

Space Temperature Policy

Aim:

This document outlines the University's policy regarding internal space temperature limits.

Purpose:

This policy has been created to ensure the University meets the following requirements:

- To comply with current government legislation and guidance including Health & Safety and Building regulations.
- To improve energy efficiency and building performance ratings
- To reduce energy costs and carbon consumption
- To promote and implement good industry practice.

Legal guidance on heating

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 lay down particular requirements for most aspects of the working environment. Whilst the law does not state a minimum or maximum temperature, Regulation 7 deals specifically with the temperature in indoor workplaces and states that:

'During working hours, the temperature in all workplaces inside buildings shall be reasonable.'

The [Approved Code of Practice](#) suggests the minimum temperature in a workplace should normally be at least 16°C. If the work involves rigorous physical effort, the temperature should be at least 13°C. These temperatures are not absolute legal requirements; the employer has a duty to determine what reasonable comfort will be in the particular circumstances. The Approved Code of Practice does not currently suggest a maximum working temperature.

Temperature Set Point

The University will endeavour to maintain a working space temperature of between 19 and 21°C in all its buildings in relation to office, accommodation and teaching spaces as needed throughout the year. This will apply during occupancy hours; generally 8am – 9pm. The exceptions to this will be the Halls of Residence and during 24 hour library opening periods where temperatures will be maintained for longer. Other areas will be assessed on a case by case basis.

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During holiday periods, the main building heating and cooling plant may be shutdown accordingly. Specific areas such as libraries may have a higher temperature set point due to the type of activity undertaken within the area. This will be discussed with the manager responsible and the Estates campus team.

The University Estate is diverse in both age and size. This represents limitations on the current heating and ventilation systems that operate throughout the buildings. As a result, in certain areas, it is not always possible to meet the criteria detailed above. Estates Planning and Services will investigate and advise on the best course of action in each case. The University, as part of its Estate Strategy, is developing a capital investment programme which will include improvements to our heating, cooling and ventilation systems as part of any future refurbishment works.

Portable heaters/coolers

The use of portable heaters is not permitted as:

- They constitute an additional fire risk to the buildings and occupants
- They can cause false temperatures to be sensed and prevent heating to be enabled
- The electrical system is not designed for heavy electrical load use such as multiple portable heaters. Use of heaters could cause overload to occur.
- The University is committed to reducing its Carbon Footprint.

Use of portable electrical heaters or portable air-conditioning units are not authorised in any University premises unless specifically agreed by Estates Planning & Services, when existing systems have been found to be incapable of meeting acceptable conditions due to plant failure, building condition, or extreme climatic conditions. Where temperatures do not meet the agreed temperature and alternative ways of avoiding the situation (e.g moving the activity elsewhere or online) are impractical, action will only be taken where instructions within this guidance have been followed.

All electric heaters and air conditioning units used on University premises must be provided by the Estates Planning & Services department, to ensure they are appropriately safe and meet required standards (e.g. PAT tested; oil filled radiators etc). The same applies to portable desk fans. The use of these should be restricted as not to increase the overall air temperature and electricity consumption.

Any equipment not provided by the Estates Planning and Services department will be removed and disposed of.

If there are particular circumstances where, for health reasons, individuals may need special consideration then managers should discuss this with HR and SHW for advice.

Responsibility:

The Director of Estates Planning & Services shall retain responsibility to implement and monitor this policy.

Individual responsibility

It is expected that occupants of University buildings will take reasonable measures to adapt to the environment by undertaking the following:

In cold weather:

- Ensure doors between rooms/areas are closed
- Ensure external windows and doors are closed (opening windows for a short period to provide fresh air when necessary). Some teaching rooms that are reliant on natural ventilation will display a window sticker indicating that these windows should remain open to provide ventilation.
- Wearing appropriate clothing
- Appropriate management action such as allowing colleagues/students to take regular breaks, allowing hot drinks in lecture theatres etc.
- Switch off equipment not in use

In hot weather:

- Close windows and doors to air-conditioned areas
- Open windows for natural ventilation in non-air-conditioned areas
- Switch off equipment not in use
- Adjust blinds to reduce direct sunlight
- Wearing appropriate clothing

All colleagues and students are also responsible for reporting any faults and areas where temperatures are deemed too high or low to the Estates helpdesk by calling extension: 65029 or emailing: bs-helpdesks@westminster.ac.uk.

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