

Title: Smokefree Policy
Issue: 4

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Smokefree Policy

It is recognised that smoking is addictive and that colleagues and students who wish to stop smoking may benefit from support.

The University wishes to promote cleaner air, discourage nicotine addiction and protect those with a sensitivity to environmental irritants. This policy supports NHS stop smoking services in their promotion of NHS-endorsed stop smoking treatments (which do not currently include e-cigarettes/vapes).

Application

1. This Smoking Policy describes the University's approach to undertaking its duties under the Health Act 2006, the Smoke-free (Premises and Enforcement) Regulations 2006, and the Smoke-free (Signs) Regulations 2012 as well as more general provisions under the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
2. All University premises, including owned and managed residential accommodation and venues operated by the University of Westminster Students' Union (UWSU) are designated as no smoking areas, as described in the 2006 Regulations.
3. Smoking/vaping of any substance, including tobacco and legal substances/illegal drugs and use of e-cigarettes and shisha is not permitted.
4. Smoking/vaping is not permitted in any enclosed areas, whether internal or external, internal courtyards or in University/UWSU vehicles or in hire vehicles used for University/UWSU purposes, or private vehicles used for car sharing on University/UWSU purposes.
5. Smoking/vaping is also not permitted within five metres of the entrances to University buildings. The aim of this is to allow University colleagues and contractors, students and visitors to access and egress the buildings without being subjected to significant smoke/exhaled vapour and to prevent the ongoing problems of smoke/exhaled vapour ingress into offices and teaching spaces when windows are opened.

6. E-cigarette/vape use is not permitted wherever smoking is not permitted on the basis that, whilst e-cigarettes/vapes are potentially less harmful than smoking products and potentially useful for those wishing to quit smoking, they also carry other negative effects. The medical evidence of e-cigarettes/vapes, particularly in relation to longer term use, is still developing. Vapour from e-cigarettes/vapes may also activate the University's fire detection systems.
7. Where indoor smoking/vaping is proposed during filming/photography where artistic integrity makes it appropriate for the performer to smoke/vape indoors, this should be risk assessed and approved by the appropriate Head of School with input from the Safety, Health and Wellbeing Team. Smoking/vaping will not be permitted during rehearsals.

Responsibilities

8. The University, UWSU, Regent Street Cinema and associated contractors will not sell nor supply tobacco, vapes, e-cigarettes or other smoking products.
9. The disposal of waste from smoking is the responsibility of the smoker. Smokers should be aware that enforcement action may be taken against individuals by local authorities for inappropriate disposal of smoking waste.
10. The disposal of waste from vaping is the responsibility of the user. Note that vapes are electrical waste and should be recycled appropriately (see Appendix).
11. The Estates Planning and Services Department are responsible for the display of no smoking signage on University premises. Colleges/Professional Services Departments/UWSU are responsible for the display of no smoking signage in University vehicles under their control.
12. People, Culture and Wellbeing, UWSU and Student Support and Residential Life will promote this policy and NHS Stop Smoking Services to colleagues and students.
13. The Safety, Health and Wellbeing (SHW) team will review this policy at regular intervals and consult SHW Committee members at each review.

Enforcement

14. All colleagues and students, contractors, visitors and any third party entering University premises will be responsible for complying with this Policy.
15. All colleagues and students have the right to ask others to comply with this policy, and not to smoke or vape. The University will not tolerate abuse or threatening behaviour towards anyone asking a student, colleague, visitor or third party not to smoke/vape.
16. The practical steps for dealing with breaches are as follows:

- The initial response to anyone noted to be smoking/vaping in an area in which this is prohibited will be to indicate the no-smoking signs; to ask the person to stop smoking/vaping or ask them to move to an outside area at least five metres away from an entrance.
- A further response is to tell the person smoking that an offence would be committed if they were allowed to smoke; and they are breaking the law by smoking on the premises or in a University vehicle.
- If they refuse to stop smoking/vaping Security will be contacted.
- Breaches will be reported using the Security incident reporting process.
- Persistent offenders will be subject to the published University disciplinary procedures or, in the case of a visitor/contractor/third party, asked to leave the premises.

Smoking Cessation

NHS Stop Smoking Services (free) - <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/quit-smoking/>

Colleagues who would benefit from time off work to attend smoking cessation classes are required to discuss this with their managers, as per the University's Absence Policy & Procedure (colleagues only):

<https://Universityofwestminster.sharepoint.com/sites/Resources/SitePages/Managing%20leave%20and%20absence.aspx>^(OBJ)

Appendix

Health Act 2006: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/28/contents>

The Smoke-free (Premises and Enforcement) Regulations 2006:
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/3368/contents>

The Smoke-free (Signs) Regulations 2012:
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/1536/made>

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/37/contents>

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1999/3242/contents>

Vape recycling
<https://www.recycleyourelectricals.org.uk/how-to-recycle-electronics/what-electronics-can-be-recycled/recycle-vapes/> (Linked legislation: WEEE legislation
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/3113/contents>)

Approved by the University's Safety, Health and Wellbeing Committee on 6 November 2025.

Further approved by UEB, November 2025.

Reviewed five yearly or on significant change, if sooner.

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