



Asbestos Policy

HSPG10

1. Statement of Policy

Asbestos can pose a serious health risk to those exposed to it. The main risk is from inhalation of asbestos fibres. Inhalation of asbestos is painless and people affected may not even realize they had been exposed. Asbestos related disease may occur many years after exposure, commonly between 5 - 20 years after the initial exposure. Asbestos is classified as a category 1 carcinogen, and can cause Asbestosis, Mesothelioma or other associated Respiratory Tract Disease. Exposure to Asbestos fibres from the air or being in close proximity to demolition or building work where Asbestos fibres or debris is being emitted can be a risk to anyone in the vicinity if containment and extraction is not carried out properly.

Asbestos containing products and materials were used predominantly from the 1940s to the 1990s and various items of equipment would contain some traces of Asbestos e.g., ironing boards to boilers, kilns and furnaces. In buildings asbestos has been used as an insulating material in pipe lagging and sprayed coatings, in composite materials for wall boards and ceiling tiles and in asbestos cement used for roofing sheets, pipes and flues.

As long as the asbestos materials is in good condition and not damaged or remains largely undisturbed, there is little risk to health, nor is there a legal obligation to replace. Any operation which could cause asbestos fibres to be released into the air poses a risk to health and there is strict guidance and legislation covering works that may lead to fibre release.

In view of the serious health effects of exposure the University recognises the need to prevent exposure or, where this is not reasonably practicable, reduce exposure to the lowest level reasonably practicable under current legislative Approved Codes of Practices.

2. Responsibility

In order to fulfil the University's duty to manage the risk of asbestos, the Director of Estates and Campus Services shall ensure that:

- a suitable and sufficient Asbestos Management Plan is in place which is subject to regular monitoring and review.
- the requirements of the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 are met including the Duty to Manage.

As the Duty Holder, the Director of Estates and Campus Services will ensure that the overall effectiveness of this Asbestos Policy is monitored and enforced across the University.

3. Departmental roles

The Senior Asset Manager will ensure that:

- delegated staff report back on essential duties such as production and maintenance of paperwork and document control, logging all accidents and incidents related to Asbestos as well as ensuing investigations and reports, robust procedures for employees to follow for incidents and decontamination should exposure occur;
- an asbestos register is maintained, giving the known locations, type and condition of asbestos materials within the University;

- action is taken to ensure that asbestos containing materials which are in poor condition are repaired or removed in order to minimize risk;
- appropriate training and information is provided for its staff engaged in the management of asbestos;
- regular Asbestos Steering Group meetings are held with noted actions.

Estates' Project Managers and the **Maintenance Manager** will ensure that:

- any work carried out to the buildings does not expose anyone to asbestos or, where this is not reasonably practicable, that exposure is reduced to the lowest level reasonably practicable within statutory controls. Prevention or reduction of exposure is the primary objective.
- any contractor engaged to undertake work on the fabric of University premises that may involve exposure to asbestos are aware of the risks to their health and are competent to carry out the work safely and with minimum risk to their own health and that of others who may be affected;
- no work with asbestos, including removal or disposal, is carried out without prior consultation with appropriate stakeholders;
- prior to any works, obtain appropriate risk assessments and method statements;
- appropriate HSE notifications have been issued;
- any maintenance staff, grounds staff, contractors and sub-contractors or anyone that engages with or undertakes work on University premises which may involve asbestos, are aware of the risks to their health and have read the University's Asbestos Policy. They must also be competent to carry out the work safely, have the necessary training, experience, qualifications and licenses to conduct the work as required;
- no intrusive works are to be undertaken without a suitable refurbishment and demolition survey in place.

The Health & Safety Officer will:

- liaise with departmental managers and others to ensure that all work with asbestos is carried out in a manner which prevents, or if that is not reasonably practicable, adequately controls exposure;
- liaise with site & project managers in control of work to ensure that adequate planning and risk management has been carried out prior to the commencement of the work;
- carry out regular spot checks and inspections, at suitable intervals i.e. both site and document checks; assist Project Managers in checking all documentation and survey reports;
- attend the Asbestos Steering Group and support the Senior Asset Manager in managing the Asbestos Management Plan;
- check the asbestos register and hold regular meetings with Project Managers in charge of projects involving asbestos works along with asbestos removal contractors and surveyors to ensure compliance and safety standards are being met & maintained for every project;
- compile and manage RIDDOR reports where appropriate.

4. Other staff and students

All members' of staff have a general duty to co-operate on issues of health and safety, and to ensure that they do not compromise their own safety, or the safety of others, by their acts or omissions. In respect of this Policy, staff and students must:

- where they suspect that a particular task may expose them to asbestos should check with the University's Health & Safety Officer prior to starting the task;
- not disturb the fabric of any buildings in any way;
- not remove any asbestos warning stickers provided to identify asbestos containing materials around the Campus;
- immediately inform the Director of Estates and Campus Services if they believe that a release of asbestos fibres has occurred, or could occur imminently.

5. Policy management

The following arrangements will apply:

- A database will be kept by the Estates and Campus Services team, giving the known locations, type and condition of asbestos materials within the University. The database will be updated on an ongoing basis when surveys are done or when Asbestos Containing Materials are discovered in new locations or if they are removed;
- Inspections will be carried out at regular intervals overseen by the Competent Person, of not more than 18 months, to monitor the condition of known asbestos containing materials. A record will be kept of the inspections and the information used to update the asbestos register in addition to regular surveying;
- Based on survey recommendations, action will be taken to ensure that asbestos containing materials which are in poor condition are either repaired or removed in order to minimize risk;
- all persons in control of work will ensure that work does not expose anyone to asbestos or, where this is not reasonably practicable that exposure is reduced to the lowest level reasonably practicable;
- any person arranging for contractors to undertake work on University premises that may involve exposure to asbestos must ensure that the contractors are aware of the risks to their health. The person making the arrangements must also ensure that the contractors are competent to undertake the work safely and with minimum risk to their own health and that of others who may be affected.

6. Queries

Any queries regarding this Policy should be addressed to the Senior Asset Manager in Estates and Campus Services or the Health and Safety Officer.

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