

# SMOKEFREE POLICY

The University of the West of England, Bristol (UWE), is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment. It recognises that staff, students and visitors who need to access University premises, have the right to breathe smokefree air.

The University acknowledges that exposure to second-hand smoke, also known as passive smoking, increases the risk of lung cancer, heart disease and other illnesses. Ventilation or separating smokers and non-smokers within the same airspace does not stop potentially dangerous exposure. The University recognises that second hand tobacco smoke is both a public and work place hazard. The principle of whether a person smokes or not is a matter of personal choice, but where a person smokes is of concern to everyone.

## The Legal Context

The right to work in a smokefree environment is supported by the general duty of section 2(2) of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 requiring employers to provide: "a safe working environment ... without risks to health."

Under the provisions of the Health Act 2006 it is illegal to smoke in enclosed or substantially enclosed public places and workplaces. "Substantially enclosed" means a space having a ceiling/roof with less than half of the wall area permanently open.

Smoking is therefore prohibited in ALL UWE premises i.e.:

- All buildings used or occupied by the University
- All student residences under the University's management
- All substantially enclosed sections of the University's premises
- All University vehicles
- All enclosed temporary structures

The University will take all steps to discharge its duty under the Health Act and in doing so under the duties of Health & Safety at Work Act. To ensure compliance with the smokefree provisions of the Health Act 2006 and the related regulations for England that came into force 1<sup>st</sup> July 2007 the policy continues to be monitored, reviewed and revised.

## UWE's position

The aim of UWE's Smokefree Policy is to:

- Protect the right of the non-smoker not to be exposed to second hand tobacco smoke;
- Surpass compliance with the legislation associated with no smoking by creating smokefree spaces;
- Provide encouragement and support to smokers who wish to give up smoking;
- To minimise the accumulation and cost of clearing up unsightly smoking litter and reduce the risk of fire by providing suitable and adequate facilities.

## E-cigarettes

At present there is still emerging research on the risks to health on e-cigarettes, however it is appreciated that they are often utilised by people trying to give up smoking. At UWE e-cigarettes are

accepted in the Smokefree spaces, but are not allowed inside buildings, university vehicles, or near doors or windows. UWE will continue to review the on-going research.

### Creating a Smokefree campus:

- A multi-media campaign will be used to promote awareness of this policy which will be brought to the attention of all staff, students and visitors via comprehensive communication strategies e.g. weekly news, manager's ezine, voice magazine, Freshers' week and induction events.
- Smokefree spaces will be indicated by clearly marked signs informing staff, students and visitors that smoking is not permitted within 10 metres of our buildings. Signs will also be displayed at areas that are defined by the law as: "*Substantially Enclosed*" and signs in accordance with the Smokefree (Signs) Regulations will be displayed at building entrances and within University vehicles.

### Responsibilities

- All staff, student, contractors of visitors to the University are expected to comply with the Smokefree Policy. Anyone smoking in smoke free spaces, premises, doorways or university vehicles will be in contravention of UWE's smokefree policy.
- Executive Deans, Directors of Services, Heads of Departments, Managers and Supervisors are responsible for bringing the Smokefree Policy to the attention of staff, students, contractors and visitors to the University
- Estates and Facilities will be responsible for implementing the practical aspects of the Smokefree policy by providing and maintaining signage on buildings and indicating smoke-free spaces. Operations and Security will be trained to assist in encouraging staff to move outside of the smokefree space and monitoring compliance.
- Professional Services operating vehicles will be responsible for fitting signs in all university vehicles.
- Students' Union Chief Executive Officer will be responsible for ensuring that the Smokefree Policy is complied with in all premises under their managerial control.
- Executive Deans and Directors of Services that engage Contractors to work on University premises must ensure that Contractors' employees are aware of this Smokefree Policy and that their compliance with it is a contractual agreement.
- Those organising events will ensure that all visitors are aware of the provisions of the Smokefree Policy via effective and appropriate communications.
- Under this policy, individual staff and student members of the University community have a *right* to politely ask individuals found to be smoking in smokefree spaces to move outside of the smokefree space. Smokers are obliged to move. A refusal to move is unacceptable and should be reported to Operations and Security on extension 222 who are then charged with taking appropriate action under this policy. In all cases where physical violence or intimidation is threatened or encountered, assistance can be accessed from the Operations and Security Team by calling 222. An accident report form reporting a near miss should also be completed.
- Failures to respond to requests to stop smoking will be addressed initially through information and support. Staff and students who persistently refuse to observe the policy will be subject to normal conduct procedures. Visitors and contractors who fail to comply through reasonable persuasion will be asked to leave the premises.

## Support

The University is committed to supporting anyone who wishes to stop smoking and encourages them to avail themselves of cessation programmes available from NHS Smokefree (Bristol and South Gloucestershire) and in particular their local General Practitioners. The University where resources permit will offer additional support through one-off cessation events. The attached (Annex 1) provides staff wishing to give up smoking with details of helpful support agencies.

Given the University's commitment to supporting a 'Healthy University' environment, and in line with changes in HEIs across England, we are promoting UWE as a Smokefree Space. In doing so we recognise that such policies have been shown<sup>1</sup> to:

- Provide a safer and healthier environment for our staff, students and visitors in line with our Healthy University aspiration;
- Improve fitness, productivity and the performance of students and staff;
- Provide safer and cleaner environments with reduced litter and risks of fires;
- Enhances the institution's profile as more socially responsible and ethical by putting the health of students and staff first.

## Review

This policy will be reviewed biennially by the Healthy University Group to assess the effectiveness of its introduction in providing students, staff and visitors with a Smokefree environment at UWE.

<sup>1</sup> Jones, A. (2009) Tobacco-free Educational Campuses, A tobacco-free futures action guide, Edinburgh: International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease

## ANNEX 1 - SMOKING CESSATION SUPPORT

If you want to give up smoking and the introduction of the 'Smoke-free' legislation has provided you with the incentive to do so, then there is lots of help available.

- The NHS has an array of support available so that you can choose the one that best suits you. All methods put you in touch with professional help:-
  - <http://smokefree.nhs.uk/>  
An online resource for all the advice, information and support needed to stop and stay stopped.
  - Local NHS Stop Smoking Services -  
This Service will get you working with a trained adviser, either in a group or one-to-one – it's up to you. To find your local service, call the NHS Smoking Helpline free on 0800 169 0 169, visit <http://smokefree.nhs.uk/>, text ?GIVEUP? and your full postcode to 88088 or ask at your local GP practice, pharmacy or hospital.
  - NHS Smoking Helpline -  
Individuals can speak to a specialist adviser by calling 0800 169 0 169 (lines are open daily from 7am to 11pm).
  - Together -  
This support programme is free to join, and is designed to help you stop smoking using both medical research as well as insights from ex-smokers. You can choose to receive emails, text messages, mailing packs and phone calls. For more information call the NHS Smoking Helpline on 0800 169 0 169 or visit <http://smokefree.nhs.uk/> or Smokefree South Gloucestershire on 01454 865502
- The University's Employee Assistance Provider, *Right Management*, provides a confidential telephone service offering information and support on a range of issues - <http://wellness.rightmanagement.co.uk/login>
- The University's Centre for Sport continually strive to increase awareness of health through advice, guidance and the creation of new opportunities for students and staff to try new things - <http://www.uwe.ac.uk/sport/health.shtml>