

Student Guidance - Using Externally Sourced Objects & Materials

Introduction

The University is a creative environment and one in which experimentation and innovation are to be championed and encouraged. However, this needs to be carried out in a manner, which does not pose a risk to yourself or to any other people who may be affected by your activities.

This guidance has been produced to assist staff and students in the following:

- Identifying items, objects and materials which pose too high a risk and should not be brought into University buildings
- Determining the processes which should be followed for items that, although posing a risk, with the right control measures, can be managed so they may be used.

Items, Objects and Materials

Mattresses

Old mattresses are not hygienic and if damaged are no longer fire retardant therefore should not be brought in. New mattresses may be used bearing in mind that there are manual handling risks with the movement of a mattress due to the bulky size and weight, which would need a risk assessment.

Asbestos

Asbestos is a high risk material and has been banned in the UK since 1999 therefore must not be brought into the University. Prior to 1999 it had been used in the building and fit out of many places in the UK for many years, therefore is still present in some buildings. It can be in many forms including lagging around pipes and boiler, gaskets, insulation board, floor tiles, cement products for example; downpipes, soffits boards and corrugated roof sheeting and window putty. Care must be taken when bringing in any old objects since there may be a possibility that they contain asbestos.

Asbestos must never be handled, broken or tampered with, below are some picture examples of asbestos materials to help in identifying it:





Old or damaged mains electrical equipment

Old or damaged electrical equipment can only be used for non-powered, decorative purpose. A risk assessment will need to be carried out and the item will need to be decommissioned so it can't be used electrically.

New and other mains electrical equipment

Only off-the-shelf electrical devices that meet British Safety Standards can be operated within University buildings. All mains electrical devices brought into the University need to be inspected by a member of Estates before they can be used. Mains electrical equipment should only be used for its intended purpose and must never be modified or adapted. The University requires that all mains electrical equipment must be PAT tested annually, a visual inspection must be undertaken each time before an appliance is used.

Students wishing to use mains electrical equipment that is not provided by the University should speak to their Module Leader, who will request via the Estates helpdesk a PAT test if necessary, and a risk assessment should be carried out. This does not include phone chargers or laptop cables, provided they are only used for their intended purpose, are in good condition and of a suitable standard.

Large electrical/domestic appliances must not be brought into the University without an approved risk assessment that also considers its safe transit in and out of the building.

Electrical work

Staff and students must not install or tamper with any electrical systems or devices within University buildings. All University electrical work is managed by the Estates department and carried out by qualified electrical contractors.

Glass / mirrors

There is a risk when transporting or handling glass and mirrors, therefore proposals for working with glass or mirrors need to be risk assessed and approved before the material is brought into University buildings.

Chemicals

Chemicals should only be used if they have been approved by the University and have safety material data sheets, COSHH risk assessments, storage and disposal measures in place.

If a member of staff wishes to try out a process using a new chemical this will need to be risk assessed under COSHH regulations and approved by Estates prior to the chemical being brought onto University premises.

Proprietary brand make-up may be used.

Paint and painted timber

Use of paint should be limited to general emulsion, water based paint and approved oil based paint only. Any deviation from this must be risk assessed. In general paint should be new and proprietary brands, however, paint from established companies which reuse/recycle paint may also be considered new provided the companies can demonstrate they have undergone the correct inspections and the measures they have taken to ensure the safety of their products can be relied upon n.b. advice may need to be taken from Estates (Risk and Safety) to ensure this.

Old paint tins or old painted timber may have lead content, which is a high risk, therefore a risk assessment must be carried out and approved before such items are brought into the University.

Gas bottles, fuel or flammable substances

These items pose too high a risk and under no circumstances should gas bottles or fuel be brought into University buildings.

Metal materials

The University provides students with metal materials for creative practice in its Workshops. Proposals for working with metals that are not supplied by the University need to be risk assessed and approved before the material is brought into University buildings.

Lead must not be brought into the University. It can be absorbed into the blood stream, cause symptoms such as headaches, tiredness, irritability, anaemia or stomach pains and anyone pregnant should not come into contact with it. Lead in the form of cast type for type-setting is subject to strict control within the University's printmaking resource and should not be augmented without a risk assessment by the Workshop Manager and approval by Estates.

Upholstered furniture

Upholstered furniture must not be brought into the University without a risk assessment since it is a combustible material and if the fabric is damaged it will be highly flammable. Furniture can be bulky and heavy and there are manual handling implications with lifting or moving heavy items that will form part of the risk assessment.

Expanding foam

Expanding foam is highly flammable and must not be used. The chemical vapours can expose individuals to isocyanates, which can cause asthma, sensitisation, respiratory problems, skin and eye irritation.

Old or used batteries

These must not be brought into the University buildings.

Pets and animals

A risk assessment will be required prior to any animals being brought into the University. Examples where risk assessments may be approved are:

- where they are required for a film/photo shoot
- assistive animals for persons with disabilities, or those in training for such a purpose
- Police dogs on duty
- Student Union arranged activities involving assistive animals

Firearms/replicas/offensive weapons

Firearms are not permitted within the University buildings.

Proposals for the use of replicas or items, which could be used as weapons will be subject to consideration and recommendation through a risk assessment. The request may be referred to the University's Research Ethics Committee in the first instance.

Any items not referenced in this guidance

If a student wishes to bring any item, object or material into the University that is not referenced in this document, they should discuss this with their Module Leader prior to bringing it into the buildings. Module Leaders will make an initial assessment as to the suitability of the item and the risks that may be posed and may seek advice and guidance from Estates (Risk and Safety) via the Estates Helpdesk.

If a member of staff wishes to bring an item or material into the building that isn't referenced in this document, they should seek advice and guidance from Estates (Risk and Safety) through the Estates Helpdesk.