Health and Safety Guide
2016/2017
Introduction

As a student in University of Leicester accommodation you, as well as the University, have responsibilities for safety. People seldom think about safety except in connection with dangerous sports or crime, however many thousands more are hurt in accidents in the home where most people feel safest. While you occupy University accommodation, whether in Oadby Student Village, or City Living accommodation, that is your home for the time being. You have a duty not only to yourself, but also to others, to act safely and avoid injury and risks to health. This information is a common-sense guide to health and safety for residents in University accommodation, and the hope and expectation is that complying with its straightforward advice will help you to avoid accidents and injuries. If you have any queries about the contents of this section, or on any other aspect of health and safety, help and advice are available from

- Your Site Reception
- Residential Adviser
- The Safety Services Office by telephoning 0044 (0)116 252 2426.

University accommodation is fitted with modern fire detection systems to provide the highest level of life safety. However the fire detectors are sensitive and susceptible to unwanted false alarms, caused by smoke from burning food, steam from kettles, aerosol sprays etc: therefore cooking should never be left unattended.

Fire extinguishers and fire blankets

Fire extinguishers and fire blankets are provided in kitchens. They should only be used on small fires and only if you have read and understood the instructions. Remember that the University does not expect you to take risks dealing with fires in its property. It can sometimes be better to just leave the area, raise the alarm and call the Fire Service.

Fire extinguishers are RED, but have a coloured band to indicate the type of fire they are designed to fight. There are two types mainly used throughout the University:

**CREAM BAND**

Contain foam and are used to smother fires. These can be used on fires that involve combinations of paper, wood, textiles, oils and fats. However, when intending to use a foam extinguisher near electricity you should cut off the power first.

**BLACK BAND**

Contain carbon dioxide and are most effective on fires involving live electrical apparatus. The gas is not toxic, but it is an asphyxiate and CO2 extinguishers must not be used in small confined spaces such as vehicles, store cupboards and the like.

Fire blankets

These can be used to smother fires in frying pans, cover small appliances that are on fire and wrap around people whose clothing is burning.

Misuse of fire safety equipment

It is a criminal offence to misuse any fire safety equipment, including extinguishers, alarms and fire blankets.

Residents caught doing so will be subject to a charge of £110, disciplinary procedures may be implemented and a report may be made to the police.

Fire doors

All doors that are marked as fire doors are required to be closed at all times. Fire doors are designed to ensure your safety should there be a fire in your accommodation. Any fire doors that are propped or wedged open will be considered a misuse of fire safety equipment and residents will be subject to the set charge of £100. Staff will carry out spot checks throughout the year to ensure that all residents are complying with our fire safety regulations.

Fire drills

Fire drills will be held during your first term. The objective of fire drills is to familiarise you with the routine to be followed in the event of fire. Treat them seriously, because there may be a real fire.

Check how to get out and identify a safe alternative route should your normal exit be blocked. Check the location of fire alarms, fire extinguishers and fire blankets. Check the sound of the fire alarm in your accommodation. On hearing the alarm, leave the building immediately using the nearest available route. Do not assume that it is a false alarm or test. If there is a fire, time spent talking might reduce your chances of evacuating safely.

Remember –
GET OUT, DIAL 999, AND STAY OUT!

Preventing false alarms

The number of false alarms set off can be limited by following some simple guidelines:

- When using the shower do ensure that you keep the room ventilated with the fan running or the window open.
- Do keep the bathroom door closed as steam may activate the fire alarm.
- Do ensure that extractor fans are working or that windows are open in the kitchen when you are cooking.
- Always remain with your food when you are cooking.
- Do not touch any ceiling mounted fire alarm detectors or sounders. Remember removing or tampering with a device will sound the alarm and set charges will be raised to the resident responsible.
- Do be aware that large amounts of deodorant sprays, hair spars or aerosol sprays can also activate an alarm.

Open flames

Candles, tea lights, oil burners, fireworks, joss sticks, live coals, shishas, hookahs, flammable liquids etc are a potential source of fire as well as a serious fire hazard and therefore can not be permitted in your accommodation or in any shared or communal areas. If any of these items are discovered in your accommodation you may be charged. Charges can be found online at:

www.le.ac.uk/accommodation

Safety for Residents

Guidance Notes on Student Health and Safety in Oadby Student Village and the City Living Sites.

Once you have used the blanket for whatever purpose, DO NOT REMOVE IT until you are sure it is safe to do so. If you have wrapped it around someone, leave it there for skilled medical people to remove.

Remember, if there is a fire the golden rule is:

GET OUT, DIAL 999, AND STAY OUT!

Property can be replaced – people can’t.

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Electrical safety

Electrically-powered equipment manufactured to normal commercial standards and in good condition should not present any electrical danger as all dangerous parts should be fully enclosed. Residents are strictly forbidden to carry out any work which might give rise to the danger of electrocution. This includes, for example, attempting to repair/adjust electrical appliances and connecting defective or dangerous appliances to the mains. All electrical work must be carried out by competent persons, i.e. qualified electricians employed by the University Estates Office or suitable contractors.

The use of heaters, and especially radiant electrical heaters, is strictly forbidden.

Electrical socket outlets in study bedrooms and elsewhere are to be used to supply one appliance. The use of extension leads and multi-way adaptors can lead to overloading of the electrical systems, which may trip overload protection devices (fuses, circuit breakers, etc) or even cause a fire. These devices should only be used after consulting the site porter. Overseas residents wishing to use portable appliances operating on voltages other than the systems, which may trip overload protection devices (fuses, circuit breakers, etc) or even cause a fire. These devices should only be used after consulting the site porter. Overseas residents wishing to use portable appliances operating on voltages other than the British national standard of 230 volts should regularly check for defects, and in particular look for:

- Broken plugs
- Frayed, chafed, cracked or split supply cables
- Signs of overheating, e.g. scorched marks, blackening or blistering
- Dangerous connections at the appliance and plug ends of the cable. Cable grips should hold both the outer and inner sheathing securely
- Rattling or other looseness in the plug or appliance which might indicate an internal fault

Safety checks of residents’ own electrical appliances will be carried out. This service is offered free-of-charge by the Accommodation Team, check notice boards for dates. Any repairs found necessary will be made and an appropriate charge levied.

Kitchen safety

Never leave cooking unattended, it will lead to fires.

Deep fat/oil frying

The use of deep fat fryers/chip pans is prohibited.

Microwave ovens

- Keep them clean so that they work effectively
- Keep door seals clean by wiping frequently with a soft, damp cloth and, if necessary, by cleaning out food particles. Never use a sharp pointed knife or similar. This will run the seal
- Keep metal out of the microwave.
- Do not run a microwave cooker without a load (something to be heated). This may damage the cooker
- Open containers fully and remove caps and closures from bottles and jars
- Beware of superheating. Superheating is the phenomenon in which a liquid is heated to a temperature higher than its boiling point, without boiling. However, once the liquid is disturbed (by stirring, jolting the container or adding a further substance) some of it violently flashes to steam, spraying boiling water out of the container

Dangerous substances

Many substances used domestically are dangerous if not used with care. Only use substances for the purpose for which they are supplied.

Before using any substances, check the directions for health and safety information and follow them carefully.

Be particularly wary when using products marked as follows:

- These will damage human tissue, causing painful and disfiguring burns. Protect your skin with a pair of good quality rubber or plastic gloves and keep arms covered. If in contact with eyes or skin wash off with lots of water immediately. If ingested seek immediate medical attention.

Foods and implements

- Keep knives used for food preparation sharp. Dull knives are very much harder to use and are liable to slip and cut you
- Never cut towards you when using a knife or other sharp implement
- Keep knives separate from other washing up. Groping around in mucky washing-up water is a recipe for lacerated fingers. Clean sharp knives one at a time using a brush or mop, and wiping from handle to blade tip with the back of the blade facing into the web between thumb and forefinger
- If a knife falls – let it!
- Use a good quality opener for canned foods, one that does not leave sharp edges on the lid

Utensils

- Discard chipped and cracked glass and crockery by wrapping in thick layers of newspaper and putting in an outside bin
- Wash glasses separately, to prevent breakages and cut fingers. If you break a glass, use a brush to gather up the pieces – never your hands
- Search the kitchen carefully for bits when a glass is broken. Glass fragments fly in all directions, and are often discovered later (by bare feet!)

Burns and scalds

Scalds can be caused by steam, hot water, hot soup or beverages, or hot oil, and burn injuries can be caused by hot utensils, flames, etc. To avoid these injuries:

- Lift lids off cooking utensils carefully to avoid the steam
- Turn pan handles away from you when cooking, to avoid knocking them
- Turn off the oven before going out, answering phone calls or attending to visitors
- Do not directly hold utensils containing hot liquids – use oven mitts
Food hygiene
Germs are widespread. Most surfaces (including human skin) have their population of microorganisms. Whilst most microorganisms are harmless, some can cause sickness either by infection, or by producing toxins when growing in food materials. For this reason, perishable foodstuffs should be stored in the refrigerator, as low temperatures slow down microorganism growth. Cooking destroys microorganisms, however it is necessary to cook food for long enough to raise the temperature adequately throughout the food. If food is left at warm temperatures bacteria build up and produce toxins. Subsequent cooking may destroy bacteria but may not destroy all toxins. Germs are killed at high temperatures and are slowed down by refrigeration. The best ways of avoiding food contamination and food poisoning are to:
- Keep food frozen or refrigerated.
- Do not keep food longer than recommended.
- Discard any ‘doubtful’ food.
- Do not store fresh food (intended to be cooked) with precooked food (which is to be eaten as it is). Any germs in the fresh food can be transferred to the pre-cooked food.
- Cook food thoroughly. Make sure that any food is cooked in the middle as well as on the outside.
- Take special care when using leftovers. Cook thoroughly.
- Do not sneeze, cough or touch your mouth or face when handling food.
- Keep pans, kitchen tools, glass, crockery, fridges and food storage areas clean. Food scraps, crumbs and open containers encourage vermin that carry disease.
- Wash your hands often when handling food (and always after using the toilet). Keep towels, tea-towels and washcloths clean and dry them quickly (and safely – not near an open flame). A warm, damp cloth that has been used to wipe food from hands is an ideal breeding ground for germs.
- Avoid handling food if you have an injury or a skin condition. Cover cuts with a clean, waterproof adhesive dressing.

Eyes are particularly vulnerable
If any product comes into contact with eyes or skin wash off with lots of water immediately. If ingested seek immediate medical attention. You can gain better protection by wearing gloves and eye protection.

Domestic hazards
Many more accidents happen at home than at work. A simple safety routine, and attention to a few basic rules, can reduce the risk of accidents and injuries.

Think carefully when storing things. Do not put heavy objects on high shelves if you can avoid it. They are more difficult to put up and take down, and if they fall, they are liable to inflict more serious injury. Load free-standing shelves and bookcases with care, to avoid top-heaviness and overturning. Take great care with medicines. Residents under medical supervision and taking regular doses of tablets or medicines should ensure these are kept in a secure place to reduce the risk of theft and misuse by others. DO NOT transfer drugs and medicines to other – especially unmarked containers. The same is true of all kinds of drinks.

Slips, trips and falls
- Being surrounded by clutter gives rise to the danger of slipping, tripping and falling.
- Rugs and mats on smooth floors are dangerous. If you must have them, fix some wide double-sided sticky tape to the back to stop them slipping.

Complaints and suggestions
If you’re pleased with our service or there is something that you are not happy with in your accommodation, it’s important that you let us know. Speak to a member of the ResLife Team or email accommodation@le.ac.uk. You can find our full complaints procedure online at www.le.ac.uk/accommodation.

Complaints and suggestions about Opal Court should be notified to the staff at reception at Opal Court. If your issues are not resolved please notify the Accommodation Team.
How do I combat condensation?

Condensation occurs when there is a difference in temperature between the air and the surface it is touching. When the air is unable to hold all of its moisture, it condenses, forming water droplets that can be seen on surfaces.

**Where does condensation occur?**

Condensation can occur on a wide range of surfaces, especially in areas that are prone to cold drafts or poor ventilation. Common areas include windows, external walls, and ceilings.

**How can I recognise condensation?**

- **Mould growth**: Mould can be a sign of condensation, as it thrives in damp and moist conditions.
- **Water stains**: Condensation can leave water stains on surfaces.
- **Wet patches**: You might notice wet patches on floors or walls.

**How do I combat condensation?**

- **Improve ventilation**: Ensure that your home is well-ventilated to prevent moisture build-up.
- **Use dehumidifiers**: Consider using a dehumidifier to help reduce moisture levels.
- **Reduce humidity**: Keep humidity levels low by using air conditioning or dehumidifiers.
- **Keep windows open**: Opening windows can help reduce condensation, especially during warmer months.

**Do not cover airbricks or other permanent ventilators.**

Condensation does not leave a 'tidemark'. Condensation is often caused by warm, moist air coming into contact with a cold surface. To combat condensation, it is important to ensure that your home is well-ventilated and that you maintain a healthy level of humidity. Preventing condensation can improve your comfort and reduce the risk of mould growth.
IMPORTANT – Fire Action

All University buildings have built in Fire Safety systems of high standards that alert you to a real or potential fire, protect you from its effects and enable you to make your way to a place of safety.

You have a responsibility to cooperate and act immediately when you hear the fire alarm.

Fire Notices

Fire notices are posted throughout all buildings informing you of what to do in case of fire. Make sure that you are familiar with the arrangements in your building(s).

If you discover a fire

- **Sound the alarm** by breaking the glass in the nearest fire alarm call point
- **Call the Fire Service – Dial 999** (check the Fire action notice in the building)
- Tackle the fire only if you are trained and it is safe to do so – do not take risks
- **Make your way to the Assembly Point** and await instructions from Staff.

If you hear the fire alarm

- **Leave the building by the nearest available exit**
- Close doors in the vicinity and evacuate the building
- If it is practicable and safe to do so switch off equipment
- **Go to the Assembly Point** and await instructions from Staff.

DO NOT

- Stop to collect personal belongings
- Use the lift – unless authorised to do so
- Re-enter the building for any reason unless authorised to do so

Remember your responsibility when the fire alarm sounds – cooperate and evacuate immediately

Your University Beat Team

We would like to start by introducing ourselves as PC Emma Jayne and PCSO Amarjit Sanghera from the University beat team. We would like to welcome you all to Leicester and we hope that you settle into student life quickly and easily. We are confident that you will find the city a great place to live and study.

Whilst the risk of you becoming a victim of crime whilst studying in Leicester is very small, below are some simple measures you can take to protect yourself and your property:

- **Security mark** expensive items such as laptops, tablets, mobile phones and MP3 players with your postcode using a UV marker pen.
- **Register** serial and IMEI numbers of electronic items for free at www.immobilise.com. This will assist the police in returning your property to you in the event it is stolen and later recovered.
- **Consider** taking out insurance.
- **Lock** all doors and windows every time you leave your room/house/flat.
- **In halls of residence, be careful** who you let in or who follows you into the building.
- **At night walk in groups** or if you are walking alone stick to well-lit and busy areas.
- **Be vigilant** when using your mobile phone or MP3 player in public and try to keep them out of sight.

Our main role is to make your stay at Leicester University as safe and crime free as possible. Look out for us patrolling in and around the campus and please come and speak to us. We are happy to help you with any queries you may have.

Once again welcome to Leicester and we wish you a safe and happy time here.

PC Emma Jayne and PCSO Amarjit Sanghera

Ways to contact us:

Leicestershire Police website: www.leics.police.uk
Email: Emma.Jayne@leicestershire.pnn.police.uk · Amarjit.Sanghera@leicestershire.pnn.police.uk
Phone: 101
Getting Home Safely

A guide to staying safe on your way home

Whether you’ve stayed late in the library, or attended an event on campus it’s always important to consider how you are going to get back to your accommodation ahead of time. We’ve compiled a list of tips and suggestions to help ensure you have the best possible experience without compromising your safety:

• Before going out make sure you have your phone, keys and enough money on you to get home.
• Let a friend know where you’re going, and tell them what time you expect to be back.

Taxis

• It can be helpful to save a couple of Leicester-based taxi company numbers in your phone.
• Pre-book a licensed taxi and avoid unlicensed vehicles; the Students’ Union’s preferred partner is Swift Fox. You can book a Swift Fox taxi at the Union’s box office, and will be picked up from outside the venue on Mayor’s Walk.
• Putting your allocated taxi money in a separate pocket or in a different part of your wallet or bag can be helpful, as you may be less likely to spend it.

Walking

• Always make sure you plan your route ahead of time, and stick to paths with street lights.
• Walk with a friend or in small groups. If you have to walk alone, make sure you let a friend or family member know where you’re going and the time you expect to arrive.
• Stay alert to your surroundings; listening to music or using your phone can make you less aware of potential hazards around you.

Public transport

• Wait in well-lit areas, and near other people if possible.
• Try to stay with friends, or sit near the driver on buses.
• Have the change for your fare ready before the bus arrives so that your purse or wallet is out of sight.
• Always check timetables for the last bus or train back, make sure you know which stop you need to get off at, and the route back to your accommodation from that stop.

What to do if you feel unsafe

• In an emergency situation always call 999.
• If you want support or need assistance at any time of the day you can call reception on the number listed on your keys.
• Be sure to contact somebody. Whether it’s a friend, family member, or even reception, they can give guidance or support if you feel uneasy or unsafe at any point on your journey.

Remember that alcohol can compromise your judgement, avoid taking unnecessary risks and always use common sense.