


HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM GUIDANCE REGISTER		Reference	G035
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INTRODUCTION

Aberystwyth University has a vibrant campus with a large community, and a range of activities similar to a town community. This does offer the risk of single case or outbreak of a communicable disease amongst its members of staff and/or students.

Aberystwyth University will be required to liaise with local Health Protection Teams where the University becomes aware of confirmed or suspected case(s) of any communicable diseases involving member(s) of staff or student(s).

SCOPE

This guidance provides the University's management arrangements of infection, prevention and control arrangements and any confirmed or suspected case(s) of any communicable diseases involving member(s) of staff or student(s).


This guidance aims to ensure that:

- Embed IPC controls ventilation, occupancy levels, cleaning regimes, vaccination promotion;
- Ability to identify communicable diseases in our staff and student community;
- Methods of monitoring communicable diseases both locally, nationally and overseas within existing arrangements;
- Adequate channels of communication and referrals exist within the University community;
- Effective support mechanisms are in place for members of staff and students;
- Good links are maintained between the University and stakeholders such as local Health Protection Teams, Health Boards and Local Authority Public Protection Services;
- Connects with business continuity plans for disruption through the loss of staff or students.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Diseases of public health importance (referred to in this document as 'Communicable Diseases' must be notified to public health authorities under the Health Protection (Wales) Regulations 2010. A full list of communicable diseases are given in Figure 1.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acute encephalitis • Acute infectious hepatitis • Acute meningitis • Acute poliomyelitis • Anthrax • Botulism • Brucellosis • Cholera • Diphtheria • Enteric fever (typhoid or paratyphoid fever) • Food poisoning • Haemolytic uraemic syndrome (HUS) • Infectious bloody diarrhoea • Invasive group A streptococcal disease | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malaria • Measles • Meningococcal septicaemia • Mumps • Plague • Rabies • Rubella • Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) • Scarlet fever • Smallpox • Tetanus • Tuberculosis • Typhus • Viral haemorrhagic fever (VHF) |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legionnaires' disease • Leprosy | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whooping cough • Yellow fever |
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Figure 1

INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL REQUIREMENTS

VENTILATION

The Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations 1992 (HSWR), Regulation 6 require effective and suitable provision shall be made to ensure that every enclosed workplace is ventilated by a sufficient quantity of fresh or purified air.

The Building Regulations 2010, Volume 2: Buildings other than dwellings Requirement F1: Means of ventilation requires a range of extract and supply of outdoor air. For occupiable rooms in offices at whichever of the following will provide the higher total rate.

- a. 10 litres per second per person.
- b. 1 litre per second per m² floor area

The University aims to provide in occupiable rooms across our estate, a minimum of 8 - 10 litres per second per person, unless there is a specific requirements to increase or decrease the ventilation levels based on usage. For example catering or kitchens, plant rooms or animal rooms or locations with high intensity activities, sport centre.

During the Pandemic, the University undertook a large ventilation survey of its teaching estate providing a baseline of ventilation performance, with remedial actions installed such as repairs to windows, installation of external fans or air purifiers. A ventilation strategy of sustainable improvement to the ventilation performance will be required.


Ventilation information is managed through CO₂ monitors both fixed and portable, which are monitored and actions taken, where necessary by Estates, Facilities and Residences Department. In naturally ventilated areas, colleagues are asked to monitor local CO₂ monitors, opening windows if the CO₂ measurement is above 800 parts per million (PPM) for a short period to achieve a change of air and close if necessary for thermal comfort. A regular flush of opening windows for approximately ten minutes every hour, should help to achieve a reasonable air change. A ventilation report on performance is required at the HS&E Operational Group on a bi-annual basis unless required on an increased frequency due to a communicable disease outbreak.

OCCUPANCY NUMBERS FOR ROOMS

The HSWR, Regulation 10, requires every room where persons work shall have sufficient floor area, height and unoccupied space for purposes of health, safety and welfare. This does not apply to rooms being used for lectures, meetings and similar purposes.

The University must consider the following items when assessing occupancy of rooms across the estate.

- Room dimensions, the HSWR requirement of 11m³ (maximum ceiling height of 3m²) further information found in the office guidance (<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/hse/documents/#guidance>);
- Ventilation performance data for that room;

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- Type of activity being undertaken;
- Layout and furniture requirements of the room;
- Maximum building number for emergency evacuation;
- Student Experience

CLEANING REGIME

The HSWR, Regulation 9 requires every workplace and the furniture; furnishings and fittings there in shall be kept sufficiently clean. The surfaces of the floors, walls and ceilings of all workplaces inside buildings shall be capable of being kept sufficiently clean. So far as is reasonably practicable, waste materials shall not be allowed to accumulate in a workplace except in suitable receptacles.

Cleaning and Portering Teams undertake as standard, a daily touch point clean across University buildings (operational days may vary depending on the building and its use).

Areas of increased footfall such as The Arts Centre, Student Union, Sports Centre, and Hugh Owen Library will benefit from an additional touch point cleaning dependant on usage or schedules of events.

Touch point cleaning will focus on front facing communal surfaces that are not subject to self-cleaning, for example, door handles, push plates, switches and handrails.

Other surfaces are subject to spot checks and reactive cleaning with periodic deep cleaning.

There is an emphasis on hand hygiene and self-cleaning measures.

Consideration of enhanced touch point cleaning in areas where the timetable showing higher rates of footfall (subject to resource availability).

The methodology for cleaning touch points will be subject to review, risk assessment and take into account published HSE guidance, and sector best practice for infection prevention and control.

Hand Sanitiser stocks to be in the following locations:	Sanitising wipes to be in the following locations:
Building entrances and exits	Teaching and learning spaces
Lecterns	Meeting rooms
Vehicles (recommended via risk assessment)	Back of house spaces to support self-cleaning (photocopier rooms, shared offices, kitchenettes etc)
Field work (recommended via risk assessment)	Vehicles (recommended)


For further information on cleaning service levels at Aberystwyth University, visit

www.aber.ac.uk/en/efr/facilities/cleaning-portering

STAFF AND STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGIES

The University will support Welsh Government and Universities Wales with relevant health campaigns as identified on an annual basis., such as meningitis, monkey pox etc.

Through our staff and student health and wellbeing strategy, the University will:

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- offer regular awareness campaigns to promote and maintain infection, prevention and control of communicable diseases, such as catch it, kill it, bin it, or good hand hygiene etc.
- encourage those that are feeling unwell with heavy colds, high temperature, a new persistent cough to remain at home working or studying if well enough to.

VACCINATION PROMOTION

Staff, students and long term visitor to the University will be encouraged to have vaccinations to protect or community. [A-Z Vaccination Information - Public Health Wales \(nhs.wales\)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/)

Staff and long-term placements (more than 12 weeks) should be encouraged through the welcome letter or induction to the University.

Students should be encouraged through applicant days, welcome letters or induction to the University.

Liaison with local GP Service to increase student GP registration will be undertaken at the start of an academic year. Vaccination pop clinics to be arranged for students during refreshers weeks at the start of term in conjunction with Hywel Dda University Health Board.

SIGNAGE

The campus will refresh regularly signage encouraging infection prevention control such as appropriate handwashing, beat flu resources and other relevant poster communications.

TRAVEL

Refer to Travel Policy (<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/hse/documents/#policies-and-procedures>), which requires a risk assessment which includes FCO checks on entry to country for vaccinations or specific actions relating to communicable diseases.

VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS

Staff and students to be encouraged to discuss any specific medical conditions resulting with increased vulnerabilities to communicable diseases. Advice and support for a risk assessment to consider suitable reasonable adjustments can be found from Human Resources, Occupational Health and/or HS&E team on hasstaff@aber.ac.uk or 2073.

NOTIFICATION


Staff and student induction will include information on communicable diseases and the requirement to record on the absence systems to inform the University.

Supporting our student together document provides staff information on how to report a communicable disease.

All staff and students should record their diagnosed communicable disease via the absence recording system.

Staff - [ABW](#)

Students - [Authorised Absence: Academic Registry, Aberystwyth University](#)

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All members of staff should be aware of the full list of communicable disease, which requires the University to notify the relevant public health authority, as given in Section 3 and promote the reporting via the relevant absence system for confirmed or suspected cases.

Should the University become aware of a potential communicable disease incident via communication with or originating from a family member if the diagnosed individual, a colleague, local Health Protection Team and/or General Practitioners (GP's), a manual entry on the absence system should be completed as soon as possible:

For Cases Involving Students: Contact Student Support and Careers Services immediately on extensions 1761 or 2087;

For Cases Involving Members of Staff: Contact Human Recourses immediately on extension 8555.

Upon receipt of a notification, involving a confirmed or potential, staff in Students Support and Careers Services and Human Resources should gather as much information as possible to establish the facts. This could include:

- Type of illness – [use the NHS Health to understand the illness and routes of transmission](#) ensure support, assistance and wellbeing is key to the beginning of this conversation. How are they feeling? Do they need any supplies?
- Has it been diagnosed? What advice has the GP provided?
- Has the staff or student had contact with their local health protection team? If yes, what advice has been offered?
- Has the student advice their household if living in halls of residences or house of multiple-occupation?
- Is the individual at home and when were they last on campus?

The information will be shared with a representative from Student Support and Career Services, Human Resources and Health, Safety and Environment Team. An assessment of the type of disease, the route of possible onward transmissions, relevant data such as cleaning of water tanks, ventilation, and/or cleaning regimes will be considered. A nominated representative from the group will contact the local Health Protection Team for advice and share the initial assessment made.

LOCAL HEALTH PROTECTION TEAM

These details should be used by the University in order to make the initial notification upon receipt of confirmed or suspected case(s) of any communicable diseases involving member(s) of staff or student(s).


The emergency contact details for the local Health Protection Team are as follows:

During Office Hours (9:00am-5:00pm): 01792 607 387

Outside Office Hours (via Ambulance Control): 03001 239 236

The University will defer any further action until advised by the Health Protection Team. The University will continue with standard infection, present increased control measures or will instigate an outbreak plan in conjunction with the local Health Protection Team based upon their analysis of known information, including consultation with the clinical team(s) managing the case(s).

To implement the outbreak plan, an Emergency Management Team should be activated immediately.

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EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TEAM

A suggested membership for the Emergency Management Team for the implementation of this procedure is as follows:

Chair	Head of Student Support and Careers Services (if involving students) / Head of Human Resources (if involving staff)
Other Members	Health, Safety and Environment Manager
	Communications Officer
	Director of the International Office (if involving students from overseas)
	Head of Residences and Residential Development (if involving students in University Accommodation)
	Head of Commercial Services (if involving students)
	Representative from the Students' Union (if involving students)
	Representative from the Trade Unions (if involving staff)
	Representative from Mid and West Wales Health Protection Team (if required)
Representative from Public Health Wales (if required)	

Additional members can be included at the discretion of the Chair, as determined appropriate.


In instances where business as usual cannot be facilitated or a strategic response is required, it will be likely that the full implementation of the University's Business Continuity Plan will be necessary, requiring the involvement of the Emergency Strategic Response Team.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE UNIVERSITY

The Emergency Management Team shall monitor, and where considered necessary, implement any operational responses on behalf of the University.

To support the local Health Protection Team with their responsibilities, the University may be expected to undertake activities which may include, but will not be limited to:

- Establishing lines of communication between the relevant organisations;
- The practical implementation of advice given by the Health Protection Team, Local Health Board and/or Local Authority Protection Service;
- Communication on the nature of the incident/outbreak to the wider University community (i.e. staff, students and members of the public);
- Establishment of an University helpline;
- A "buddy" system for unwell students both within University and private accommodation. In a "buddy" system, all students shall be encouraged to look out for each others' welfare, and inform someone if they are feeling unwell, so that they can be monitored regularly and prompt medical attention sought if their condition deteriorates;
- Facilitation of identification of cases and their contacts e.g. assisting with contact tracing;
- Liaison with family and friends (where required), although in most instances, this will be undertaken by the Health Protection Team and/or Local Health Board.

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Dependant on the particular nature of each incident or outbreak, other specific actions may require allocation amongst members of the Emergency Management Team. A generic action list that can be considered depending on the particular circumstance and scale of the incident will be available and stored with the Business Continuity documentation, should it be required.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HEALTH PROTECTION TEAM

In accordance with the requirements of the Public Health Wales *Communicable Disease Contingency Plan for Universities and Residential Colleges* document, the responsibilities of the local Health Protection Team include to:

- Receive notifications of suspected or confirmed notifiable diseases from the University;
- Co-ordinate the multi-agency response to the incident/outbreak;
- Provide health protection advice for the incident;
- Arrange for laboratory testing of samples as needed;
- Carry out case finding and contact tracing;
- Arrange for immunisation and/or prophylaxis for cases, contacts and others considered to be at risk;
- Lead on multi-agency communications including the media.

The University will be expected to support the undertaking of these responses wherever possible. To ensure that any guidance or advice given by the local Health Protection Team is considered and incorporated in any University response, it may be appropriate for representatives from appropriate local health boards and authorities to assume membership of the University's response teams, namely the Emergency Management Team and/or Emergency Strategic Response Team. Appropriate representation may include, but will not be limited to:


- Representative from the local Health Protection team;
- Representative from the Local Health Board;
- Representative from the Local Authority Public Protection Service.

COMMUNICATION

The development and application of an effective communications strategy is critical to the successful implementation of this procedure. Whilst the local Health Protection Team, local Health Board and/or Local Authority Protection Service will provide the University with health protection advice for the incident or outbreak, the information must be effectively conveyed to affected stakeholders.

A generic communications strategy, which can be amended to the particular circumstances and scale of the incident, will be stored with the business continuity documentation. The types of considerations for the Emergency Management Team to review will include but will not be limited to the publication and availability of material, email correspondence, media liaison, enquiries helpline etc.

The University must also consider the impact on staff and students who may not have been directly affected by the incident or outbreak. Affected individuals can be provided with the contact details for the University's Employee Assistance Programme, currently provided by Care First. [Employee Assistance Programme - Care first: Human Resources, Aberystwyth University](#)

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FURTHER READING

Workplace health, safety and welfare. Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992. Approved Code of Practice and guidance [Workplace health, safety and welfare - L24 \(hse.gov.uk\)](https://www.hse.gov.uk/l24/)

[Public Health Wales Health Protection Division - About the Notification of Infectious Disease in Wales](#)