Prevention and Control of Legionella Policy

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1. Introduction

1.1 This policy is intended to set out the processes the University College of Osteopathy (UCO) have in place to manage and control the risk of Legionella bacteria in their water systems. The document applies to all premises and to all areas where water is stored or used and where there is the potential for creating water droplets.

1.2 The policy is based on the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 and the HSC Approved Code of Practice and Guidance for The control of Legionella Bacteria in Water Systems, L8. Any possible cases are notifiable to the Health and Safety Executive under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR).

2. Background

2.1 Legionnaires' disease, a potentially fatal form of Pneumonia and each year there are between 200-250 reported cases of which approximately 15% prove fatal. The bacteria *Legionella pneumophilia* is the main cause of the disease with other strains contributing on a lesser scale.

2.2 The conditions required for the bacteria to multiply are:

a) Water temperature between 20°C and 45°C with the optimum being 37°C. Below 20°C the bacteria are dormant and above 60°C they cannot survive.

b) A source of nutrients, e.g., rust, sediment or biofilm.

c) The ability for an aerosol to form such as shower heads, taps etc.

2.3 The disease is contracted by breathing in droplets of water contaminated with the bacteria. Whilst everyone is susceptible to the Legionella bacteria, the risk is higher for males, those over 45 years of age and those with respiratory problems or smokers.

2.4 The bacteria are widely found in natural sources of water such as rivers, lakes, and ponds and due to their abundance, they can cause contamination in hot and cold-water systems, cooling towers and other artificial systems.

3. Risk Assessment

3.1 On-site cooling towers and evaporative condensers are notifiable and must be reported to the local authority. The UCO does not currently have any notifiable devices.

3.2 At the UCO, the hot and cold-water systems present the greatest risk with the showers contributing to the risk factor. Factors affecting the level of risk include:

a) Size of water system and distance the water needs to travel.

b) Age of system and build-up of rust etc.

c) Frequency of use.

d) Number of outlets with potential for aerosols to form.

3.3 See the full risk assessment for further details.

3.4 The risk assessment for the UCO will be reviewed at a maximum interval of two years or earlier if the following occur:

a) Changes to legislation.

b) Alterations to the water systems within the building.

c) Changes to building use or population.

4. Control Procedures

4.1 In order to minimise risk, the following procedures are in place:

a) Calorifiers will be maintained at 60°C with pipework insulated where necessary to minimise heat loss.

b) Water tanks will be checked bi-annually and cleaned and chlorinated as necessary.

c) Flow and return temperature to calorifier will be monitored and recorded monthly.

d) Monitor and record temperature of hot and cold sentinel taps monthly.

e) Descale shower heads quarterly.

f) Records will be maintained for all areas covered in the Legionella Policy.

g) Redundant pipework has been removed and little used outlets are flushed through weekly

h) Any future pipework installed should be rigid and details recorded in the logbook

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 The Duty Holder is the Vice Chancellor of the UCO. As the Responsible Person, the Head of Estates is responsible for the risk assessment and maintaining up to date records and reports. The Facilities Supervisor will act as an operative and will carry out some of the tasks described above under the supervision of the Responsible Person

5.2 Six-monthly sample tests are carried out by external contractors – for more information see the Risk Assessment

6. Training and Competence

6.1 The ACOP L8 Paragraph 39 recommends a competent person is made responsible for implementing the risk assessment and ensuring the recommendations are met. Both the Head of Estates and the Facilities Supervisor are trained in Legionella Management.

6.2 Records of training will be kept in the Log Book.

6.3 Any external contractors employed to undertake any of the Legionella Control Procedures will be accredited by the Legionella Control Association and will be required to conform to the Prevention and Control of Legionella Policy. Whilst on site they will also be required to conform to the UCO's Health & Safety and Control of Contractors policies.

7. Dates

7.1 Next date for review: March 2025.

CORE DOCUMENTATION RECORD PAGE

Prevention and Control of Legionella Policy

Version number	Dates produced and approved (include committee)	Reason for production/ revision	Author	Location(s)	Proposed next review date and approval required
V1.0	Jan 2011 School Management Team	To set out the processes the British School of Osteopathy have in place to manage and control the risk of Legionella bacteria in their water systems.	Facilities & Purchasing Manager	All master versions will be held in: J:\0 Quality Team - Core Documentation Intranet	Jan 2012
V2.0	Oct 2014 Corporate Services Director	Minor Amendment to reflect current practice.	Facilities & Purchasing Manager	All master versions will be held in: J:\0 Quality Team - Core Documentation Intranet	Oct 2015
V3.0	Aug 2015 Corporate Services Director	Minor Amendment to reflect current practice.	Facilities & Purchasing Manager	All master versions will be held in: J:\0 Quality Team - Core Documentation Intranet	Aug 2017
V4.0	Aug 2017 SMT	Minor Amendments to update institution name change from British School of Osteopathy to University College of Osteopathy, to reflect current legislation and current staff role titles and to include a section on Site Testing & Records.	Head of Estates	All master versions will be held in: J:\0 Quality Team - Core Documentation Intranet	Aug 2019
V5.0	Aug 2019 HSC	Minor amendments to wording	Head of Estates	All master versions will be held in: J:\0 Quality Team - Core Documentation Sharepoint	July 2021
V6.0	Mar 2022 HSC	Scheduled Review Administrative Amendments to correct factual information.	Head of Estates	All master versions will be held in: J:\0 Quality Team - Core Documentation Website	Mar 2025

Equality Impact	
Positive equality impact (i.e. the policy/procedure/guideline significantly reduces inequalities)	
Neutral equality impact (i.e. no significant effect)	X
Negative equality impact (i.e. increasing inequalities)	

If you have any feedback or suggestions for enhancing this policy, please email your comments to: quality@uco.ac.uk