

## **Safety Representation in College**

### **Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics and Science**

#### **Background**

Health and Safety legislation (Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005, Section 25(1)) gives employees in a workplace the right to select an employee to act as their representative in matters of safety, health and welfare at work. This is a prerogative given by law to employees. There is no absolute requirement to select a safety representative nor can management in an organisation nominate or delegate one. The rights of the safety representative are set out in the legislation referred to above and are expanded in guidance documentation published by the Health and Safety Authority. Further information is available at [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie) or from the College Safety Office at ext. 1914.

#### **What does the Safety Representative do?**

The function of the safety representative is to act on behalf of the employees s/he represents in matters of safety, health and welfare at work. While every employee has a right to make representations directly to their employer and to be consulted by their employer, and in College employees are encouraged to deal with safety issues locally, the safety representative may be better able to deal with issues on a collective basis. In circumstances where an employee is reticent to deal directly with their supervisor the intervention of a safety representative may be beneficial for both. A safety representative will attend formal Safety Committee meetings and Building User Group meetings where they exist. Management may choose to use a safety representative as a conduit for consultation with employees.

#### **Whom will I represent?**

The Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics and Science Safety Representative will act on behalf of employees in the Faculty and Schools in the Faculty.

#### **Who can be a Safety Representative?**

Any employee of College at any grade whether fulltime, part-time, permanent or temporary may put themselves forward for selection as Safety Representative provided they are employed in the area that they wish to represent.

#### **Do I need any particular qualification or experience?**

No – but you should have a general interest in employee Health and Safety. College will provide or arrange training for new Safety Representatives.

#### **Do I get paid for this?**

No - but you should be at no loss either. The law provides for safety representatives to be provided with reasonable paid time off (subject to notice) to carry out their functions as a Safety Representative.

**Will I be discriminated against?**

The law provides protection against any safety representative being placed at any disadvantage in relation to their employment.

**How long will the term of office be?**

The term of office will generally be for three years.

**Is this not an onerous responsibility?**

The role of the safety representative is an important and serious role. There are, however no obligations, responsibilities or liabilities over and above those of any employees attaching to the role of safety representatives. The Safety Representative does have significant rights granted to him/her by the law. College has a code of practice that they expect safety representative to adhere to in carrying out their function.

**What is the selection procedure?**

Employees will be invited to put themselves forward (nominated and seconded by two Faculty staff members) for selection. If more than one nomination is received an election will be arranged. The person receiving the highest number of votes will be deemed elected as the Safety Representative. The person receiving the second highest number of votes will take over as Safety Representative in the prolonged absence of the safety representative.

**I'm interested. What do I do?**

Fill out the nomination form below and return it to the Faculty Office by close of business on the 24<sup>th</sup> February 2009. Two colleagues are required to endorse your nomination.

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**Nomination Form**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_(block Capitals) Staff No. \_\_\_\_\_

Nominated by: \_\_\_\_\_(Signature) Staff No. \_\_\_\_\_

Seconded by: \_\_\_\_\_(Signature) Staff No. \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_(Signature), the above named, agree to put my name forward for selection as Safety Representative for the Engineering, Mathematics and Science Faculty and agree to be bound by the result of any election that may take place.

**Return completed form to Faculty Office, Engineering, Mathematics & Science, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor 27-29 Westland Row by 24.02.09**