

# **Contractor safety for schools and services**

## **Guidance**

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## 1.0 Planning the work

If you are considering using contractors, your school or service must consult with Estate Services to ensure only approved contractors are employed ([see Appendix 7](#)). The current service level agreement also states that schools/services “must obtain the agreement of Estates Services to all proposed additions, alterations to building fabric and engineering services.”

### 1.1 Minor alterations

For minor alterations such as putting up a shelf or notice board it is still essential to consult Estate Services, to ensure there is no asbestos at the proposed location. The form for authorisation to undertake works in/on University buildings is available in [Appendix 1](#). (For ISS this form needs to be completed for any planned works, which have not been requested by Estates Services, with the exception of cabling contractors. [For the latter see section 1.2](#))

Aside from legislative requirements there are also common sense reasons for consulting Estate Services – for example, to get advice on specifications or to find out if the work overlaps with other proposed building work. Unknown to you there may be plans to modify fire alarms or electrical systems and this could have implications if your school is planning redecoration. It may also be necessary to liaise with Estate Services on other issues such as design, isolation of fire detection or gas, electrical, water or steam supplies.

The School/Service must submit the form in [Appendix 1](#) to the Estate Services Helpdesk, for the attention of the Maintenance and Operations Team. Estates Services will then complete the bottom section of the form, in relation to approval/non-approval. Once approval is obtained, key information will be provided by Estates Services to the School/Service regarding the building/area of work, which will include:

- location of any asbestos (via reference to the University asbestos register) and consequently areas to avoid, to ensure that no asbestos is disturbed by the work
- whether other Estates Services contractors are working in the area and arrangements to prevent any conflict of interest

It also enables Estates Services to:

- be aware of new equipment being installed, any requirements in terms of electrical supply and any relevant future maintenance requirements for the equipment
- consider how the proposed alterations interface with existing facilities
- consider issues regarding how the work may affect fire detection and alarm systems

Once approval is given the responsibility for management of the contractors remains with the School/Service (see [Section 2](#) and also [Flowchart 1a, 1b, 2 and 3](#) for procedures to be followed).

### 1.2 Contractors who have an impact on the building

ISS, due to the nature of their work, do employ their own contractors, however, these contractors also need to fulfil the criteria required to be on the Estates Approved List

([see Appendix 7](#)). Contractors who have an impact on the structure of the building includes anyone working on/in the building where they carry out alterations to the fabric or services e.g. drilling, cabling contractors ([also see Section 2.2](#)).

*For cabling contractors*, it has been agreed that the Works Form (in Appendix 1) does not need completing. An alternative arrangement has been agreed due to the large number of jobs. Consequently, for cabling contractors, ISS will send Estates Services a copy of their cabling contractor jobs database, showing any new jobs, on a weekly basis. This will include details of the work to be carried out, the department and location, the date the work is planned and indicate that the relevant asbestos register information has been obtained. The relevant Maintenance Teams will then discuss this work with ISS, where necessary, and provide ISS with any other key information, e.g. notification of whether any other contractors are working in the area and any arrangements to prevent any conflict of interest.

([see Section 2.2](#) and [Flowchart 1b, 2 and 3](#) for procedures to be followed).

### **1.3 Large contracts**

Large contracts should automatically be dealt with by Estate Services, because of their complexity and the extra administrative burdens caused by health and safety legislation (such as the Construction Design and Management Regulations). If the work falls under the remit of these regulations, then a CDM coordinator will be required in addition to a principal contractor.

There should be liaison with the school/service at several stages of the contractors' work regardless of who is organising it - from the start of the design process through the building stage to completion. If neighbouring schools/services are likely to be affected they should also be advised about disruption such as noise and dust. It is important to know details such as commencement dates, length of work and any knock-on disruption.

Consideration should also be given to facilities the contractors will need around the University, including:

- Road access
- Car parking arrangements
- Delivery of materials and then transfer to a building
- Disposal procedures including location of skips
- Segregation of working areas, including sheeting up to contain dust and debris generated by building work.
- Provision of sanitation / wash rooms, etc.

#### **1.4 Other contractors**

Contractors visit the University to carry out maintenance and repairs in a variety of areas:

- Repairing office equipment
- Laboratory maintenance
- Ancillary support equipment such as air conditioning,
- Testing equipment including pressure systems, lifting equipment and microbiological safety cabinets, LEV.

and we need to ensure the competency of such contractors (see Section 2 and also Flowchart 1a, 1b, 2 and 3 for procedures to be followed).

## **2.0 How to confirm your contractors are competent**

### **2.1 Building contractors ([see Appendix 7](#))**

For building contractors, only those on the Estates Approved List should be used. To be approved they must be registered with both Construction line and the Contractors' Health and Safety Assessment Scheme (CHAS). CHAS provides an independent evaluation of the contractors' health and safety competency.

As part of CHAS, and to meet other general requirements, contractors must provide the following:

1. Employer's and public liability insurance certificate
2. Identification of the competent health and safety person in the company
3. Their safety policy
4. Procedures for monitoring standards. (Inspections, audits and investigations).
5. Procedures for risk assessments and method statements, general or specific, e.g. for:
  - Activities being undertaken
  - COSHH
  - Manual handling
  - Personal protective equipment
  - Noise
6. Procedures for portable appliance testing.
7. Safe use of work equipment.
8. Fire and emergency procedures.
9. Training provision.

10. Information relating to hazards associated with plant, operations and materials used in the work (as required by Section 6 of the Health and Safety at Work Act).
11. Test certificates and examination certificates for lifting gear, cranes, compressors etc used on a project.

If clarification or assistance is required on the details of certification, contact Estate Services or Health and Safety Services. This information should be available to staff in schools/services, and should be collated into the health and safety plan for larger projects. For building contractors, CHAS registration is coordinated by Estate Services.

## **2.2 Contractors who have an impact on the structure of the building**

Contractors who are not building contractors but who have an impact on the structure of the building (includes anyone working on/in the building where they carry out alterations to the fabric or services, e.g. cabling contractors) must be registered with CHAS, as described in the previous section, and be on the Estates approved list. If companies do not have CHAS accreditation but have another similar accreditation, then details of this need to be recorded, and checks made to ensure that it is of an equivalent health and safety level. Where existing contractors do not have CHAS accreditation or equivalent their agreement to obtain this within 3 months must be gained and [Appendix 5b](#) completed, in the meantime. If they are not prepared to get this, then checks need to be made to see whether any other companies are available, with CHAS accreditation, who do similar work with the view to employing these instead.

## **2.3 Service engineers and other contractors**

Service engineers and other non-construction contractors require their competency verifying. Ideally, regularly used contractors need to be registered with CHAS outlined in the previous section under building contractors.

The host school/service where the work is being carried out must ensure the following:

- If the contractor has CHAS accreditation, then the contractors (with CHAS accreditation) additional information required in [Appendix 5a](#) must be completed by the contractor. (If the contractor is already on the Estate Services Contractor Approved List, then delete questions 1 and 2 before sending out.) The contractor's documents then need to be checked by the school/service to ensure that they are deemed adequate and the form signed to indicate this.
- If they do not have CHAS then the contractors' compliance document must be filled in by the contractor. The contractor's documents then need to be checked by the school/service to ensure that they are deemed adequate and the form signed to indicate this. (This form is available in [Appendix 5b](#)).

Appendix 5a and 5b are one-off forms for contractors who are used continuously throughout the year, but they should be reviewed annually to ensure that there are no significant changes in the data provided. These forms must be kept in the School/Service records. As part of their contract, service engineers etc. should report to a contact person before carrying out any work and should also inform the

contact person when this work has been completed.

## **2.4 All contractors**

All contractors must provide copies of method statements and risk assessments for the tasks to be carried out at the University.

The University have a legal responsibility to ensure that contractors working on behalf of the University are competent and work in accordance with health and safety legislation and current best practice. The contractors in turn will need to ensure that their sub-contractors meet the same standards and that they have appropriate procedures in place for vetting their competence.

## **3.0 Providing information**

This is a two-way requirement between the University and the contractor, and an obligation for both parties to co-operate under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations.

To comply with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, the University must advise contractors about the likely hazards and risks which could be encountered within the school/service – This could include chemical, biological, physical and radioactive hazards, as well as the presence of asbestos in areas such as boilers or the building structure.

## **4.0 Other key forms in appendices**

### **4.1 Area decontamination certificate ([see Appendix 2a](#))**

This form must be completed by the relevant School/Service when the work is to be carried out in a vacated area (e.g. laboratory), where biological agents or chemicals may have been present. Copies of this form must be displayed at the entrance to the area, kept within the School/Service and sent to Health and Safety Services. (It should be noted that this form will need to be completed by the School/Service, for these type of vacated areas, for any contractors regardless of who is employing the contractors e.g. they may be employed by Estate Services, ISS etc.)

Wherever possible, the area should be decontaminated before contractors are permitted to work in the area, however, decontamination may not be possible for some aspects of fabric, services or fixtures. When this is the case, it is particularly important to ensure that contractors are aware of any specialist personal protective equipment that they need to wear when handling these items or working in this area.

PLEASE NOTE FOR RADIATION: For areas where radiation may have been present the University Radiation Protection Service must be contacted, who will undertake the final decontamination/clearance work and then issue a Service Certificate.

### **4.2 Clearance to work certificate ([see Appendix 2b](#))**

This form must be completed by the relevant and School/Service when work is to be carried out in an operational area (e.g. laboratory which is still in use), where biological agents, radiation or chemicals are present. The form in [Appendix 2b](#) must

be completed and then a copy given to the contractor before they start work. It is particularly important to ensure that contractors are aware of any specialist personal protective equipment that they need to wear when working in this area.

(Again, it should be noted that this form will need to be completed by the School/Service, for these operational areas, for any contractors regardless of who is employing the contractors e.g. they may be employed by Estate Services, ISS, School etc.)



### **4.3 Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) room(s) permit-to-work ([Appendix 3a](#))**

If any contractors are required to carry out work in Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) Rooms then the relevant School, where the NMR is located, must complete the NMR Room Permit-to-Work in [Appendix 3a](#). (If the contractors are employed by Estate Services then they will be able to assist with completing this permit to work, in terms of Contractor risk assessments and other contractor requirements.)

PLEASE NOTE: When planning work, always arrange it so that it involves personnel working outside the 5 Gauss line, wherever possible. Work should also be as far away from the 5 Gauss line as possible.

The School will need to provide induction to contractors (as outlined in [Appendix 3a](#)), regarding the particular risks associated with the room, and subsequent control measures needed. The School must also ensure that the work is supervised by competent NMR personnel.

### **4.4 Hot works permit ([see Appendix 3b](#))**

A hot works permit needs to be issued for all temporary hot work inside buildings or outside, if adjacent to buildings or flammable storage. These permits need to be issued by competent persons and should be done so with liaison with Estate Services.

### **4.5 Access to authorised areas ([see Appendix 4a](#), [4b](#) and [4c](#))**

See [Appendix 4a](#) for Guidance for Contractors and Service Engineers requiring access to authorised areas e.g. duct, roof, locked building, plant room. The Request for Access Authorisation from Estate Services Form in [Appendix 4c](#), needs to be completed by the contractor and signed by the manager responsible for employing the contractor within the School/Service. This form must then be taken to the Estates Helpdesk on the day access is required.

If access is required to confined spaces, then it is important to give Estates advance warning of the work (minimum of 48 hours). A confined spaces permit will need to be issued by Estates and a walk-through of the job carried out. (See [Appendix 4b](#) for guidance regarding what is classed as a confined space.)

If the work involves breaking into building services or facilities such as steam or electrical supplies, then a permit to work is required irrespective of whether building contractors or service engineers are involved. These permits will be issued by Estate Services.

## **5.0 Contractors' own health and safety procedures**

Contractors working on site should have their own procedures for managing the health and safety of their work. These should take into consideration other users of the area and anyone who could be affected by their actions. Contractors should be able to demonstrate knowledge of relevant health and safety law and have taken this into account in the pricing, planning and execution of work on University premises.

Contractors will be provided with information about the likely hazards they will encounter by [Estate Services](#) or the School or Service they are working in, and should take this into account in their planning process. In some situations the work

may also be subject to a permit to work issued by a School.

Ensure contractors are given local induction with regard to emergency procedures for the area in which they will be working.

## **6.0 Contractors and service engineers risk assessments and method statements**

As part of [Appendix 5a](#) and [Appendix 5b](#), contractors and service engineers are required to provide copies of their risk assessments and method statements for the work they are to carry out.

If contracting schools/services need assistance in evaluating generic/specific risk assessments and/or method statements from contractors then they will need to liaise with the

- Relevant Health and Safety Manager within Health and Safety Services

For contractors who have an impact on the building, assistance may also be sought from

- Health and Safety Manager for Estates (based within Health and Safety Services), or
- Estate Services health and safety team.

## **7.0 Safety guidelines for contractors**

In carrying out their work there are many safety issues that contractors should address.

Information is available in a document called [“safety guidelines for contractors”](#). It is important that contractors read these guidelines, which should be sent out to them prior to the work commencing. Building or maintenance contractors on the Estate Services approved list will automatically be given a copy of these guidelines by Estate Services. Schools/Services should ensure copies of these guidelines are sent out to any contractor or service engineering contractor, employed directly by them, prior to the work commencing. Contractors need to complete the sheet at the back of these guidelines and return it to, the relevant person within the Schools/Service who is co-ordinating the contract.

## **8.0 Monitoring contractors**

The work in progress of building contractors working for Estate Services is monitored by the clerk of works and Estate Services safety personnel.

Where contractors are employed directly by the School or Service, it is important that their methods of work are monitored by a competent person at the University, to ensure that they are following their risk assessments/method statements and working safely. A written record of these checks should be kept.

Service engineers are not routinely monitored but schools/services should check the

quality and competency of work on a regular basis to ensure that they are satisfactory, and the contractors are complying with health and safety requirements. Similarly if they need advice on any supplementary documentation provided by contractors such as test certificates then they should contact their relevant health and safety manager.

It is preferable that this monitoring is done in a planned, proactive manner so managers can programme into work schedules, but if problems arise 'here and now' they will be dealt with accordingly.

## 9.0 If problems arise

### 9.1 Significant Problems

If significant problems arise during the work, such as the discovery of building material which is suspected to contain asbestos, then contractors should follow these steps:

- Stop work
- Segregate the work area
- Report back to the school/service contact who will liaise with Estate Services. In the case of major building work, contractors should report directly back to Estate Services.

In the event of accidents, incidents or significant safety issues the contractor is obliged to notify the School/Service contact as soon as possible. They should then contact Health and Safety Services and Estate Services, where applicable, to pass on this information.

### 9.2 CONCERNS OVER WORK IN PROGRESS

If you notice any unsafe practices during the course of the work then prompt and effective action must be taken to remedy the matter. In the case of building contractors, you should contact your representative from the estates area maintenance team, the estates safety manager or health and safety services as appropriate.

### 9.3 The contact details are:

	Tel:	Email:	Fax:
Estate Services helpdesk	☎ 35555	eshelp@leeds.ac.uk	35987

Area maintenance teams			
Blue team	☎ 35935	mainblue@leeds.ac.uk	35908
Green team	☎ 35907	maingreen@leeds.ac.uk	35908
Red team	☎ 35919	mainred@leeds.ac.uk	35908

Estate services safety manager			
G Cheetham	☎ 35910	g.cheetham@leeds.ac.uk	35913

University health and safety manager			
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Health and safety services	☎ 34201	safety@leeds.ac.uk	34205
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The progress of Estate Services building work, including health and safety aspects, is routinely monitored by either a clerk of works or Estate Services safety personnel. This is not the case for school/service appointed contractors, so schools/services are required to monitor their own contractors.

If unsafe practices are observed work should be stopped immediately and support should be sought from the University health and safety service or Estates health & safety team. All accidents and near misses must be recorded on Sentinel.

## **10. Completed work**

When larger building jobs are completed, representatives from Estate Services and the school/service should “walk the job” to ensure the work has been carried out to agreed design, including cases where designs have been altered. A “snagging” list should also be drawn up for contractor action.

For smaller or school/service managed jobs it is equally important to do a quality check on the work and this should be done in liaison with the school/service’ contact person in Estate Services.