

## **MOBILE PHONES & DRIVING POLICY**

### **New document for approval**

Please note that this document was approved by the University Health and Safety Committee on February 9<sup>th</sup> 2016 for presentation to the Operating Board on March 1<sup>st</sup> 2016 and it was duly approved by the Board.

When published in its final form, it will be issued as a Policy document, with a briefing issued to all relevant managers.

### **Synopsis**

This document sets out University of Aberdeen Policy on the use of mobile phones whilst driving on University business or operation. This Policy applies to all employees of all schools/Departments.

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### **Approval**

Approved by : Operating Board

Date: March 1<sup>st</sup> 2016

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## 1. Background and Purpose

1.1 It has been proven by research and data that using a mobile phone whilst driving is very distracting and the driver is not in complete control of the vehicle and is therefore at considerable risk of a collision. A study concluded that drivers who are engaged in a mobile phone conversation are four times as likely to crash as other drivers. Research carried out by the Transport Research Laboratory in the UK showed a clear trend for significantly poorer driving performance (speed control, following distance and reaction times) when using a mobile phone in comparison to other conditions. It concluded that:

- Driver's reaction times are, on average, 30% slower when talking on a hand-held mobile phone compared to being drunk and nearly 50% slower than under normal driving condition
- Hands-free is safer than using hand-held mobile phones but is more dangerous than driving under the influence of alcohol.

1.2 In line with Because We Care way of working, this Policy is designed to promote the safety at work of our staff and others who may be travelling in vehicles being driven by our staff on University business.

## 2. Definitions

Term	Definition
<b>Mobile phones</b>	Are defined for the purpose of this Policy as any electronic device that may be used for accessing oral, textual or pictorial communications. This definition will apply to hand held or hands free mobile phones using a wire or wireless connection, earpiece and microphone.
<b>Driving</b>	Is defined as being in control of a vehicle even when the vehicle is stationary with the engine running. This definition will apply to both on and off the public highway when driving on University business.
<b>Vehicle</b>	Is defined as a mechanically propelled vehicle, including motorcycles.



### 3. Policy

- 3.1 Hand held or hands free mobile phone must not be used while driving on University business. The phone should be switched to off or to silent or calls diverted to messaging service.
- 3.2 For making or receiving calls, the vehicle must be stationary (and in the UK, the engine must be switched off for hand held use of the phone) and parked in a safe place with the gear selector in neutral (for manual gear boxes) or in 'P' position (for automatic gearboxes) and the hand or parking brake firmly applied.
- 3.3 In the event of a genuine emergency, if it is unsafe to stop the vehicle (and switch off engine), a mobile phone may be used to call the emergency services.
- 3.4 The University will not be liable for any sanction or fine levied on an employee or contractor as a consequence of non-compliance with this Policy. Any breach of this Policy will be dealt with in line with the disciplinary procedures.

