



Asbestos Management Policy

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POLICY/PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

The University of Wolverhampton has a statutory duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety, and welfare of all the University community which includes its employees, students, apprentice learners, visitors, contractors, partners and others who may be affected by its undertaking.

This policy has been produced by the Health and Safety Department in collaboration with the Estates Management Department.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Asbestos Management Plan & Register information which details the actions that are in place as part of our Control & Management of Asbestos.

2. Purpose (Policy Statement)

This policy is issued under the University's Health and Safety Policy. It is reviewed in line with the university policy review process. The University will carry out its duty to manage asbestos as required by the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 and take all appropriate steps to comply with other asbestos related legislation, codes of practice and standards.

3. Principles

The duty to manage asbestos is provided by regulation 4 of the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012[4]. It requires the person who has the duty (i.e., the "duty-holder") to:

- Take reasonable steps to find out if there are materials containing asbestos in non-domestic premises, and if so, the amount, where it is and what condition it is in.
- Presume materials contain asbestos unless there is strong evidence that they do not.
- Make, and keep up to date, a record of the location and condition of the asbestos containing materials or materials which are presumed to contain asbestos.
- Assess the risk of anyone being exposed to fibres from the materials identified.
- Prepare a plan that sets out in detail how the risks from these materials will be managed.
- Take the necessary steps to put the plan into action.
- Periodically review and monitor the plan and the arrangements to act on it so that the plan remains relevant and up to date; and
- Provide information on the location and condition of the materials to anyone who is liable to work on or disturb them.

There is also a requirement for all staff to follow the asbestos policies and procedures and co-operate as far as is necessary to allow the duty-holder to comply with the above requirements.

The University recognises the risks involved with the Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs).

This policy along with the supporting management procedures is designed to ensure that the University meets its legal obligations.

4. Scope

The policy applies to all employees of the University including those who are within a probationary period.

The responsibilities and organisational arrangements for the policy lie with a variety of personnel within the University, details of which are set out as follows:

University staff who fail to adhere to the terms of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

5. What is Asbestos and Why it is Managed?

Breathing in air containing asbestos fibres can lead to asbestos-related diseases, mainly cancers of the lungs and chest lining. Asbestos is only a risk to health if asbestos fibres are released into the air and breathed in.

Deaths associated with exposure to asbestos, including mesothelioma, asbestosis, and asbestos related lung cancer account for over 5000 work related deaths per year in Great Britain. Workers who carry out building maintenance and repair are particularly at risk.

There is usually a long delay between first exposure to asbestos and the onset of disease. This can vary from 15 to 60 years. Only by preventing or minimising these exposures now, can asbestos-related disease eventually be reduced.

It is now illegal to use asbestos in the construction or refurbishment of any premises, but many thousands of tonnes of it were used in the past and much of it is still in place.

There are three main types of asbestos that can still be found in premises, commonly called crocidolite (*blue asbestos*), amosite (*brown asbestos*) and chrysotile (*white asbestos*), all of them being dangerous carcinogens.

Despite their common names, you cannot identify them just by their colour.

Any buildings built or refurbished before the year 2000 may contain asbestos. If the asbestos-containing material (ACM) is in good condition and is not being or going to be disturbed or damaged, there is negligible risk. But if it is disturbed or damaged, it can become a danger to health, because people may breathe in any asbestos fibres released into the air.

Who is at risk?

The more asbestos fibres breathed in, the greater the risk to health. Therefore, workers who may be exposed to asbestos when carrying out maintenance and repair jobs are at particular risk. Such workers include:

- Construction and demolition contractors, roofers, electricians, painters and decorators, joiners, plumbers, gas fitters, plasterers, shop fitters, heating and ventilation engineers, and surveyors.
- Anyone dealing with electronics, e.g., phone and IT engineers, and alarm installers.
- General maintenance engineers and others who work on the fabric of a building.

If asbestos is present and can be readily disturbed, is in poor condition and managed properly, others who may be occupying the premises could be put at risk.

Where is asbestos found in buildings?

Asbestos was used in many parts of buildings, below is a sample of uses and locations where asbestos can be found:

Some ACMs are more vulnerable to damage and more likely to give off fibres than others. In general, materials that contain a high percentage of asbestos are more easily damaged (see examples below).

- Moulded or preformed lagging – e.g., thermal insulation of pipes and boilers.
- Sprayed asbestos – e.g., firebreaks, panels, partitions, soffit boards, ceiling panels and around structural steelwork.
- Insulating boards used for fire protection, thermal insulation, partitioning and ducts.
- Some ceiling tiles.
- Millboard, paper, and paper products used for insulation of electrical equipment.
- Asbestos cement products, which can be fully or semi-compressed into flat or corrugated sheets.
- Certain textured coatings.
- Bitumen roofing material; and
- Vinyl or thermoplastic floor tiles.

Sprayed coatings, lagging and insulating board are more likely to contain blue or brown asbestos. Asbestos insulation and lagging can contain up to 85% asbestos and are most likely to give off fibres. Work with AIB can result in equally high fibre release if power tools are used. On the other hand, asbestos cement contains only 10–15% asbestos. The asbestos is tightly bound into the cement, and the material will only give off fibres if it is badly damaged or broken, or is worked on (e.g., sanded, drilled, cut etc.).

However, the appropriate management of existing asbestos containing materials should prevent adverse health effects.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Governors:

The Board of Governors 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.

The Vice-Chancellor:

- Ultimate Duty Holder for Wolverhampton University Health and Safety compliance.
- Responsible for the appointment of competent personnel to implement Wolverhampton Universities Asbestos Policy and Asbestos Management Plan.
- The Statutory Duty Holder at Wolverhampton University will appoint, a Responsible Person (asbestos)—possessing adequate professional knowledge and experience and having undergone appropriate training—to take managerial responsibility and to provide supervision for the implementation of asbestos control precautions.
- The Responsible Person will be given sufficient authority to ensure that control measures are implemented effectively.
- The Responsible Person shall have a deputy also appointed in writing by the Statutory Duty Holder.
- Responsible for provision of funds for any Asbestos related works.

The Corporate Health and Safety Team:

- Notifying the Health and Safety Executive, where appropriate, of any accidental release of fibres.
- Offering screening (via Occupational Health) to members of staff who are known or suspected to have been exposed to asbestos materials.
- Providing health advice and/or counselling (via Occupational Health) to individuals who are concerned about possible exposure to asbestos materials.
- Maintaining health records (via Occupational Health) for individuals who may have been

exposed to asbestos fibres (records must be kept for at least 40 years).

The Estates Management Team:

- Maintain and update the Asbestos Management Plan.
- Review and approve any risk assessments and method statements for works where ACM's have been identified.
- Ensure a competent contractor is in place to maintain the asbestos register.

Those members of the university who manage contracts and or contractors are responsible for:

- Ensuring that reference is made to the Asbestos Register prior to the commencement of any works.
- Notifying contractors and all parties involved of any ACM's in the vicinity of the proposed works and recording of such on the relevant EST forms/documentation.
- Ensuring that the proposed health and safety provisions are adequate and check and approve all risk assessments and method statements prior to permitting the contractor to commence work.
- On being notified of damage to asbestos materials or suspected asbestos materials the Emergency Operating Procedure (detailed in the Asbestos Management Plan) including, ensuring all work ceases immediately and informing the Estates Health, Safety, Risk and Compliance Manager.

The Estates Management Department are also responsible for gathering and recording all relevant information regarding asbestos or suspected asbestos containing materials. This information is documented on a register, which is maintained by the University's current termed contractor, Lucion Environmental (NexGen database).

Information contained within the Asbestos Register together with the Asbestos Management Plan, will be shared with key stakeholders through Estates Management and designated termed contractors as part of the project management process.

If any member of staff, contractor or subcontractor employed by the University becomes aware of damage to asbestos containing materials or suspected asbestos containing materials, they should notify the Project Manager or the Site Technical Supervisor in Estates Management immediately.

The Project Manager or the Technical Supervisor is responsible for closing/making the area safe, as they determine appropriate. After consultation with the University's termed contractor, the Project Manager or the Technical Supervisor will implement any appropriate action. Any damage involving ACM's or suspected ACM's should be logged on the university accident, incident and near miss reporting system via the link [Here](#).

Further information for those undertaking or intending to undertake works to the fabric of the building can be found within Estates and Facilities Policy: Maintaining Building Integrity: [WLV Policies – University of Wolverhampton](#).

7. Training

Training is equipping staff (and others where appropriate) with the relevant skills required to comply with this policy. Training relating to this policy will be made available according to training needs of the individual, this could include:

- Asbestos awareness - which provides information workers need to avoid disturbing asbestos during their normal work, not to actually work with asbestos.
- Non-licensable work - for workers undertaking lower risk work on asbestos that does not require a licence.
- Licensable work - most work with higher-risk asbestos-containing materials must be carried out by licensed contractors with specialist training and their specific role.

8. Exceptions

There are no exceptions to this policy.

9. Amendments

The University may update this Policy at any time, should any significant changes be identified. Where a policy is not due for review, but is found to require updating, it will remain published, unless the reasons for review render it obsolete.

10. Information and Resources

- Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974.
- Control of Asbestos Regulations, 2012.
- Management of Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations, 1999.
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations, 2015.
- Approved Code of Practice L143 'Managing and working with asbestos'.
- A comprehensive guide to Managing Asbestos in Premises HSG227.
- MDHS 100 – Surveying, sampling and assessment of asbestos containing materials.
- Asbestos Survey Guide HSG264.
- Licenced contractor Guide HSG247.

11. Contact

For general queries, please contact the University Health and Safety Department at HSDEmails@wlv.ac.uk

For queries regarding compliance with this policy, please contact the Corporate Compliance Team at compliance@wlv.ac.uk

VERSION	13	AUTHOR(S) OWNER	Head of Health and Safety
Approved Date	June 2026	Approved By	University Health and Safety Committee- 8th June 2026 and University Executive Board- 8th September 2026
Next Review Date	June 2029		