



UCL

**UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON
SAFETY WHEN VACATING AREAS AT UCL**

APPROVED CODE of PRACTICE

Introduction / Aim of this document

This document, a UCL-Approved Code of Practice (UCL-ACoP), provides a mechanism by which departments can fulfil their duty to assess and manage the risk to health and safety arising from persons and constituent groups leaving or vacating space at UCL.

This Code of Practice forms part of UCL's general arrangements for health and safety and may form part of a department's own arrangements for health and safety under its Statement of Safety Policy (SSP). It will assist the department to comply with the requirements of UCL in accordance with legislative requirements. Departments may use alternative methods to those set out in this Code but if so will have to show that they have met, as a minimum, the standard set out in this ACoP.

This ACOP applies to aspects of a department's work that have ceased or are re-located. It requires those responsible for that work to ensure that substances, materials and equipment are disposed of or removed from work and storage areas when employees leave or re-locate. Thus workspace occupied by new groups and individuals will be in a condition that is free from hazards and unwanted materials and equipment and that the department does not incur the higher costs associated with the disposal of unknown hazardous items.

Not all eventualities are covered in this document, but the principles will be the same for all situations. These are;

- Inform all persons who may be affected.
- Dispose of what is no longer needed through the correct channels.
- Keep what may be of use, but check with incoming group.
- Make the area and equipment safe.
- Keep the area secure.

This ACoP and Appendices have been drawn up by Safety Services making use of guidance issued by the Health and Safety Executive and other "best practice" where appropriate. They are approved for use in UCL and its constituent Institutes, Divisions and Departments by the Health and Safety Management Team (HSMT) and are published after consultation as widely as possible with interested parties.

Abbreviations

GM	Genetic Modification
GMSO	Genetic Modification Safety Officer
DRPS	Departmental Radiation Protection Supervisor
DHWS	Disposal of Hazardous Waste Service
DSO	Departmental Safety Officer

1. Application of this UCL-ACoP

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1.1

This Approved Code of Practice is intended for implementation in all UCL’s constituent academic and administrative departments, institutes, schools and divisions in UCL. In this document the term “department” is used generically to apply to all UCL management “entities” whose Head annually reviews and signs a Statement of Safety Policy (SSP).

Guidance

1.1

This document applies to all UCL departments, members of staff, students, visiting academics, contractors, researchers and post graduates working in any UCL department or building and on any of UCL’s sites.

2. Management

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2.1

The Head of Department must ensure that all vacated areas for which he/she is responsible, are free from hazard and unwanted materials and equipment.

Guidance

2.1

All staff with responsibility for a room, laboratory etc must be aware of this requirement, and the department must implement any necessary arrangements to ensure that when an area managed by it is to be vacated, it is left in a condition that is safe for any person / other personnel to enter to carry out their work. A record of laboratory decontamination should be kept.

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2.2

When an area is to be vacated, the Principal Investigator/ Supervisor must inform the Head of Department, Departmental Safety Officer and Departmental Administrator to ensure that systems are put in place to notify those persons necessary to ensure that the area is left safe and clear for incoming persons.

Guidance

2.2

Persons who may need to be notified will include specialist officers such as:

- Departmental Radiation Protection Supervisor (DRPS);
- Genetic Modification Safety Officer (GMSO);
- Incoming Group Leader;
- Buildings Liaison Officer;
- UCL Project Officer – where refurbishment is taking place.

The department must ensure that the staff vacating and clearing the area have sufficient time and resources as necessary to ensure that the area is ready and safe for occupation by incoming staff or contractors.

In order to minimise delays to the commencement of work by contractors or the incoming group, it is important that any clearance is arranged in advance of the departure/vacation date.

Additionally, financial penalties may be incurred where a refurbishment / building project is delayed because the area has not been cleared or decontaminated and is not deemed safe for contractors or a new group to occupy the area.

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2.3

Supervisors and Principal Investigators must ensure that all unwanted materials and equipment are disposed of via the correct disposal routes and systems.

Guidance

UCL Estates has put in place systems to provide a wide range of cleaning and waste removal services throughout UCL's research, teaching, administration, circulation and common areas: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/estates/estates-services/waste-and-recycling>

Cleaning and Waste Services ext 37001 will dispose of:

- Compactable domestic waste packed in clear plastic bags at no cost;
- Items such as filing cabinets, computers, and white goods (e.g. refrigerators), provided the items are clean and have been authorised by a named member of the department as safe to remove;
- Unwanted documents containing confidential information for shredding;
- Confidential material, including slides and x-ray plates, with patients' names on them;
- To protect confidentiality and meet the requirements of the Data Protection Act, information on computer hard drives must be erased before disposal;
- Office paper can be recycled, and should be put in green bags;
- Glass, including broken glass, provided that it is boxed.

Departments are charged for removal of all non-compactable waste.

Staff and Students leaving UCL should advise companies from whom they receive mail of their change of address, (doing so contributes to a considerable reduction in paper waste and lightens the burden of the staff in the Post Room).

2.3

3. Laboratory Clearance

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3.1

Supervisors and Group Leaders must ensure that all substances, materials and equipment are made safe for removal or re-use.

Guidance

Samples, specimens and legacy materials left behind for others must be clearly labelled. Arrangements for disposal of chemicals and equipment must be made prior to leaving. See the following:

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/estates/estates-services/waste-and-recycling>

- Clinical waste in yellow bags or medi-bins;
- Chemical waste provided that it is listed giving container size, not the quantity inside. This is not necessary for containers of <10grams;
- Solvents;
- Sharps such as scalpel blades, needles etc must be disposed of in a cin-bin or suitable container;
- HEPA filters from Biological Cabinets must be fumigated and double bagged before removal from laboratories;

3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radioactive waste and associated equipment such as disposal sinks, refrigerators etc must be • de-contaminated and cleared by the Departmental Radiation Protection Supervisor (DRPS) in line with UCL Local Rules; • Laboratory equipment if free of chemical contamination. <p>In order to avoid unauthorised removals, it is important that items are clearly labelled FOR REMOVAL whenever arrangements have been made with Cleaning & Waste Services or another contractor.</p> <p>If necessary, Cleaning and Waste Services can arrange for specialist cleaning or removal contractors.</p>
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3.2	<p><i>The clearance of areas where radioactive materials have been used or stored, requires that the DRPS be informed and UCL Local Rules for the use of Ionising Radiations are closely followed. All users should be familiar with these and have access to a copy. Once this process is completed, normal laboratory clearance should be followed (see 2.2).</i></p>
Guidance	<p>User – return film badge to the Radiation Protection Supervisor (RPS) or badge collector for the department. Clear unwanted stock; NB check limits for disposal with RPS. Undertake contamination monitoring and decontaminate equipment and work area as necessary. Record results.</p> <p>Group – return film badge to the Radiation Protection Supervisor or badge collector for the department. Clear stock. Decontaminate equipment and work areas. Provide a signed decontamination certificate for the department. A copy of the form should be kept by the RPS, a copy given to the Project Officer and a copy sent to UCL Safety Services; see LR16, UCL Local Rules for the use of Ionising Radiations.</p>
3.2	
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3.3	<p><i>Users of Genetically Modified (GM) Material must ensure that it is inactivated and disposed of, assigned to a different project or placed in long- term storage.</i></p>
Guidance	<p>If the project is to be continued by others within the department, UCL GM Safety Committee must be notified. This can be done through the quarterly review carried out by Safety Services at which time the Project Notification can be reviewed and re-submitted.</p> <p>If GM material is to be kept under the same notification, the project will be deemed still to be active. All such materials must be labelled and archived within the department.</p> <p>If the project is to be terminated, any GM material must be disabled and disposed of as indicated in the risk assessment and the GM Safety Committee informed. This can be done through the quarterly review carried out by Safety Services.</p>
3.3	
UCL – ACOP	<p><i>Hazard Signs and Notices should be kept in place until the Supervisor/Principal Investigator is satisfied that the area or</i></p>

3.4

equipment is free from contamination.

Guidance

3.4

The hazard signs must be removed when an area has been cleared and is free of contamination when the area is to be refurbished or a change of activity is to take place, e.g. no longer to be used for work with biohazards or radioactive substances etc.

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3.5

Supervisors and Principal Investigators must ensure that all equipment not belonging to them, is returned to its owners.

Guidance

3.5

Before leaving the area, supervisors and group leaders must ensure that all non departmental equipment has been returned to the owners e.g. gas cylinders – you should notify BOC or your supplier that you have cylinders which are no longer required, as rental will continue to be charged to the group.

4. Workshop Clearance

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4.1

The workshop manager must ensure that all substances, materials and equipment are made safe for removal or re-use.

Guidance

4.1

All unwanted material must be made safe and disposed of using the correct procedures.
Sharps such as waste material (swarf) should be placed in a suitable bin for disposal. Large quantities of swarf can be recycled.
Machinery which is to be removed should be made safe and isolated from its power source. In the case of hard wired equipment, this must be done by a competent electrician. Once the machine is safe it can be removed. This can be arranged through <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/estates/estates-services/waste-and-recycling>
Unwanted oil and chemicals can be removed by <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/estates/estates-services/waste-and-recycling>

5. Office Clearance

UCL – ACOP
5.1

Office managers or supervisors must ensure that unwanted material and furniture are disposed of correctly.

Guidance

5.1

Before leaving the area, Supervisors and Principal Investigators must ensure that all non departmental equipment has been returned to the owners e.g. photocopiers, printers etc.
It may be possible to store unwanted furniture for future use or for others to use. Unwanted furniture that cannot be stored, paper, books etc can be disposed of by arrangement <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/estates/estates-services/waste-and-recycling>

6. Record keeping

UCL - ACOP
6.1

Records of work activities must be kept and passed to the DSO for centralised filing.

Guidance

The following records **must** be kept;

- Radioactive stock control – 3 years;
- Surface radioactive contamination monitoring – 3 years;
- Health surveillance and exposure records, e.g. animal allergens;
- Risk assessments:
for work within the last 5 years should be retained;
for work prior to the last 5 years should be archived – contact UCL Records Office
<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/library/about-us/ucl-records-office>
Work with Genetically Modified Organisms must be kept for at least 10 years;

6.1

- Training records;
 - Records of maintenance and testing of equipment;
- The following will be kept by UCL centrally:
- Accident reports and investigations - UCL Safety Services
- Health screening records are also kept by UCL Occupational Health.

7. Security

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7.1

To ensure that security in the area to be vacated is maintained, keys, access cards and UCL identity cards must be returned to your departmental administration or given directly to Access Systems.

Guidance

To ensure the security of all areas, keys, access cards and UCL identity cards must be returned to your departmental administration or directly to Access Systems
Contact Access Systems ext 32102

7.1

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/estates/our-services/security-ucl/id-cards-locks-and-keys>

A forwarding address should be left with the Departmental Administrator.

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7.2

Disposal of secure information must be done in line with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Guidance

To prevent confidential or secure information or data from becoming available to unauthorised persons and to comply with the Data Protection Act (1998), computer hard drives should be cleared of such information before being removed for use by others or disposal.

7.2

For further information contact Records Office
<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/library/about-us/ucl-records-office>
Unwanted paper documents should be disposed of using the Confidential waste collection and disposal service.
<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/estates/estates-services/waste-and-recycling>

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7.3

The department may have to make changes to its Major Incident Plan where this is affected by the movement of staff and relocation of part of the department.

Guidance

7.3

The group or section which is leaving or re-locating may be one which holds dangerous chemicals, explosive material or very valuable artefacts etc which will have to be listed as part of the department's major incident plan.