



Infectious Disease Policy

Policy owner:	Wellbeing Skills and Diversity Department
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Related policies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Procedures including Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Procedures, Control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH) policy, First aid at work and study policy)
Related procedures:	Infectious Disease Procedure

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Version History

Version	Authorised by	Revisions made	Date
V1	Exec	New template/structure	March 2020
V2	Exec	Updated document	January 2023

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to
- (i) manage the risk of transmission of infectious diseases to the University community as far as reasonably practicable; and
 - (ii) manage the health and well-being of the University community during any outbreaks of infectious diseases in order to maintain the University's ability to provide essential operations.
- 1.2 The policy outlines what action is to be taken, by whom and the key lines of communication needed to ensure a timely, sensitive and professional response. However it should be noted that each incident must be managed according to any available public health advice. This policy covers the current approach to COVID 19, although additional measures may be introduced in response to any new government guidance.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all University of Buckingham staff (including any emeritus, honorary and visiting academics), students, volunteers, independent contractors or consultants, who are attending university premises or carrying out work on behalf of the University, regardless of location.

3. Legislative context

- 3.1 The University's response to managing infectious diseases, specifically those which are notifiable, is underpinned by legislation and expert guidance:
- [Control of substances hazardous to health regulations 2002](#) (COSHH)
 - [Health and Safety \(First Aid\) regulations 1981](#)
 - [Management of Health and Safety at work regulations 1999](#)
 - [Reporting of injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences regulations 2013](#)
 - [The Public Health \(control of diseases\) Act 1984](#)
 - [Public health \(infectious diseases\) Regulations 1988](#)
 - [Food hygiene \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
 - [Preventing and controlling infections](#)
 - [Managing specific infectious diseases: A to Z](#)

4. Policy statement

- 4.1 The University has a responsibility to provide and maintain a healthy and safe environment, for all staff, students, visitors and contractors using its facilities or providing the University with services.
- 4.2 The University recognises that, while most work and study situations within the University pose little risk of infectious transmission, as people work and live closely together there is a slight increased risk of spreading infections and diseases, and there are some staff and students who have a higher risk of contracting an infectious disease because of the nature of their work/study environment and/or activities.

4.3 The University is committed, so far as it is reasonably practicable, to the following principles.

- (i) Taking appropriate steps to prevent or minimise the risk of infection posed by transmission of infectious diseases from a person, animal or research material to any other person. This includes but is not limited to:
 - promoting informed awareness and understanding in relation to infectious diseases and any control measures by disseminating and publicising up-to-date information widely throughout the University community;
 - establishing University preventative measures such as comprehensive health and safety policies and procedures, and robust cleaning practises/ schedules;
 - promoting precautionary measures such as high standard of personal hygiene and immunisations for dealing with infectious diseases.
- (ii) Managing potential and confirmed outbreaks of infectious diseases, through
 - working in conjunction with local authorities and HSE where appropriate;
 - informing staff, students, visitors and contractors as soon as possible following notification of a confirmed case or suspected outbreak of an infectious disease;
 - providing sufficient information to everyone who is deemed 'at risk', i.e. any member of staff, student, visitor or contractor that has been in close contact or proximity to the infected individual within the period prior to diagnosis. Please note this will vary by disease;
 - ensuring confidentiality and privacy for any person who discloses an infectious disease in the course of providing or using the services of the University;
 - maintaining records of any reports of infectious diseases and control measures put in place for monitoring and review purposes, in line with the University GDPR policy.
- (iii) Maintaining this policy and associated procedures as part of the emergency response arrangements

5. Responsibility

5.1 All staff, students, visitors and contractors using the University of Buckingham facilities or providing the University with services have a responsibility to take all required precautions to limit the spread of any disease. If anyone has been diagnosed or are suspected to have contracted a communicable infectious disease, they must report this to their manager, Head of Department or Head of Wellbeing Skills and Diversity (WSD), who in turn will advise the Infectious Disease Control Team (IDCT).

5.2 *Reported Case/Outbreak*

- 5.2.1 The Vice-Chancellor has overall responsibility for infectious disease control at the university and has established the Bronze (BIMT), Silver (SIMT) and Gold (GIMT) Incident Management Teams to manage and monitor risk.
- 5.2.2 Head of WSD is the point of contact for PHE and relevant local authorities.
- 5.2.3 BIMT membership is typically made up of Head of WSD (Chair), Director of Student Support Services (Interim), Health and Safety Manager with others co-opted as necessary (e.g. Dean or Associate Dean, Estates, HR, GP representative from Swan Practice Surgery, Occupational Health Representative etc.). BIMT are responsible for convening to consider reported/suspected cases and determining what advice, guidance and if applicable action should be taken to manage risk to the University community. They will also coordinate and monitor all action taken to manage the risk. The Chair will report to the Executive team, or SIMT.
- 5.2.4 SIMT will typically be convened during an epidemic/pandemic. Membership is made up of Registrar (Chair), Head of WSD, Director of Student Support Services (interim), Head of Estates, Health and Safety Manager and others co-opted as necessary. SIMT are responsible for coordinating communications to the University community, establishing control measures that should be put in place and monitoring and, if appropriate, directing the work of the BIMT. The Chair will report to Executive team.
- 5.2.5 GIMT will typically be convened during a pandemic. Membership is made up of the Vice Chancellor (Chair), the Chairs of SIMT and BIMT and other co-opted members of the University community. GIMT are responsible for determining University policy in managing the pandemic, providing strategic guidance and support, and overseeing all communicating with PHE and other relevant local authorities.

5.3 *Preventative Measures*

- 5.3.1 BIMT are responsible for ensuring the policy and its procedure are fit for purpose, for promoting the policy and its procedure and providing the University with up-to date information about infectious diseases and their prevention/control.
- 5.3.2 Head of WSD is responsible for providing information about good health and wellbeing to the student community including providing relevant information and health advice to students about the prevention and control of infectious diseases and immunisation requirements.
- 5.3.3 Deans/Heads of Department are responsible for determining any activities that may place staff, students, visitors and contractors at risk of acquiring an infectious disease. They must complete risk assessments of hazards and determine relevant controls to eliminate or mitigate risk.
- 5.3.4 Head of Estates is responsible for managing resources to ensure health and safety policies and procedures are used throughout the site, including, but not limited to, robust cleaning schedules, waste disposal, inspections of the site etc.

6. Definitions

Communicable (infectious)	Any disease transmissible by infection or contagion which can spread from one person to another via direct or indirect contact with infected individuals or their bodily discharges or fluids (such as respiratory droplets, blood, or semen), by contact with contaminated surfaces or objects, by ingestion of contaminated food or water, or by direct or indirect contact with disease vectors (such as mosquitoes, fleas, or mice)
Notifiable disease	A disease with significant public health implications, typically highly infectious. A registered medical practitioner has a statutory responsibility to notify PHE or local authority (list of notifiable diseases and causative organisms - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)). The medical practitioner is also obliged to notify the University as soon as possible, usually via the Head of WSD (mainly for students), or through the issuing of a medical certificate..
Cases	Individual incident recorded with no known link to other cases
Outbreak	Usually two or more confirmed cases of the same infectious disease within a 1 to 2 week timeframe, dependent on the illness and where the common links can be identified.
Endemic	Communicable disease such as influenza, diarrhoea and vomiting, measles, mumps, pneumonia which is characteristic of a particular place, or among a particular group, or area of interest or activity
Epidemic	Where an infectious disease is found to infect a significantly larger number of people at the same time than is common at that time, and among that population, may spread through one or several communities (can affect a region in a country or a group of countries)
Pandemic	A global disease outbreak, an epidemic which has spread worldwide