

Guidance

**Managing Workplace Environment
Requirements**



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GUIDANCE ON MANAGING WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT REQUIREMENTS

1. Introduction

The University has a responsibility to ensure that all staff and students are able to work in a clean and safe environment with adequate and appropriate welfare facilities.

1.1 Aim and Scope of Guidance

This guidance outlines the main requirements of the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 (WHSWR) and their associated Approved Code of Practice (ACOP). The regulations apply to all parts of the workplace (e.g. lecture theatres, offices, laboratories, workshops) and also deal with the grounds and common parts of buildings which staff and students have access to such as corridors, stairs, car parks and pathways.

The ACOP expands upon the duties already placed upon the University and those in control of premises by the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HSWA). The requirements broadly cover the following main areas:

- health and safety in the workplace (including the working environment);
- provision of welfare facilities for people at work; and
- maintenance and housekeeping of the workplace.

Welfare facilities are those facilities that are necessary for the well-being of staff, such as washing, toilet, rest and changing facilities, and having somewhere clean to eat and drink during breaks.

The WHSWR sits logically with other premises-related health and safety issues, such as asbestos management, management, maintenance and treatment of water systems and building and property maintenance.

1.2 Roles and Responsibilities

Although many parts of the WHSWR are generally dealt with by Estates Services, responsibility for the WHSWR is much wider and includes departmental and individual responsibilities. This guidance also aims to outline the roles and responsibilities of departments and individuals in relation to their responsibilities in respect of the WHSWR and with specific reference to:

- reporting building and infrastructure defects,
- regular inspection and monitoring of work areas; and
- general housekeeping and maintenance of building and department work areas.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

The responsibilities of Heads of Departments (hereafter used to include Heads of School and Directors of Services), staff and students are fully explained in the Health and Safety Policy, but the following gives guidance on the expectations and demarcation of responsibilities for workplace environment requirements.

2.1 Heads of Departments/Heads of Schools/Directors of Service

Heads of Departments are legally responsible for the day-to-day management of health and safety within their departments and with particular reference to WHSWR, this include ensuring:

- departmental systems are in place for reporting building faults and defects;
- staff and students adhere to general good housekeeping in work areas;
- all accidents, incidents and dangerous occurrences are reported and investigated; and
- regular inspections of work areas are undertaken and remedial actions notified and/or taken where necessary.

2.2. Departmental Safety Convenors

One of the main duties of Departmental Safety Convenors (DSC), as outlined in the Health and Safety Policy, is to advise the Head of Department on health and safety matters. Duties may include:

- reporting fabric and fitting faults to Estates Services and monitoring their remediation and progress;
- investigating or acting upon reports or concerns from staff and student members;
- making arrangements for service/maintenance engineers;
- ensuring risk assessments have been carried out in relation to working environments; and
- liaising with Estates Services for any workplace alterations and refurbishments which affect or may affect building fabric or services e.g. the installation of new equipment.

2.3. Departmental Safety Committees

One of the main functions of Departmental Safety Committees is to assist the DSC in carrying out their range of functions. This should include monitoring general welfare and environmental conditions in departmental work areas e.g. through the outcomes of safety inspections etc.

2.4 Laboratory Managers, Supervisors, Principal Investigators, COSHH Assessors etc.

All those individuals responsible for designing, assessing, running and supervising work/research activities must ensure that relevant and up-to-date risk assessments and safe systems of work, where applicable, are in place for the work activities being carried out and that these are being followed.

2.5. Individuals

WHSWR cover the basic requirements of workplace safety. Whilst the University has routine and preventative maintenance programmes in place, all individuals also have a duty to report any defects or items requiring repair. Therefore, all staff members should be vigilant in reporting defects, accidents, incidents, dangerous occurrences, items for repair and poor or inadequate working conditions to the appropriate personnel (e.g. line manager, Principal Investigator, Supervisor, senior technician, administrator or Estates Services).

2.6 Estates Services

Estates Services are responsible for maintaining and servicing all University buildings, servicing, plant, welfare facilities, grounds maintenance, general housekeeping requirements of the University e.g. window cleaning, room cleaning and waste disposal and for providing direct labour such as Joiners, Plumbers, Electricians, Heating Engineers, Portering Services etc.

However, Estates Services are not responsible for the maintenance of Departmental equipment and plant as this falls under the responsibility of the Head of Department as a Departmental owned responsibility.

3. Additional considerations for certain workers

Particular groups of individuals may or are likely to require additional considerations under these regulations.

- **Young workers** must not be employed in activities that are likely to be exposed to extreme cold or heat.
- **Pregnant workers.** Departments must specifically assess the risks to pregnant women, including extremes of heat and in relation to the provision of rest facilities and access to drinking water.
- **Disabled workers.** Disability is not always obvious. The Equality Act 2010 defines a person disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has, or is likely to have, a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. In such instances, assessments must be made in respect of these individuals.

4. Working at other institutions (Regulation 4)

If a staff member is working at another employers' workplace, such as another University, a hospital, a school or other external establishments, then the Head of Department still has a general duty under the HSWA to ensure the health, safety and welfare of this individual, although compliance with the WHSWR remains the responsibility of the external establishment.

5. Other legislation

In some cases, the WHSWR cannot be considered in isolation from other pieces of legislation. This includes the following:

The Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992	Requires that a risk assessment is carried out for all 'users'. Work equipment belonging to any work stations should not produce excess heat which could cause discomfort to operators or users.
Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992	Risk assessments carried out under these regulations require employers to take account of risks from various factors listed in Schedule 1, including hot and humid conditions.
The Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at Work Regulations 1992	Requires selecting PPE which is suitable for the risks, staff who will be using it and, and for the environment it is being used and stored in. Where PPE has to be used in hot weather, it should be designed to allow workers to keep as cool as possible.

The Equality Act 2010	Requires that ‘reasonable adjustments’ are made to jobs and workplaces to ensure anyone that the Equality Act applies to is not unfairly disadvantaged against other workers when carrying out their jobs. Adjustments can include things such as improving access or layouts e.g. for wheelchair access, providing facilities such as rest rooms e.g. for the administration of medication, getting new or adapting existing equipment for the user or providing aids to improve communications e.g. visual aids or audible cues.
The Working Time Regulations 1998	Working time is the time when someone is ‘working at his employers disposal and carrying out his activities or duties’.
Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002	Requires that any engineering controls e.g. fume extraction systems that are used as protection control measures are suitable and properly maintained and that any PPE used is suitable, appropriate, maintained and correctly stored.

Where, and if, appropriate please refer to the applicable University Local Rule or Guidance.

6. Repairs by Estates Services

6.1 General

Estates Services is responsible for keeping all University buildings wind and watertight and for keeping footpaths and external lighting in good condition.

It is Estates Services policy to ensure that all possible hazards resulting from any fault are made safe as soon as reasonably practicable and irrespective of whether or not the fault can be fully repaired at the time. Repairs are categorised into emergency, urgent and routine repairs and each have a target time for response given below. However, these categories are for guidance only and account will be taken of the specific needs of the building occupants e.g. teaching rooms, whether or not the issue is business critical or if the fault/defect affects those with special requirements. Also, these are initial response times and not necessarily completion times, which may be affected by the availability of materials or equipment or the complexity of the work required.

All emergency defect reporting should be made via the Estates Services Helpdesk (ext. 2164) during normal hours (8.00am to 5.00pm weekdays). Out with these hours, defect notifications (or emergencies) should be reported to Security Services, (ext. 3333), who will contact the appropriate standby tradesperson to deal with the problem if required.

General or routine maintenance and service requests should be reported and submitted online via [web EMIS](#). The following are all examples of maintenance works:

- broken brickwork on exterior of buildings;
- Water and/or wind coming into buildings from outside (Via windows, doors, roof area);
- broken footpath slabs;
- overhanging plants;
- exterior paintwork; and
- external lighting faults.

Only requests for emergency works are taken over the phone. All other requests should be submitted by completing a manual Service Request (SR) form or going online via [Pegasus](#) and creating a [web SR](#).

6.2 Emergency Repairs

This class of repair is intended to deal with genuine emergencies, which are likely to cause injury or death, or substantial property damage. The response/repair target time is up to four (4) hours. Typical emergencies are:

- escape of gas or fumes;
- bare or live electrical wires or fittings;
- electrical fittings in contact with water;
- failure of lights or power;
- failure of sanitary services and sewage overflowing into properties;
- external doors or windows that cannot be securely locked;
- severe water leakage;
- repairs to floors or paths that are hazardous; and
- broken doors or windows causing the property to be insecure.

Emergency repairs should be reported to the Estates Services Helpdesk by phone.

6.3 Urgent Repairs

These are associated with faults that may cause inconvenience to an occupant or member of staff but represent a low probability of causing further property damage if dealt with within the specified target time which is 3 working days. Typical urgent repairs are:

- faults at electrical fittings;
- ball valve faults at storage tanks or cisterns;
- leaks in WC flush pipes, waste pipes, traps; and
- damage to roofs likely to cause additional damage to other structures or finishes.

All heating, power and water supply failures are classified as urgent repairs; however they have a target rectification/repair time of 24 hours.

6.4 Routine Repairs

These are associated with faults that are not hazardous or which cause minor inconvenience to the building occupants. The response/repair target time is 10 working days or 2 weeks. Typical routine repairs are:

- cleaning or repairing gutters or downpipes;
- easing or re-fitting doors or windows;
- plasterwork repairs;
- repairs to floors and paths that are not hazardous;
- draughts at doors and windows;
- minor plumbing leaks;
- roof tiles or lead flashings;
- furniture faults; and
- repairs to shelves and fixed equipment that are not hazardous

6.5 Other functions

The Works Management Section (WMS) of Estates Services is responsible for providing a complete routine maintenance service to the University. This includes maintaining buildings and services, carrying out minor alterations, upgrading of the existing property portfolio and meeting client accommodation needs. This section completes about 28,000 work requests per year for the University.

Trades workshops are located with Estates Services' premises, although the vast majority of work is carried out in buildings across the campus and most departments will be familiar with the various trades staff. Day-to-day repairs are usually reported by building occupants, security and/or cleaning staff.

WMS also provides technical advice and guidance by supporting the Risk Management Structure within Estates Services and where required provides a professional and technical interface between the department, contractors and customers.

Estates Services also have a policy to improve access to buildings across the University estate. This ensures that new buildings and refurbishments will comply with various pieces of legislation including the requirements of The Equality Act 2010.

7 Health & Safety (including the Working Environment)

7.1 Room dimensions and space (Regulation 10)

Every workroom should have sufficient floor area, height and unoccupied space to allow workers to get to and from workstations and to move about freely. The recommended minimum space is 11 cubic metres per person, assuming the room is 3m high (note: any parts of the room over 3m are still counted as only 3m high). These measurements do not include equipment or furniture. Therefore, more space per person may be required based upon the room contents (furniture, equipment, fixtures and fittings), room layout and by the nature of the work.

7.2 Temperature (Regulation 7)

Health effects from incorrect workplace temperatures can include discomfort, loss of concentration, irritability, and tiredness with more serious health effects caused by extremes of temperature.

During working hours, the temperature inside buildings must be reasonable. Workers should be comfortable without the need to wear special clothing indoors (e.g. wearing coats and gloves). Workrooms should normally be at least 16°C for most types of work and 13°C for work involving increased physical effort. There is currently no legal requirement for a maximum working temperature. Ideal temperatures are normally considered to be between 16-24°C. Draughts, humidity and excessively high temperatures must also be considered and controlled when aiming for a comfortable temperature.

Thermometers should be available to measure the temperature in an environment, although they do not need to be provided for each workroom.

7.2.1 Work locations with specific temperature requirements

Some workplaces e.g. kitchens, chiller rooms, sterilisation rooms with autoclaves etc. have specific temperature requirements for the products/samples being stored or used or for the work processes being carried out. For example, because of the very nature of the cooking process, and the need to serve cooked food hot, high temperatures and humidity are not unusual in kitchens and serveries. Both can affect the health, comfort, and efficiency of kitchen staff. Therefore ventilation, with sufficient air changes and adequate movement of air, is necessary to cool the workplace and counteract humidity. Fume extraction alone may not be adequate to ventilate all parts of the kitchen properly and, if necessary, additional extractor or circulation fans may be necessary. Air inlets should be carefully sited to make sure that there is air movement in all parts. In kitchens where the temperature or humidity is persistently high the advice of a ventilation engineer should be sought.

7.2.2 Hot and Cold Temperatures

Where maintaining the aforementioned workroom temperatures would be impractical, then the University is required to take all reasonable steps to achieve a comfortable temperature as close to the standards as possible. For example, by providing a warm workstation within a room where the overall temperature may be lower.

7.2.3 Possible methods for controlling high temperatures

It is advised that a detailed survey is arranged, which may include data about temperature, humidity, air movements and workload. Methods arising from the survey results may include:

- providing properly designed ventilation and/or air conditioning which is correctly maintained, and which must not produce harmful or offensive fumes, gases or vapours;
- insulating hot pipes and equipment;
- providing adequate ventilation, fans, and windows that can be opened (but above 27°C/80°F fans are ineffective at cooling the air);
- providing portable air cooling cabinets, which may reduce the air temperature by up to 6°C/11°F;
- re-designing the job or work area to isolate staff from the source of heat as much as possible, for example:
 - reducing heat gain via windows by shading, reflective film or blinds, and by reducing window area;
 - moving or siting of desks and workstations away from windows and/or hot areas;
- allowing staff to dress appropriately for hot weather and the risks present in the work area;
- reducing staff exposure to hot work through frequent rest breaks in a cool area where cold drinks are available, job rotation, or altering work activities undertaken during the hottest part of the day;
- taking the hottest rooms out of service is another temporary measure;
- allowing regular rests for pregnant women and those with medical conditions or early leave from work;
- providing local cooling at individual workstations, and
- as a last resort in unavoidably hot work areas, providing rest facilities and limiting the amount of time individuals spend in the heat.

7.2.4 Heat and Outdoor Workers

The WHSWR do not apply to outdoor workplaces, but employers still have general duties to ensure health and safety under the HSWA; and duties to assess and control risks from work in hot temperatures under the MHSWR.

Exposure to ultraviolet light from excessive sunlight can increase the risk of skin cancer. Outdoor workers exposed to high temperatures for long periods are at risk from sunstroke, sunburn, and heat exhaustion. These effects are more likely when heavy physical work is being done.

To avoid these effects, working hours should be kept short; clothing, including protective clothing, should not be tight and restricting, and should allow body heat to escape; plenty of rest periods in a cool place should be taken; and cool, clean water should be provided for frequent drinks as it is important to replace water lost through sweating.

Excessive exposure to sun should be avoided by covering bare skin with lightweight material and taking frequent rest breaks in the shade and ideally the work should be organised so that staff and students are not outside working during the hottest part of the day.

7.2.5 Cold Temperatures

Where exposure to cold is unavoidable, workers must be provided with cold weather clothing. When the body is working the production of heat increases. To maintain a balance between heat production and heat loss, insulation must be decreased. Properly designed cold weather clothing allows the wearer to remove layers or open vents and let the excess heat escape. This prevents overheating which can be a serious problem in the cold: sweat accumulates in clothes and continues to evaporate during periods of rest, chilling the body.

The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 (PPE 1992) describes processes and activities where thermal protective equipment should be used.

7.2.6 Possible methods for controlling cold temperatures

- enclosing or insulating the product;
- keeping chilled areas as small as possible;
- pre-chilling the product, and
- exposing the product to workroom temperatures as briefly as possible.

If this is not 'practicable', then the employer should:

- provide a warm working station within a room where the overall temperature may be lower. This can be achieved by the provision of local heating for the worker. Note: the use of items like portable heaters, for example, needs careful monitoring to guard against fire, electrical overload and there needs to be adequate ventilation to prevent against any build up of carbon monoxide gas. These should never be used as permanent method of heating;
- insulated cleanable duckboards or other floor coverings if workers would otherwise have to stand for long periods on cold floors (unless special footwear is provided which prevents discomfort); and
- draught exclusion including fitting self-closing doors.

Where, despite the application of these measures a reasonable temperature cannot be maintained the employer should ensure that the individual is kept warm. This can be achieved by:

- providing suitable heated rest facilities and allowing staff ready access to them or establish systems of work to minimise the length of time of exposure to uncomfortable temperatures and by job rotation to give workers the opportunity to go to heated areas; and
- as a last resort by providing suitable PPE.

7.3 Ventilation (Regulation 6)

Enclosed workplaces must have suitable and adequate ventilation. This can be either by fresh or purified air. Ventilation is allowed by either windows and/or other openings or through a mechanical ventilation system. To be effective, fresh air must be drawn in from outside and diluted with the warm humid air inside, creating movement and a sense of freshness without causing a draught. Humidity and ventilation must be at levels, which do not cause discomfort or result in sore eyes. Air inlets should not be near any contaminated air, for example exhaust fumes or flues. Any environment where hazardous substances are used will require a higher standard of ventilation.

7.4 Lighting (Regulation 8)

Every workplace must have suitable and sufficient lighting which should be natural so far as is reasonably practicable. Where possible, workstations should be so positioned as to make the best possible use of all available natural light. In some cases natural lighting is not feasible for workplace rooms, however work in these locations this is still permissible under the WHSWR.

Wherever artificial light is required, a suitable system of emergency lighting must also be installed.

Outdoor areas should also be adequately lit after dark.

7.5 Workstations and seating (Regulation 11)

Workstations must be suitable for staff using them and for the work being carried out. Awkward postures or movements should be kept to a minimum. Seating should be the right height for the user in relation to the workstation, work task being carried out and should include proper back support. If appropriate and if required, a footrest must be provided. Workstations outside must, where reasonably practicable, protect the worker from adverse weather and be easy to evacuate in an emergency. Any particular requirements of disabled workers must be considered.

7.6 Floors and Stairs (Regulation 12)

Workplace floors (indoor and outdoor areas) should, as far as is reasonably practicable be free from obstructions and other slip, trip or fall hazards. They must be suitably constructed without slippery or uneven surfaces. They must only be loaded within their weight-bearing capacity. Where surfaces are likely to become wet, either through the work process or because of spillage, a suitable system of controlling the risk of slipping must be in place - either through drainage, a clearing-up system or slip-resistant coating. Holes, slopes and uneven surfaces all pose a risk to health and must be properly controlled, through fencing, or repairs. The stairs and slopes must be provided with handrails or guards whenever possible, that is, on at least one side of staircases unless this obstructs access.

7.7 Preventing falls and falling objects (Regulation 13)

Where reasonably practical, the University must prevent people from falling from edges and prevent objects from falling onto people resulting in injuries. The ACOP deals with a variety of such issues, including the provision of fencing or covers, fixed ladders, roof work, stacking and racking and scaffolding. For example, all roof work must be assessed and planned for, as well as access to heights in general (e.g. for gutter cleaning, drama studio lighting assembly, putting up displays etc.). Suitable measures should be taken to prevent accidents arising from falls from heights or into dangerous substances or from falling objects.

The Work at Height Regulations (WAHR) 2005 specify the need for risk assessment and stipulate additional requirements, including amongst others items, in relation to the provision and selection of work equipment, inspection and training requirements. These regulations are applicable where any work at height is involved.

Safety measures when fencing is required or when fencing (and covers) cannot be used are also covered. The ACOP also deals with covers for tanks, pits and similar structures and there is guidance on ladders, work on roofs, stacking and racking, and loading and unloading vehicles.

7.8 Windows and transparent doors (Regulation 14)

For transparent or translucent surfaces (e.g. windows, door panes etc.) where there is a risk of breakage to any of these items, they must be constructed of suitable safety material and, if appropriate, marked so that they are clearly visible). This is to minimise the risk of someone being injured by walking into them.

7.9 Windows, skylights and ventilators (Regulation 15)

If a window, skylight or ventilator can be opened, then it must be possible to do so in a safe manner. When open, the window should not create a hazard (e.g. of collision). Additionally, windows must be able to be cleaned safely. This entails either a safe method of cleaning them from the inside or the provision of safe access equipment for cleaning them from the outside. (See Section 9.3 also).

7.10 Doors and gates (Regulation 18)

Doors and gates must be suitably constructed and fitted with viewing panels, if there is a risk of opening them onto people on the other side. The exact location of any 'viewing panel' needs to take account of the occupants of the building, which may include young children or wheelchair users. It is important that appropriate advice is sought from the University Fire Safety Adviser if any 'fire doors' are involved. Gates must have a suitable stop to prevent them coming off the end of their track. Powered doors should be prevented from trapping people and if the power fails should be operable manually or 'fail-to-safety' by opening automatically. Doors which can be pushed open from either side should allow a clear view of the space close to both sides and upward opening doors must be fitted with a device to prevent them falling closed in such a way as to cause injury.

7.11 Traffic routes on site (Regulation 17)

The University caters for the access, egress and movement of staff, students and visitors either as pedestrians or in vehicles arriving at or leaving the entrances and exits of building premises as well as movement within buildings.

The WHSWR requires that all traffic routes across the University are organised in such a way that it allows the safe passage of pedestrians and vehicles about the campus. Pedestrian routes must be safe, suitable for the number of people expected to use them and, whenever possible, separate from vehicle routes. Traffic routes include stairs, staircases, fixed ladders, doorways, gateways, crossings, loading bays or ramps. Loading bays, and areas where vehicles need access to make deliveries and may have to reverse present a particular hazard and this must be adequately controlled. External traffic routes must also have suitable systems in place to deal with ice and snow.

The ACOP gives advice regarding the separation of people and vehicles and also pedestrian crossings, loading bays and traffic signs.

Care needs to be taken for everyone who may use or have access to the premises, and particular attention given to the requirements of young children and people with disabilities.

Estates Services are generally responsible for the maintenance and risk assessments associated with all grounds and garden routes, external pathways to buildings and car parks (internal and external). They are also responsible for the snow and ice plan for external surfaces. However, in a few specific cases, a department may be responsible for maintaining or risk assessing an external area, for example the external courtyard delivery area for the SIPBS Building.

The loading and unloading of deliveries and equipment is generally within the responsibility of departments to risk assess and make appropriate specifications with suppliers or delivery companies.

8.0 Welfare Facilities

8.1 Toilets and Washing facilities (Regulations 20 and 21)

Within the workplace there must be suitable and sufficient washing facilities provided which are readily accessible. This includes showers if required by the nature of the work. "Suitable" requires washing facilities to be:

- provided near to sanitary conveniences;
- in separate rooms for men and women, except where a facility is for a single person at any one time and the door can be secured from the inside;
- provided near any changing rooms;
- have toilets in their own room and have a lockable door, not just a row of cubicles in one room;
- have flush toilets that are connected to a suitable drainage system;
- provided with a supply of clean hot and cold water;
- provided with soap or other similar means of cleaning;
- provided with towels or other suitable means of drying;
- sufficiently ventilated and lit; and
- kept in a clean and orderly condition.

Enough toilets and workstations must be provided for those expected to use them and people should not have to queue for long periods to go to the toilet. However, toilets need not be in the workplace or even in the same building but must be available at all material times and be within reasonable travelling distance.

Toilets should never communicate directly with a room in which food is prepared or eaten.

Furthermore, the needs for individuals with disabilities must also be considered and taken into account.

The ACOP provides a minimum number of toilets and washbasins to be provided. However, it also states that there should be enough facilities provided to enable everyone to use them without undue delay. This may mean that more than the minimum number is required.

8.2 Restrooms and meal facilities (Regulation 25)

Facilities should be provided to eat meals at work. Taking a rest break at your desk is acceptable, however if hot/cold food cannot be eaten there due to business needs, then a suitable facility should be accessible. Separate rest rooms/areas must be provided if staff are unable to sit and rest at their workstations.

All rest facilities must:

- be large enough for everyone who needs to use them;
- be kept clean, quiet and contain sufficient chairs and tables for staff who may use the facility at any one time;
- have facilities for staff to eat meals; and
- eating facilities should be kept clean and include means of obtaining hot drinks e.g. hot water dispenser/urn, kettle or vending machine.

The ACOP states that when hot food cannot be obtained in or near the workplace, facilities should be provided for workers to heat their own food. For example, the use of microwave ovens is commonplace.

The University provides numerous facilities for staff and students. In addition to the commercial catering facilities provided across the University, there is provision for staff and students to eat their own packed lunches in a section of The Venue (at the bottom of the Livingston Tower) and a section in the Lord Todd Dining Room.

Suitable rest facilities, situated near to toilets and including somewhere comfortable to lie down should be available for pregnant women and nursing mothers.

8.3 Drinking water (Regulation 22)

The University must provide an adequate supply of wholesome drinking water which is readily available at suitable places. Cups must be provided unless the supply is from an upward drinking fountain. If the cups are not disposable, there must be a convenient location to wash them. The preference is for a mains supply, though bottled water/water dispensers can be provided as a secondary source. Drinking water taps should not be installed where contamination is likely. Drinking water does not have to be marked unless there is a significant risk of people drinking non-drinking water.

Within the University, potable (drinkable) water supply is provided either directly from mains water from the Scottish Water network or from cold water storage tanks within buildings.

Estates Services has the following procedures in place to manage drinking water services across the University:

- six monthly inspection of all water storage tanks;
- disinfecting of services fed from storage tanks based on tank inspection results or at a minimum of at least every two years;
- microbiological testing every 6 months by a UKAS accredited laboratory; and
- annual mineral testing by a UKAS accredited laboratory.

Samples are tested for compliance with current legal standards for potable water.

For further information on the above, please contact the Estates Services helpdesk, extension 2164.

8.4 Changing facilities and accommodation for clothing (Regulations 24 and 23)

If the work activities require staff and/or students to change from their own clothes into specialist clothing (e.g. lab coats, overalls, a uniform, thermal clothing etc.) and individuals cannot be expected to change in an existing or suitable location for this purpose, then suitable and sufficient changing facilities must be provided.

Where a changing room is provided it should:

- be readily accessible;
- sufficient for the number of people expected to use it/them without causing overcrowding or unreasonable delays;
- contain, or lead directly to, clothing storage and washing facilities;
- provide seating;
- provide a means for hanging clothes e.g. a hook or peg may be sufficient; and ensure the privacy of the user.

The University must also provide suitable and sufficient accommodation for:

- staffs' own clothing which is not worn during working hours which can be within the workroom, if appropriate and;
- special clothing worn at work but not taken home.

Accommodation should be clean, warm, dry, well ventilated and located in a convenient place. So far as is practical, the facility for drying clothes should be provided.

The Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 1992 also requires suitable accommodation for PPE clothing and equipment.

9. Maintenance and Housekeeping

The University is responsible for ensuring that all workplaces, equipment and devices that fall under WHSWR are maintained in an efficient state, in efficient working order, and in good repair. The importance of a systematic maintenance approach, particularly in areas where failure could endanger staff is emphasised.

Buildings, including welfare facilities must be maintained in good, clean condition. This is primarily achieved through a cleaning and maintenance programme managed by Estates Services. However, whilst Estates Services have a general overall responsibility for this, Heads of Department also have a responsibility for ensuring that areas that fall out with this general programme are in place and maintained. For example, the cleaning of laboratories is a departmental responsibility, although Estates Services can arrange for special cleans in lab areas in conjunction with Departments. This is required to ensure other health and safety legislation is complied and adhered to.

9.1 Cleanliness (Regulation 9)

All workplaces, furniture, furnishings and fittings must be kept "sufficiently clean". According to the ACOP this will depend on the nature of the workplace i.e. food preparation, workshop, laboratory etc. In addition, cleaning should be carried out in an effective manner without exposing anyone to a health and safety risk. This is particularly important in areas such as research laboratories; workshops etc. where there may be particular health and safety aspects to be considered in relation to the cleaning process. These need to be addressed with reference to risk assessments made for example under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002.

Floors, walls and ceilings must have easily cleaned surfaces.

Redecoration may be required when the internal finishes of a workplace can no longer be kept sufficiently clean.

Waste materials and rubbish must be kept to a minimum and stored in suitable containers.

9.2 Maintenance (Regulations 4 & 5)

Workplaces and related equipment, devices and systems, must be kept in a clean and efficient state, and in good repair. Maintenance must be suitable and sufficient, and records should be kept to show maintenance programmes.

Examples of the 'equipment, devices and systems' include such things as emergency lighting systems, mechanical ventilation systems, water systems, fixed window cleaning equipment, anchorage points for safety harnesses, devices to limit window openings, powered doors and escalators.

The ACOP highlights regular inspection, and testing of equipment and maintenance to be carried out regularly and the details suitably recorded. An overall risk assessment under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 should help to establish an action programme to implement these Regulations. This programme will also provide an opportunity to revise existing arrangements for workplace maintenance and to identify priority areas for action and remedy.

9.3 Safety of window cleaning (Regulation 16)

Estates Services are responsible for engaging internal and external window cleaners. They are also responsible for all access arrangements including mobile equipment, anchor points and for the engagement of competent contractors to carry out this work. This includes for any properties or areas leased to tenants by the University.

All windows and skylights must be easily cleaned and window cleaning equipment safe to use. Additional controls or devices may be necessary to protect against falls from heights through or out of a window. Arrangements should be made to ensure that window cleaning can be done safely. This may be by virtue of design, construction or position. Additional features to the building may be necessary to allow for use of window cleaning equipment, e.g. suitable conditions for use of mobile access equipment, anchorage points for safety harnesses etc. Window cleaning is currently through an external contract which is managed by Estates Services.

Estates Services cleaning staff are responsible for cleaning viewing panels in doors.

10. Work Breaks

Work, daily and weekly rest breaks do not fall under the WHSWR, but come under the Working Time Regulations 1998 (WTR). The main provisions for rest breaks at work and time off is as follows:

Rest breaks at work	A worker is entitled to an uninterrupted break of 20 minutes when daily working time is more than six hours. It should be a break in working time and should not be taken either at the start, or at the end, of a working day.
Daily rest	A worker is entitled to a rest period of 11 consecutive hours rest in each 24 hour period during which he works for his employer. However, there are a number of special circumstances in which the entitlement to rest periods does not apply, for example, where the activities involve a need for continuity of service or production or where there is a foreseeable surge of activity. Also, if a shift worker changes shift, it may not be possible for them to take their full rest entitlement before starting the new pattern of work. In such a case the entitlement to daily and weekly rest does not apply.
Weekly rest	An adult worker is also entitled to one day off a week; this can be averaged over 2 weeks.

11. **Sources of information and further reading:**
[Safety Services - Local rules, guidance, documents, training](#)

Legislation

[The Workplace \(Health, Safety and Welfare\) Regulations 1992](#)
[Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974](#)
[Management of Health and Safety At Work Regulations 1999](#)
[The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002](#)
[The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992](#)
[The Health and Safety \(Display Screen Equipment\) Regulations 1992](#)
[The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992](#)
[The Working Time Regulations 1998](#)
[Equality Act 2010](#)
[The Water Supply \(Water Quality\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2001](#)
[The Water Quality \(Scotland\) Regulations 2010](#)

HSE - Approved Codes of Practice, Guidance and Web Links

[Workplace health, safety and welfare - a short guide for managers](#) (HSE, leaflet INDG 244)
[Welfare at work - Guidance for employers on welfare provisions](#) (HSE, leaflet INDG 293)
[Workplace \(Health, Safety and Welfare\) Regulations 1992. ACOP](#) (HSE, 1992, L24, ISBN 9780717604135)
[Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 ACOP](#) (HSE, 2000, L21, ISBN 9780717624881)
[Working with substances hazardous to health - what you need to know about COSHH](#) (HSE, leaflet INDG 136)
[The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 \(as amended\). ACOP](#) (HSE, 2005 L5, ISBN 9780717629817)
[A short guide to the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992](#) (HSE, leaflet INDG174)
[The Work at Height Regulations 2005 \(as amended\) A brief guide](#) (HSE, leaflet INDG174)
[Simple guide to the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998](#) (HSE, leaflet INDG290)
[Safety in window cleaning using suspended and powered access equipment](#) (HSE Information Sheet MISC611)
[Safe use of ladders and stepladders - An employers' guide](#) (HSE, INDG402)

Young People (HSE)

[Young people at work](#)

New and Expectant Mothers (HSE)

[Guidance on legislation affecting new and expectant mothers at work](#)
[Guidance on health and safety for new and expectant mothers](#)
[A guide for new and expectant mothers who work](#) (Leaflet, INDG 373)

Disability and Equality

[Disability](#) (HSE)
[Disability and the law](#) (HSE)
[Equality and Human Rights Commission - Disability in Employment](#) (EHRC)
[Equality and Human Rights Commission - Equality Act Guidance](#) (EHRC)

Environment, equipment and welfare related safety issues (HSE)

[Temperature](#)

[Lighting at work](#) (1997, HSG38, ISBN 9780717612321)

[Seating at work](#) (1997, HSG57, ISBN9780717612314)

[Stress](#)

[Falls from height](#)

[Slips and trips](#)

[Safe use of ladders and stepladders](#) (Leaflet INDG402)

[Safety in window cleaning using portable ladders](#) (Information Sheet MISC613)

[Safety in window cleaning using rope access techniques](#) (Information Sheet, MISC612)

[Safety in window cleaning using suspended and powered access equipment](#)
(Information Sheet MISC611)

[Legionnaires](#)

[Legionnaires' disease - A guide for employers](#) (leaflet, IACL27)

[Equipment](#)

[Safe maintenance](#)

[Local exhaust ventilation \(LEV\)](#)

[Workplace transport](#)

Other external sources

[Working hours](#) (Government website)

[Working Time](#) (Healthy Working Lives website)