



Estate & Campus Services Directorate

Legionella and Water Safety Policy

Policy Number – E&D Policy 005

Policy Authors –Paul Richards & Simon Keeling
Reviewed – Naomi Ashenden

Issue date: March 2021
Reviewed date: October 2023

Legionella Control and Water Safety Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

As Legionella is naturally occurring and widely dispersed in nature, it must be accepted that there is a constant risk of the bacterium entering the building services of our properties. The size and complexity of the University naturally increases this likelihood.

What must not be accepted, and neither will the law allow us to accept it, is that if it should enter our buildings, due to a fault in design or maintenance, the bacterium may find favourable conditions for growth, multiplication and possibly ultimately infection of people by being conveyed in aerosols created by our building services.

The measures to be taken for our management of this risk are contained within this policy document.

The University recognises its responsibility to implement in full the codes of practice, as defined in the Health and Safety Commission's document and 'Safe' water guidance notes, in order that it can properly control its water supply system. To comply with these legal duties, Keele University is obliged to:

- Identify and assess sources of risk
- Prepare a scheme for preventing or controlling the risk
- Implement, manage and monitor precautions
- Implement a safe system of working
- Keep records of the precautions implemented and do so for each of the premises within the university's control.
- Appoint a person to be managerially responsible.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to safeguard all employees, contractors, tenants, visitors and assets through prevention and reduction of harm or loss. The aims of this policy are as follows:

- To set out a clear framework to protect all employees, contractors, tenants and visitors by minimisation of the risks associated with waterborne pathogens;
- To identify correct practice for the safe operational management of water systems for staff to implement based upon nationally accepted guidance and the principle of "so far as reasonably practicable" [SFARP];
- To enable staff to understand their responsibilities in relation to this Policy and the overall Water Safety Plan;
- To establish arrangements for the monitoring and review of this Policy in order that it continues to reflect the most up-to-date legislation and guidance;
- To detail the process for version control, to ensure that out of date policy is archived and that the current version of the document is accessible to those who require it.

1.2 Scope

Keele University recognises its responsibility to ensure that the facilities it provides in its properties achieve the required standards for control of legionella bacteria. Water quality is an area which has been the subject of much publicity and discussion, fuelled by recurring outbreaks of Legionnaires' disease and an increasing awareness of the measures available to control and maintain acceptable standards.

The University accepts its responsibility to take every reasonable precaution as outlined in the current Health & Safety Executive's Approved Code of Practice L8 [including HSG274 Parts 1, 2 & 3] necessary to protect occupiers, users and visitors within the vicinity of the campus.

This policy [within the University's broader Water Safety Plan] applies to all domestic-type hot and cold-water systems managed and operated by the organisation. It does not apply to other risk systems, including (list is not exhaustive):

- Evaporative cooling systems;
- Process water systems;
- Heating and ventilation systems;
- Water systems which are wholly contained within tenanted buildings or facilities.

This Policy applies to Keele University and all the organisation's employees.

The Policy applies to all employees, contractors and visitors associated with the University and should be read and implemented whenever water related risk management advice is required.

Legionnaires' Disease can prove fatal as confirmed by a number of cases, many of which could have been prevented. It is these preventative measures that Keele University wishes to address across its portfolio for the protection of students, staff, contractors and visitors. The associated liability of such an outbreak, coupled with the public attention attached to even a suspected outbreak, necessitates the need for clear, concise guidelines to be published, recommending measures to be taken to prevent the Legionella bacterium becoming active within the buildings owned, managed or maintained by Keele University.

Water services, in particular hot water service installations, humidifiers, cooling towers and air supply systems are the sensitive areas requiring close scrutiny regarding maintenance methods and procedures. This has been emphasised by many studies of such services, and in available documentation relating to maintenance and monitoring of water systems.

In new, occupied or partially occupied buildings, special care must be taken as the circumstances may require bespoke solutions for circumstances encountered therein.

This Policy, together with Procedures and the associated documents and records, form Keele University's Water Safety Plan [WSP]. The plan has been developed in order to comply with the requirements of the Health & Safety Executive's Approved Code of Practice L8 [4th edition]. The content of the WSP includes management and governance arrangements, together with details of training, professional support, maintenance regimes and supporting documentation.

2. POLICY

Keele University [hereinafter referred to as the “University”] has a duty of care to employees, contractors, tenants and visitors to ensure a safe and appropriate working environment.

The University accepts its responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002 [as amended]. In doing so, the university aims to take all reasonable precautions in respect to the management of water systems so as to control the risk of harm to employees, contractors, tenants, visitors and other persons working at or using its premises. Threats include infections caused by waterborne pathogens, scalding by hot water, chemically contaminated water and disruption to the water supply.

The University recognises the importance of a safe workplace with appropriate equipment and facilities as well as high standards of leadership, engagement, communication, training & competence and other management issues.

This Policy is formally accepted by the Vice Chancellor and approved by the appropriate Directors and associated Heads of Department. The Vice Chancellor will do all that is reasonably practicable to comply with its requirements and will make the necessary resources available.

The management of water safety will be a continual commitment by the University involving regular management and progress meetings, and a commitment to a risk assessment programme.

The overall Water Safety Plan [WSP] shall be supported with adequate resources and suitably qualified, trained and competent staff to ensure the successful implementation of this Policy element of the WSP and the associated operational procedures manual.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Organisational Responsibilities

The Council

The Council is ultimately responsible for the health and safety of any person who may be harmed by University activities. As such, it must satisfy itself that the University has an appropriate written Statement of Policy on Health and Safety, along with effective arrangements to implement it.

Statutory Duty Holder: Vice-Chancellor

Take overall responsibility to ensure that the Policy for the control of Legionella is implemented and that appropriate funding is made available, within budget submissions, to carry out any capital and revenue works.

The VC delegates responsibility for undertaking aspects of these duties through line management and identified roles and has a duty to appoint a Responsible Person Legionella, and deputy who in practice carries out the day-to-day implementation of precautionary measures.

The following people are identified as having specific responsibilities under this policy (in addition to any other responsibilities under other health and safety policy) for the control of legionella issues in those water systems, and for those relevant persons, that fall within their budgetary control:

Director of Estate & Campus Services

The Director of Estate & Campus Services shall ensure adequate resources are in place for ongoing legionella bacterial control including:

- Suitable resources are allocated for the management of legionella risk in domestic hot and cold-water systems. This includes the written appointment of relevant people within their line management chain and the allocation of sufficient budget to manage legionella risk in accordance with legal requirements.
- Suitable and sufficient risk assessments are undertaken of all in-scope systems.
- Risk assessments are undertaken by suitably competent persons.
- A bespoke legionella management plan is developed for each system by a suitably competent person. The legionella management plan will include:
 - An appropriate schematic detailing the water system and its key components.
 - A written record of the system risk assessment. This will include consideration of any “at risk” groups who might potentially be exposed to legionella bacteria.
 - A written schedule for minimising the risk of legionella within each system. This will include a prioritised action plan and a mechanism for escalating remedial work where the risk assessment, or any subsequent monitoring regime, identifies a significant risk of legionella growth or transmission.
 - A written schedule and procedures for inspection, maintenance and disinfection, where applicable, of each system.
 - A written schedule for monitoring the effectiveness of control measures for each system.
- Deans, Heads of Department and Directors are made aware of any control measures identified in the legionella management plan that they may be responsible for implementing (for example, the periodic flushing through of certain outlets).
- The legionella management plan is implemented and is subject to periodic audit (at least annually).
- Submitting annual statements of reassurance to University Health and Safety Committee to confirm that legionella risks are being appropriately controlled.
- System risk assessments are reviewed at a maximum of two-year frequency.
- Appropriate actions are taken to remediate any matters arising from system inspections, testing and monitoring.
- Significant non-conformances are reported to the Duty-Holder as soon as is reasonably practicable.
- People working on in-scope systems are competent to do so and comply with this policy and all other relevant water hygiene and safety legislation.
- Suitable and sufficient information, training, supervision and instruction is given to any person authorised to work on in-scope systems.
- Ensure that all new or refurbished water systems handed over to Estates & Facilities are appropriately documented, commissioned and signed off in accordance with the procedures document. Any issues arising with the control schemes will be reported to the relevant contractor / project team for resolution;

Deputy Director - Estate Services

- Review operational action plans on a regular basis;
- Review Audit action Plans on a regular basis;
- Report status of compliance to various committees – Leadership team/ health & safety committee.

Responsible Person / Deputy (Legionella)

- Convene a water Safety Management group, chaired by Estate & Campus Services with representatives from Department of Health and Safety, Students Union, Accommodation Services and Science Park manager.
- Develop operational procedures and audits to satisfy legislative requirements.
- Appoint suitable contractors and consultants.
- Identify and request the necessary funding required implementing the precautionary measures and any improvement or alteration works necessary to comply;
- Be professionally and operationally responsible for water quality.
- Implementation of an effective maintenance policy must incorporate the preparation of fully detailed operating and maintenance documentation and the introduction of a logbook system.

Executive Members, Directors, Deans, Heads of Schools and Managers will:

- Cooperate with the Duty-Holder and appointed Deputy / Responsible Person (Legionella) to enable them to meet their responsibilities under this policy.
- Ensure that any control measures that they are responsible for implementing (for example, flushing through of certain local outlets) are carried out in accordance with the directions of the legionella management plan.
- Alert the Responsible Person (Legionella) to any redundant or little used hot and cold water outlets within their areas.
- Not permit alterations, additions or other works to be carried out by their staff or students or by contractors directly employed by their School, Faculty, Department or Directorate without first seeking written approval from the Deputy / Responsible Person (Legionella).

Head of Health and Safety:

Health and Safety Manager will be responsible for providing advice and guidance to enable duty holders to fulfil their duties under this policy.

Appointed Contractor (Legionella)

- Advise on potential areas of risk and identify where systems do not comply with current standards/guidance;
- Advise on the required controls and procedures for the prevention or control of Legionella risk;
- Operate and maintain the plant and systems on behalf of the University in accordance with its Policy and procedures for control of legionella;
- Ensure it maintains adequate records. (The University is responsible for maintaining its own records);
- Ensure that its staff (directly employed or contractors) are trained in the correct procedures and are aware of the standards required and expected of them in discharging their duties in compliance with the Policy for the minimisation of legionella risk;
- Maintain records of inspections, cleaning, disinfection and pasteurisation regimes, maintenance, alterations, repairs and operational abnormalities.

Nominated Person(s) (Legionella): Student Accommodation Manager

- Maintain an up-to-date list or management process to identify all rooms which remain unoccupied for 7 days or more and ensure that the water systems in them are flushed weekly and this is recorded.

Nominated Person(s) (Legionella): Head of Operations Support

- Ensure that all shower heads and hoses are dismantled, cleaned and de-scaled on a three-monthly basis and that this is recorded.
- Attend the Monthly Legionella Compliance Meetings quarterly

Directly Employed Staff (Including University and Agency Maintenance Staff)

- Ensure that all staff engaged on the operation and maintenance of water plant and systems do so in accordance with the Policy for the minimisation of legionella risk and relevant codes of practice at all times;
- Comply with the standards and procedures laid down in this Policy and associated procedures for the minimisation of legionella risk;
- Ensure that agency staff carries adequate insurance cover.

Contractors

All contractors employed by the Estates Department are responsible for ensuring that they and any sub-contractor reporting to them carry out their activities in a way which complies with the Policy for minimisation of legionella risk.

The above includes verbal instructions as considered appropriate by the Supervising Officer to whom they are accountable.

Ensure adequate insurance liability cover is carried.

Contractors providing Risk Assessments

The risk assessment should be carried out by a competent person. It is recommended that companies/ individuals who carry out risk assessments should be members of the Legionella Control Association. A standard specification for and guidance on, water risk assessment can be found in BSRIA's (1999) FMS 4/99: 'Guidance and the standard specification for water services risk assessment.'

Building Surveyors and Staff

Project Management staff and any consultants appointed by them shall be responsible for the effective design and management of all capital schemes including appropriate and comprehensive commissioning which is to be agreed with the Responsible Person (Legionella) during the design stage. To comply with CDM Regulations, information about an existing system that is to be modified should be passed to the Building Surveyor, together with the operating criteria that have to be achieved for the system. This should detail installation and commissioning requirements. They will also be responsible for ensuring that plant and services are capable of meeting any increased demand where a system is extended and for the provision of as-fitted drawings at the time of handover, together with all commissioning data.

All Staff

All staff members can affect water hygiene risk, as such they report any concerns, suspicions regarding the operation or performance of water systems that might increase the risk of waterborne pathogen proliferation i.e. little used outlets. Maybe required to attend training sessions [where necessary].

Employees may be consulted regarding the assessment and control measures according to their role. Each risk assessment/risk minimisation scheme report should include an employee summary for dissemination to unions/employees at the discretion of the RP.

Tenants

Tenants are responsible for the safe operation of the water systems in their demised areas in accordance with their tenancy agreement. This includes:

- a) Water systems wholly contained within their demise;
- b) Water systems pipework, outlets and other components fed from University water systems.

4. RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Related policies:

Control of Contractors policy <https://www.keele.ac.uk/policyzone/data/controlofcontractorspolicy/>

Related legislation and guidance:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- HSE's ACoP L8 and HSG274 Part 2
- **BS8580-1:201**

Related Internal procedures:

- Keele University Water Safety Plan

5. REVIEW, APPROVAL & PUBLICATION

This policy is to be reviewed every 3 years by the Responsible Person Legionella, with approval from Deputy Director of Estate Services and final sign off from Health and Safety Standing Committee. Consultation during this review will be undertaken with teams in the Estate & Campus Services Directorate and Health and Safety department.

This review will be uploaded to Policy Zone.

6. ANNEXES

None

7. DOCUMENT CONTROL INFORMATION

Document Name	Legionella and Water Safety Policy
Owner	Paul Richards
Version Number	1.1
Equality Analysis Form Submission Date	N/A – HR agreement not required as no direct people element
Approval Date	02 October 2023
Approved By	Occupational Health and Safety Committee
Date of Commencement	10 September 2021
Date of Last Review	02 October 2023
Date for Next Review	02 October 2026
Related University Policy Documents	Control of Contractors policy
For Office Use – Keywords for search function	