowest possible level. All manual handling operations are subjected to the risk assessment process.

General handling tasks such as moving paper supplies, furniture, materials, books, and equipment have standing risk assessments and must be carried out with care.

Specialist handling operations, e.g. very heavy or very large objects, or those operations requiring lifting devices, must be undertaken only by trained and authorised staff.

A specific risk assessment **MUST** be completed for any specialist or unusual handling operation.

#### **Notes:**

1. NEVER attempt to lift or move something which is beyond your capability.
2. Always ASK FOR HELP if you need it.
3. When carrying large, heavy, or awkwardly shaped objects, choose your route carefully.

## First Aid

In the event of any incident requiring first aid treatment contact an authorised first aider. Then:

- Stay with the casualty until help arrives.
- For any emergency requiring an ambulance, YOU or the First Aider must call the 999 or 112, or 08 45 46 47 for NHS Direct and state the precise location and nature of the emergency.
- First Aiders' names and contact details are also given on the green printed notices alongside first aid boxes or on safety notice boards throughout the office. First aid box is available in the on the third floor at Quest main office.

### **Notes:**

1. Do not take any item from a first aid box unless it is for the treatment of an injury at work.
2. Authorised First Aiders must familiarise themselves with the contents and locations of first aid boxes.
3. Please report items used or missing to the Health & Safety Adviser.

## General Health and Welfare

Quest has a policy of zero tolerance to violence. Physical or verbal violence at work is totally unacceptable and disciplinary action will be taken against any member of the company who initiates violence or who responds with violence in the workplace or client's sites. Similarly, bullying, harassment, and other forms of threatening behaviour at work, will not be tolerated under any circumstances, and will be treated with equal severity.

## Stress

Stress is recognized as an important health issue for everyone and pressure at work that may lead to work-related stress is taken very seriously by Quest. Any employee or consultant who is experiencing undue stress at work or who is suffering from symptoms which may be the result of stress, may talk, in complete confidence, to the Health & Safety Adviser, or refer themselves directly to Quest's management. Stress may be the result of the immediate physical or emotional environment, workload, or management issues. Change, for example, is recognised to be a major stress factor. Quest will take whatever steps it can to remove or reduce stress to acceptable levels if you seek help and support.

## New & Expectant Mothers

The Health & Safety Adviser carries out a specific assessment of the risks for new and expectant mothers as soon as the company is officially notified of your pregnancy and again when you return to work.

## General Tidiness and Hygiene

All employees and consultants are expected to leave company's facilities in a clean and tidy condition for other users. Particular care should be taken in the ***kitchen area:***

- DO NOT leave microwave ovens or fridges dirty or smelling.
- If you find it like that, do the decent thing: CLEAN IT.
- DO NOT leave dirty mugs, plates, cutlery, lying around.

## Accident & Accident Reporting

All fires and other dangerous occurrences, accidents and “near misses”, and instances of known or suspected occupational ill health, must be reported to Quest's Health & Safety Adviser as soon as possible after the event. No accident or incident should be considered too trivial to report. A report must be sent to Kris Stevich, [kstevich@questit.ltd.uk](mailto:kstevich@questit.ltd.uk) within seven days of the event. The report is filed securely to preserve confidentiality.

Accidents and incidents of a serious nature must be notified immediately by telephone 0845 686 1212 to Kris Stevich at Quest head office.

## Training

It is our policy that Quest will have at least one person trained to Basic First Aid at Work (Authorised First Aider Certificate) in its main office.

## Review and Consultation

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis in accordance with legislative developments and the need for good practice. Policy is accessible to all employees and consultants on the company web site and it is included in Quest corporate handbook. This policy should not be read in isolation, but cross-referenced with all relevant Quest employment policies.

Managing Director  
Feb 2009