

AVP Britain Health and Safety Policy

1. Policy statement

AVP Britain is committed to providing and maintaining safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all our volunteers and staff, and to provide such information, training and supervision as they need for this purpose.

AVP Britain recognises and accepts its responsibility to protect the health and safety of all visitors to the workplace (including contractors, temporary staff and any members of the public) who might be affected by our activities.

AVP Britain will make arrangements to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, the safe use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances.

This document shall be circulated to all volunteer facilitators and staff. This policy statement was approved by the Trustees on 1 June 2018 and will be reviewed annually. This policy applies to all offices and services operated by AVP Britain.

2. Corporate responsibilities

Trustees:

The AVP Britain Chair has been nominated as the national health and safety coordinator (NHSC).

The NHSC is responsible for co-ordinating and implementing this policy and holds the overall responsibility for ensuring that the health and safety policy is put into practice. In particular the NHSC will ensure that:

- all employees and volunteers receive sufficient information, training and supervision on health and safety matters
- all coordinators and line managers are aware of their responsibilities to their staff and volunteers
- a national risk assessment is undertaken and the results written up and made available to all employees
- accidents are investigated and reported to the trustees through the maintenance of a national accident book to be reviewed annually to improve the effectiveness of this policy
- arrangements are put in place to monitor the maintenance of AVP Britain equipment and premises (including premises based in offices of other organisations)

The NHSC will ensure that adequate time, information, training and resources are available to undertake these tasks. All employees will be told who the health and safety persons are. AVP Britain Trustees will review the operation of its health and safety policy annually.

Regional groups:

Each regional group will designate a regional health and safety co-ordinator (RHSC) who will:

- be responsible for implementation of the health and safety policy in that region
- maintain and review an accident book and send a copy of all entries to the national coordinator
- ensure that all staff, volunteers and facilitators receive a copy of this health and safety policy
- report to the national health and safety co-ordinator annually or at the time of an injury or dangerous occurrence
- ensure that a risk assessment is carried out on a regular basis, and before any change of activity for the regional group premises

When organising workshops in non AVP managed venues, AVP regional coordinators have a responsibility to:

- carry out a risk assessment of the activity
- follow the health and safety policy of the host organisation
- disseminate information to facilitators regarding the host venue fire procedures and health and safety contact in case of emergency.
- ensure a record of any incidents that occur during workshops is recorded in the accident book by the RHSC

Regional groups are expected to provide the necessary resources to ensure that advice, information, consultation and training are available for all staff and volunteers concerning health and safety matters.

Staff and volunteers:

All staff and volunteers are required to:

- comply with all health and safety policies relating to their work for AVP.
- take reasonable care for the health & safety of themselves and of others who may be affected by his or her acts or omissions.
- not intentionally or recklessly interfere with anything provided for their health, safety and welfare. Serious breaches of the health and safety policy and rules (e.g. misusing equipment, deliberately putting someone else's safety in danger) will be dealt with through AVP Britain's disciplinary procedure.
- co-operate with management on health and safety matters.
- report all health and safety concerns to line management.

Where volunteers work in premises managed by other organisations, they must familiarise themselves with such elements of that organisation's health and safety policy that have a bearing on AVP's work and know who to contact in case of problems. In particular, when facilitating in a new venue facilitators must ensure that they know the fire procedures and who the health and safety contact person is at the host venue in case of emergency.

3. First Aid and Accident Reporting

First aid

In all AVP Britain premises first aid provision will be available at all times in an appropriate and accessible first aid box. AVP Britain will ensure at least two designated persons based at the premise will receive appropriate first aid training.

All new employees will be told as part of their induction of the location of first aid equipment and the staff who have received first aid training. A record of all first aid cases treated will be kept in the accident book, which will be kept with the first aid box.

Accidents and emergencies

All employees and volunteers must report to their regional coordinator or line manager all incidents which resulted (or nearly resulted) in personal injury to themselves or others. They must make sure the accident is recorded in the Accident Book. It is the responsibility of the regional health and safety coordinator (RHSC) to ensure that any necessary follow up action is taken to reduce the risk of the accident or near accident reoccurring.

The national health and safety coordinator (NHSC) is responsible for reporting incidents, which come within the reporting of injuries, diseases & dangerous occurrence to the local environmental health department. The following incidents should be reported:

- fatal accidents
- major injury accidents\conditions
- dangerous occurrences
- accidents causing more than 3 days incapacity for work
- certain work-related diseases.

4. Fire Safety:

In AVP premises, it is the responsibility of all staff to be aware of fire hazards, to know the location of fire exits and the assembly point. Everyone must know the fire drill instructions, and these will be part of the induction process for all new staff and volunteers.

RHSC shall ensure that:

- access to escape doors, extinguishers and other firefighting equipment are not be obstructed and that all fire doors are kept closed
- all staff and volunteers are made aware of arrangements for fire safety and know how to raise the fire alarm, call the emergency services, and evacuate the premises
- all staff and volunteers are familiar with fire exit routes, including key pad numbers where necessary, assembly points and location of fire-fighting equipment
- firefighting equipment in AVP offices or premises is checked annually by a contractor and a record kept of the check and its outcome
- firefighting equipment in AVP offices or premises is checked visually by staff or volunteers on every occasion that the offices or premises are in use
- visitors to AVP Britain are made fully familiar with the escape routes and assembly points

Where premises of another organisation are used by AVP organisers and facilitators, they must ascertain what fire regulations govern the use of such premises and act in accordance with those and the general policy of AVP.

When running workshops, it is the facilitation team's responsibility to familiarise itself with the location of the fire exit routes, including key pad numbers where necessary, assembly points and location of firefighting equipment. All participants must always be informed of the fire drill instructions at the start of all workshops. During every workshop 'opening talk' the lead facilitator must ensure that the participants are informed of what to do in the event of a fire. At the start of every session the lead facilitator must ask participants to sign a register. In the

event of a fire the lead facilitator must take the register with them. Once assembled in the assembly points the lead facilitator must take a quick register to ensure that all the group is together in the safe point.

5. Risk Assessment:

AVP Britain will ensure that a competent person carries out a risk assessment for each regional group in accordance with the 1992 management of health and safety at work regulations and the approved code of practice (ACOP). This risk assessment will be written up, and be made available to all staff. The written risk assessment will be reviewed and updated annually to ensure it covers all employees against all risks, and to ensure that any action identified as needed in the risk assessment has been carried out. The risk assessment will also be updated every time that there is a major change in working practices. The risk assessment will cover all AVP Britain employees, wherever they may be based, and will cover all aspects of their work.

All AVP Britain risk assessments will be completed using the AVP Britain risk assessment guide and pro forma.

In addition, a risk assessment shall be completed for each new workshop activity taking place by those responsible. There will be common features for most AVP workshops, and regional groups may develop a template risk assessment for workshops, but each organiser and workshop team should consider whether there are any special features which need extra attention before every workshop. In the first instance a risk assessment shall be completed by the regional coordinator preparing for a workshop, and it shall be reviewed by the workshop team during team building to ensure any safeguards required are put in place. AVP Britain NHSC shall ensure that:

- a risk assessment is carried out by the Operations Committee and each regional group at least annually and should take into account the views of employees.
- a record should be kept showing the date of the assessment, any issues identified and a note of the steps taken to rectify them together with dates.
- coordinators have necessary training in completing risk assessments.

6. Food Hygiene:

When providing food for AVP Britain workshops and events the following guidelines must be followed. When supplying food always purchase food from a reputable supplier (whether a caterer or supermarket) where food will have been prepared in a way that meets health and safety regulations and by someone who is qualified in food hygiene and preparation. In this case, if a participant was to be ill as a result of the food, as long as you had stored and served the food appropriately (as outlined below), then the responsibility would lie with the supplier and any compensation claims would go directly to them. When serving or storing food for AVP workshops/events, please ensure staff/volunteers follow these simple guidelines:

Personal hygiene: Wash your hands thoroughly using warm water and liquid soap, rinse and dry using a clean towel or a hand drier before handling any food. Wear clean clothes and an apron or protective garment. Cover any cuts or sores with waterproof dressing and avoid wearing jewellery or false nails which might fall into the food.

Food handling: If you are receiving food from a supplier, check it is what you ordered and that the packaging is undamaged.

Temperature control is essential to keep foods safe: Chilled food must be kept at or below 8°C and hot food must be kept above 63°C.

You must **store food** correctly to keep it safe. Do not overload the fridge as this will hinder the circulation of cool air. Ensure that ready to eat food is separated from any raw food and ensure everything is stored in a sealed container. Never serve any food at a workshop that is past its use by date. Contamination can easily occur during **food preparation**. Observe good personal hygiene and ensure that your equipment and surfaces are cleaned thoroughly before use. Where possible, avoid unnecessary handling of food, using tongs or plates instead.

7. Building maintenance

AVP Britain has a responsibility to provide a safe and healthy environment for staff and volunteers. Where regions maintain their own office space, the RHSC will be responsible for liaising with the office manager to ensure that any repairs are carried out swiftly with the minimum of disruption.

All AVP Britain staff are responsible for spotting hazards or potential hazards within the office. If a hazard is seen, it should be removed or dealt with as soon as possible, or if not, reported to the office manager or RHSC.

Good housekeeping:

Aisles & gangways

Gangways must be kept clear from obstructions and materials must be stored in safe areas. Under no circumstances must goods or materials be stacked immediately in front of or obstructing fire doors, fire exits, fire alarms or fire equipment.

Smoking

All public places and workplaces are smoke-free in England, Scotland and Wales under the relevant laws for each country. AVP Britain offices and workshops are therefore non-smoking.

Overcrowding

AVP Britain will avoid unhealthy and overcrowded working conditions, and will consult staff on any changes in office layout.

Ventilation

AVP Britain will endeavour to provide a well ventilated workplace in which staff have control over their local level of ventilation.

Office equipment such as photocopiers and printers can emit pollutants into the atmosphere. AVP Britain will take reasonable precautions in ensuring that these levels are kept as low as is possible. Employees will not be expected to work in enclosed spaces with equipment that emit atmospheric pollutants. Spaces where these pollutants are present shall be kept well ventilated.

Temperature

In office workplaces a minimum temperature of 16°C must be maintained. Efforts will be made so far as is reasonably practical to ensure the workplace temperature does not rise to

an uncomfortable level. A thermometer will be provided in a conspicuous place and in such a position as to be easily seen. AVP Britain will do all in its power to ensure reasonable temperatures in the workplace at all times.

Lighting

Adequate lighting must be provided. If lights are found to be out of order, the fault must be corrected as soon as reasonably possible.

Noise

Some AVP Britain staff work within an open plan office and therefore a certain level of noise is unavoidable. However, AVP Britain will endeavour to ensure that noise is kept to as low a level as is practicable.

Hygiene controls

All areas must be kept clean and tidy.

Equipment storage and usage

Equipment must not be left lying around but must be suitably stored. No wires must be left trailing across floors. Non-flammable rubbish bins must be positioned at various points.

Except in emergencies, and with the permission of the NHSC, no paraffin, bar electric or Calor gas fires will be used at AVP Britain premises.

Manual handling

AVP Britain employees and volunteers should avoid manual lifting where at all possible. However, they may occasionally be required to manually lift and handle loads. Correct manual lifting and handling reduces the effort required and prevents strain and risk of injury. Aids which are available to reduce the risk of injury, e.g. sack trolley, lifts, should be used. No one should put themselves at risk by attempting to lift heavy loads which could be divided into smaller quantities. The assistance of other employees or volunteers should always be sought for moving large quantities or for lifting heavy and awkward loads. When lifting in a team, take instructions from one person only. Anyone feeling a strain should stop immediately and record the incident in the accident book. To continue may result in more serious injury.

Electrical equipment

All building maintenance such as electrical work, carpentry, painting etc .should be carried out by skilled people. No staff should endanger themselves or others by carrying out such work and staff should never perform unsafe practices. Broken, ineffective or damaged electrical equipment must be reported to the regional coordinator or office manager. The regional coordinator or office manager should hold copies of manufacturers' detailed instructions on the maintenance of machinery, and will ensure that maintenance contracts are adhered to and, where appropriate, renewed.

Toilets and washing facilities

AVP Britain will seek to ensure that suitable and sufficient toilets and washing facilities are provided for all staff in accordance with the minimum requirements of health and safety legislation:

Number at work	Number of toilets/washbasins
1-5	1
6-25	2
26-50	3

Each toilet will be in a separate, lockable room and washing facilities will include a supply of clean hot and cold water, soap and suitable means for drying hands (e.g. paper towels). Vending machines for sanitary products and disposal bins should be provided. Toilets must be washed regularly and kept clean. Bins should be emptied and sanitised regularly.

Drinking water

An adequate supply of drinking water will be provided for all staff.

Rest areas

So far as is reasonably practicable AVP Britain will provide all staff with seating in a rest area, where they may rest during normal work breaks. In addition, suitable rest facilities will be provided for pregnant employees.

Hours of work

AVP Britain employees should not work excessively long hours, and should take adequate breaks for meals and rest as indicated within their statements of terms and conditions of employment.

8. Working with VDUs

It is the policy of AVP Britain to comply with the law as set out in the health and safety (display screen equipment) regulations 1992. The health and safety (display screen equipment) regulations 1992 and subsequent amendments in 2002 apply to staff who habitually use VDUs as a significant part of their normal work

AVP Britain will conduct health and safety assessments of all workstations staffed by employees who use VDU screens as part of their usual work. All workstations must meet the requirements set out in the regulations.

In particular, AVP Britain must ensure that:

General

- appropriate and adjustable seating is available to all users
- staff take regular breaks (at least 10 minutes away for every hour at the screen). Short frequent breaks are more satisfactory than occasional longer breaks.
- any special needs of individual staff are met, within reason

Equipment

AVP Britain will provide:

- VDUs with a detachable and adjustable screen, i.e. in height, swivel etc. to allow for the individual preference of the operator
- computer cleaning supplies
- a wrist and foot rest at each workstation an anti-static mat at each workstation
- keyboards which are separate from screens (unless the employee chooses to use a laptop)
- anti-glare screens, where direct light cannot be prevented from falling on the screen
- adequate workstation space
- training to make sure that employees can use their VDU and workstation safely and know how to make best use of it to avoid health problems

Regional groups shall take steps to incorporate changes to employees' tasks within the working day to prevent intensive periods of on-screen activity.

Maintenance

The regional coordinator or office manager should hold copies of manufacturers' detailed instructions on the maintenance of machinery, and will ensure that maintenance contracts are adhered to and, where appropriate, renewed.

Eye tests

Where a member of staff is experiencing eyesight problems attributable to their work with VDUs she/he will be entitled to have an eyesight test paid for by AVP Britain. VDU users can request regular test every 12 months. Where a test shows that as a result of work with AVP Britain VDUs a member of staff needs to purchase special corrective appliances (usually glasses) AVP Britain will pay for these. This excludes those normally used for purposes other than work with VDUs.

WRULDS/RSI

Work related upper limb disorders (also known as repetitive strain injury) are often associated with keyboard work. It is the intention of AVP Britain, by following best advice, to provide VDU/keyboard equipment and furniture which help prevent the development of these musculoskeletal disorders.

Staff should contribute to their own safety and welfare by:

- avoiding sitting in the same position for long periods
- adjusting equipment and furniture to appropriate/comfortable positions
- taking a rest break from VDU work (at least 10 minutes away every hour) by doing some other work.

9. Personal safety

It is in the nature of AVP Britain's work that staff or volunteers may, on occasions, find themselves in potentially dangerous situations whilst on AVP Britain business. The following policy guidance is concerned with minimising the risk to people working for AVP Britain.

Staff or volunteers who are working on their own should not allow access to casual visitors who have no appointment. Such callers should be encouraged to make an appointment.

Where staff are dealing with an individual but feel uneasy about being alone with him or her they have the right to refuse to make an appointment or give access if it would put them in that position. In these situations AVP Britain management will put their trust in the feelings of the worker.

AVP Britain premises will keep a personal alarm for use by staff. Staff will be instructed in how the alarm sounds, how to set it off and how to respond on hearing it.

All windows and entry doors will be lockable.

Prevention whilst out of the office

Staff who are going to be away on AVP Britain business should make it clear to other staff where they will be, how long for and how they can be contacted.

- staff should make clear who they wish to be informed (outside of work) in the event of an emergency and how they can normally be contacted
- AVP Britain will keep a personal alarm for use by staff

Prevention whilst holding or carrying money or valuables for AVP Britain

- staff who carry money for AVP Britain have the right to be accompanied by another person
- large amounts of cash, over and above petty cash, should not be kept on AVP Britain premises
- visits to the bank should not be at a regular time
- under no circumstances should staff put themselves at risk on account of AVP Britain's property. If money is demanded with threats it should be handed over

Personal awareness

There are lots of things we already do that keep us safe, but becoming more aware of our surroundings puts us in control of our environment. Trust your intuition and listen to your feelings. If you sense something is wrong, it probably is. Acting on intuition may prevent an aggressive situation.

- Be prepared. Do you know whom to contact and what to do if a difficult situation arises? Find out, and if there is no one designated, ask for a supervisor or manager to be nominated.
- Never stay in a situation where you think you may be at risk. Don't feel you have to stay because of your work. You can see the client, arrange the visit or do the interview again. You can ask a colleague to come in or be with you. Don't be afraid to ask for help.
- Don't accept lifts in vehicles from people you have no reason to trust.

In dealing with dangerous situations

If you find yourself in a potentially violent situation, what can you do? Try to stay calm if someone is starting to get angry. Your body language, voice and response can help to defuse a situation. Take a deep breath, keep your voice on an even keel, and try to help.

- Offer an angry person a range of options from which they can choose the one they prefer. They will find it difficult to stay angry.
- Do not be aggressive back - this is how anger can escalate into violence.
- Are you the best person to deal with this situation? Going to get someone else is often helpful particularly if they can solve a problem that you can't.
- Get on the same level as the aggressor. If they are standing so should you. It makes you feel less vulnerable and makes it easier for you to get away or fetch help if necessary.
- Keep your balance and keep your distance.
- Do not touch someone who is angry.
- Don't let your escape route be blocked. Keep yourself between an escape route and an aggressor so you can still get away, without blocking the other person's escape.
- If the situation is dangerous, then get away as fast as you can. Try not to remain alone with an actively violent person.
- If you cannot get away, use the panic alarm if there is one or shout for help..

Reporting and recording

All incidents of aggression or violence should be reported to management and recorded in the accident book. Employers have a responsibility to provide a safe working environment.

Staff should report any current or potential situation at work, which is a threat to personal safety. Talking about fear and other problems related to aggression or harassment are not marks of failure but good practice. A serious incident, even if it results in no physical harm, may cause feelings of fear, panic or despair which can carry on long afterwards. The management of AVP Britain recognises this and will be disposed to provide whatever support, counselling or time off work seems appropriate.

10. Training AVP Britain will ensure that employees and volunteers receive information on health and safety as part of their induction.

AVP Britain will organise training for employees and volunteers on health and safety matters as appropriate, including: general health and safety training, first aid, manual handling, fire safety, risk assessment. AVP Britain will also organise training for appropriate use of equipment, and any special training needed to ensure safe systems of work.

If employees and volunteers consider they have health and safety training needs they should inform their line manager.

11. Information This document shall be circulated to all volunteers and staff. This policy statement was approved by the Trustees on 1 June 2018 and will be reviewed annually.

Agreed by the Board 1 June 2018

Next review June 2019