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# OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPRESENTATIVE

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## What does an occupational health and safety representative do?

Occupational health and safety representatives are part of the occupational health and safety group and play an important role in:

- supporting management to ensure a safe and healthy work environment
- acting as the contact between employees and managers and passing on information that helps to create a good work environment
- creating focus on daily occupational health and safety, and preventing occupational health and safety problems
- participating in local workplace assessment (WPA) work
- analysing and preventing work-related injuries
- participating in the occupational health and safety work on the Local Occupational Health and Safety Committee (LAMU), the Faculty Occupational Health and Safety Committee/Administration Occupational Health and Safety Committee (FAMU/AAMU) and the Main Occupational Health and Safety Committee (HAMU).

## Cooperation in the occupational health and safety group

The manager and the occupational health and safety representative together make up the occupational health and safety group. The cooperation between the manager and the occupational health and safety representative is at the heart of the unit's occupational health and safety efforts.

## Election of occupational health and safety representative

An occupational health and safety representative is elected by the employees in the area to which the employee belongs, and which the occupational health and safety group covers – for example a small department/school or part of a department/school. The occupational health and safety

representative is an important role model in the joint efforts to improve the work environment, and it is therefore important that occupational health and safety representatives enjoy the confidence of their colleagues.

If no occupational health and safety representative is elected, the manager is the only member of the occupational health and safety group until the employees elect a representative.

## How to become an occupational health and safety representative

As an AU employee, you are eligible to be nominated for election as an occupational health and safety representative if you have been employed at AU for at least nine months. The occupational health and safety representative is elected by and from among all employees within the area covered by the representative, irrespective of professional affiliation.

Occupational health and safety representatives are elected for a term (election period) of three years. The three-year term makes it possible for the occupational health and safety group to develop an efficient method of cooperation and to implement preventive occupational health and safety initiatives.

## Rights and obligations

The manager must ensure that the occupational health and safety representative has the necessary time to handle the occupational health and safety work within normal working hours.

The occupational health and safety representative cannot resign from his/her position during the term of office, unless he/she leaves the workplace, the work area or is absent for a minimum of four months, for example due to leave or illness. Moreover, the occupational health and safety representative cannot be overthrown or forced out of his/her position.

### **Occupational health and safety training**

A newly elected occupational health and safety representative must complete the statutory occupational health and safety training course no later than three months after the election, unless he/she has already done the course.

The occupational health and safety training course:

- is a three-day course

- provides specific knowledge about occupational health and safety
- introduces methods for systematic occupational health and safety efforts.

The occupational health and safety representative is also entitled to

- two days of supplementary training within the first year
- one and a half days of supplementary training in each of the following years.