



Communicable Diseases Contingency Plan (including Meningococcal infection)

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1. Background

The University is aware of the perceived or actual threat that any type of communicable disease can cause including invasive meningococcal infection (septicaemia or meningitis)

This plan sets out the actions required in responding to a case(s) of a communicable disease in the university community including meningococcal infection as it can develop rapidly and is fatal in five to ten per cent of cases. The Lothian Health Protection Team (HPT) will advise on recommended periods of absence if a case is confirmed.

This plan seeks to summarise the actions required in responding to a case(s) of communicable disease and, in, ensures that there are:

- Adequate channels of communication with students, staff and the public
- Effective support arrangements for students and staff
- Good links with health protection teams
- Direct access to appropriate advice on the management of communicable diseases.

2. Introduction

Notification of a communicable disease can come from a number of sources. In the majority of cases it is likely that the University will be contacted by the NHS Lothian HPT regarding a possible, probable or confirmed case of a communicable disease. It is also possible that a student, member of staff or member of the public may inform the University directly. If the university officials are contacted directly by a student, staff or member of the public they should liaise directly with the health protection team before undertaking any investigation.

The health protection team will work with the University to undertake a risk assessment and determine the course of action required. Once a response is initiated, the senior officer or deputy in charge has ultimate responsibility to make decisions/choices including communications for their area of responsibility. Advice should be taken where necessary and escalated as and when required. In particular, the advice of health professionals should be closely followed at all times.

Communications during a suspected or actual outbreak of a communicable disease are essential and must be accurate and timely; poor communications can make the event seem much worse than it is and cause anxiety amongst staff, students and members of the public and ultimately be damaging to the University's reputation. NHS Lothian communications team will work with the university team to provide communications to the university and wider population if required.

As well as dealing with cases and outbreaks of communicable diseases prevention is key. Raising awareness of communicable diseases and vaccinations available in the university population should be undertaken – see Appendix 4 for details.

A copy of this plan will be held by Governance & Compliance, School Support Service, Human Resources, Marketing & External Relations, Student Wellbeing & Inclusion, Property and Facilities, Central Security Control and NHS Lothian.

Contact details for these staff are held in Appendix 1 along with the out of hours contacts for the Lothian HPT and contact details for the main meningitis charities. Central Security Control will facilitate out of hours call outs in line with the Emergency Response Procedure as they hold out of hours contact details for key colleagues.

The Governance Officer (Risk & Governance) will ensure that the Contact List and numbers are updated every six months or sooner if there are known changes.

The key staff involved in responding to a case/outbreak along with representation from NHS HPT will review this document in August each year.

3. Notification of an infectious disease

There is a statutory duty on the **diagnosis** of some communicable diseases, under the Public Health Scotland Act (2008).

This is a clinical duty and relates to Registered Practitioners (NHS Doctors in GP practice and/or Hospital) who are required to notify the Health Protection Team of any diagnosed and suspected cases of certain communicable diseases within 3 days.

The University is NOT required to notify the Local Authority as this is undertaken by NHS Lothian at the point of diagnosis. NHS Lothian will also notify any other relevant bodies.

ENU can however make contact with any and all public bodies in an advisory capacity should this be required.

There are a large number of infectious and communicable diseases that may in rare occasions be found- in the university community. The recommended period of absence for the disease in question should be followed together with the actions advised by health professionals.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

In the event of a case or outbreak of a communicable disease the following colleagues will play a key role in facilitating the appropriate response. The **Head of Health and Safety or Health and Safety Manager** would be contacted by the HP Team in the first instance. If appropriate and in discussion with the Director of Finance and Operations, they would co-ordinate a university team to manage the situation liaising with the Health Protection Team as required.

If an incident response team with NHS staff was deemed to be necessary the University's Director of Finance and Operations or their deputy would take the lead role and authorise any mechanisms or facilities, which require to be set in place (Appendix 1 provides an outline agenda). The incident response lead would co-ordinate the team as required and ensure that all involved in the University's response are kept informed on the situation including actions taken.

The team may include the following members.

The Director of Information Services or their deputy will be required to assist in the setting up of any digital services that are needed to support the University's response e.g. provision of an email helpline.

The Director of Property and Facilities or their deputy will be responsible for the provision of an area for the administration of antibiotics, vaccination, drinking water, security and cleaning. Information on how this might be set up can be found in Appendix 5.

The Director of People & Services or their deputy will be responsible for managing any staff input or implications arising and liaising with the University's Occupational Health provider as appropriate.

The Senior Officer with responsibility for Marketing & External Relations or the **Head of Communications** will be responsible for liaising with the NHS Lothian Press Office to prepare any press statement and/or statement(s) to staff/students/the media.

The Senior Officer with responsibility for Student Administration or their deputy will be responsible for providing information on students, including student address labels and class lists if necessary and with their permission. They will also provide details of programme leaders and personal tutors and will assist with the provision of information to students.

The Senior Officer with responsibility for Student Wellbeing or their deputy will provide counselling and wellbeing support to students and will be advised and asked to assist with advice and assessment as appropriate to the situation.

The Senior Officer with responsibility for Student Accommodation or their deputy will be contacted in the case of a student living in University Student Accommodation. His/her remit will be to provide details of all students in Student Accommodation and to assist in whatever way deemed necessary.

Edinburgh Napier Students Association will assist in providing information as advised by colleagues in Marketing and External Relations/Head of Communications and Student Wellbeing and Inclusion.

The Relevant Dean of School or their deputy will be advised as appropriate and will be asked to assist in whatever is deemed appropriate to the situation.

5. Other Contacts

Other University colleagues may be required to provide support dependent on the actions advised by the HPT.

Health & Safety will liaise with the HPT. Close contacts may be advised by NHS Lothian (through Health and Safety) on any further action that may be required.

6. Communications

It is very important that the identify the affected staff or student member is not identified in any communications. The identity of the person involved should only be shared on a need to know basis. The health protection team will only share essential information on the case(s) with consent from the case or their Next of Kin.

All media enquiries will be directed to the marketing and External relations team. This team will work with NHS Lothian to draft holding statements.

- **Staff/Students**

The health protection team will risk assess the situation and determine what communications are required for staff and students. It is unlikely that an all staff/student communication would be appropriate as this is likely to cause anxiety and panic throughout the University. It is more appropriate to communicate with those closely involved e.g. a student class in a department. A general communication may be appropriate to reassure staff and students and to highlight the symptoms of the disease. Guidance on this matter will be provided by Marketing & External Relations in conjunction with NHS Lothian.

- **Student Accommodation**

The content of any notification to students in Student Accommodation will be agreed by NHS Lothian and the Senior Officers with responsibility for Marketing & External Relations and will be circulated by members of the Student Accommodation Team. In the first instance information will be prepared by Marketing and Communication and the HPT for flats of individual students on particular sites. Should it be deemed appropriate a meeting of residents will be arranged at an appropriate location.

- **Private Accommodation**

No immediate leafleting should take place but flat mates may be considered as close contacts. Marketing & External Relations will liaise with the HPT who will advise on any further appropriate action.

If there is a probable/confirmed case of meningococcal infection in the student or staff communities, the HPT will also help with notifying other Higher Education Institutions in Lothian. See Appendix 6 for contact details

- **Central Security Control**

Information for dealing with enquiries out of normal hours or during periods of University closure will be provided to the Central Security Control along with contact numbers for relevant members of staff.

- **Family**

If deemed necessary, consideration should be given to an initial offer of sympathy in the name of the Principal and Vice-Chancellor in line with existing university policies and as appropriate to the situation.

- **Telephone helpline**

It is very unlikely that this will be required. Ideally information for students, staff and the wider university population will be available online. However if the university is dealing with a vast number of calls there may be a need to set up a university dedicated phone line. The helpline would be staffed by trained volunteers or in the event of a less serious communicable disease a recorded message advising of the situation and what the University is doing to respond to the outbreak along with any relevant contact numbers for further information. Action cards will be prepared for these volunteers with key information on the communicable disease.

The health protection team are more likely to receive calls from members of the public and will be able to provide bespoke information. In a very serious situation affecting more than the university population then an NHS 24 helpline will be considered by NHS Lothian.

6. Data Protection

In order to meet our statutory obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998, appropriate personal data may be disclosed by authorised University personnel at the request of the Health Authorities. Guidance can be found in sections 8.6 and 8.7 of the [University's Data Protection Code of Practice.](#)

If you are in any doubt about whether personal data should be released and/or the appropriate secure method by which this is to be done please contact Governance Services on ext 6471

Primary Contacts for HPT in the order they would be contacted

APPENDIX 1

Name	Role	Contact Number Work	Contact Number 1	Contact Number 2
Sean Hughes	Interim Head of Health and Safety	0131 455 6371	07826 905 293 (w)	-
David Conner	Health & Safety Manager	0131 455 3315	07977 589867 (w)	-
Security Control	OUT OF HOURS OR IF THE ABOVE CANNOT BE REACHED	0131 455 6119 securitycontrol@napier.ac.uk	-	-

Wider Team to be convened by the Director of Finance and Operations if required

Director, Finance & Operations	0131 455 6016	0131 445 2707	0771 191 6810 (w) 07777 678 715 (p)
Director, Strategy and Planning & Secretary to Court	0131 455 3209	07395 283489	-
Director, People & Services	-	07525657202 (p)	07971 236546 (w)
Director, Marketing & External Relations	0131 455 6258	07591 388 988	-
Director, Property & Facilities	0131 455 4662	07815 023723	-
Director, Information Services	0131 455 4202	07730 480113 (p)	07542 230289 (w)

Head of Asset Management	-	-	07816 182295 (w)
Head of Student Wellbeing and Inclusion	0131 455 2902	07736 650 571	-
Director of Student Services & Academic Registrar	0131 455 2404	07977 156527 (w)	07754 111 207 (p)
Head of Communications	0131 455 6018	0773 403 4163	-
Edinburgh Napier Students Association	0131 229 8791		

Deans may be called upon as appropriate – contact details can be found in the emergency procedures.

External Contacts

NHS Lothian	<p style="text-align: center;">Health Protection Team 0300 790 6264 (Monday to Friday 08:30- 18:00)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">0131 536 1000 (out of office hours switchboard. Ask for Public on call Health)</p>
Meningitis Research Foundation	<p style="text-align: center;">Helpline- 0808 80 03344</p> <p style="text-align: center;">https://www.meningitis.org/</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Edinburgh Office- 0131 510 2345</p>
Meningitis Now	<p style="text-align: center;">Helpline- 0808 80 10388</p> <p style="text-align: center;">https://www.meningitisnow.org/</p>

ARRANGEMENTS FOR INCIDENT MEETINGS

1. The purpose of meetings is to share information, agree communications, confirm administration required and ensure effective communication between the University and NHS Lothian.
2. Joint incident meetings will be convened by NHS Lothian and held in a suitable location on campus or using teams.
3. The standard incident agenda will be circulated by NHS Lothian. Admin support will also be provided by NHS Lothian.
4. The meetings will be attended by the contacts listed in Appendix 2 unless otherwise agreed.

Possible Draft Agenda

1. Introductions and reminder of confidentiality
2. Update on the current situation
3. Investigations
 - Epidemiology
 - Microbiology
 - Environmental Issues
4. Control Measures
 - Infection control issues
 - Mass Antimicrobial prophylaxis
 - Immunisation requirement?
5. Communications
 - Information for students/staff
 - Help lines
 - Press and media
6. Actions agreed
7. AOCB
8. Date and time of next meeting

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES (INCLUDING MENINGITIS) EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROCEDURE

Edinburgh Napier University
Emergency Action Card 1

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES – Meningococcal infection

The purpose of the protocol is to provide guidance for the response, management and containment of a Meningococcal infection (Meningitis)

Definitions

A **communicable disease** is one that is spread from one person to another through a variety of ways that include: contact with blood and bodily fluids; breathing in an airborne virus or being bitten by an insect.

Health Protection team have a major role in the management of meningococcal infection, ensuring that there are adequate disease prevention and surveillance programmes and in the prevention of secondary spread through contact tracing.

communicable diseases cases are defined as: **confirmed, probable** and **possible**.

Confirmed case: Clinical diagnosis of meningitis, septicaemia or other invasive disease (eg orbital cellulitis, septic arthritis) which has been microbiologically confirmed. Any student with Meningitis isolated in their eye will also be classed as a confirmed case. The health protection team will undertake full follow up for confirmed cases.

Probable case: Clinical diagnosis of meningitis or septicaemia or other invasive disease where an experienced member of the Health Protection Team, in consultation with the physician and/or microbiologist, considers that meningococcal infection is the most likely diagnosis. The Health Protection Team will undertake full follow up for Probable cases.

Possible case: Clinical diagnosis of meningitis or septicaemia or other invasive disease where an experienced member of the Health Protection Team, in consultation with the clinician and microbiologist, considers that another diagnosis, such as a viral illness, is a more likely diagnosis than meningococcal disease. The Health Protection Team will not follow up a possible case but can provide information to the university if required.

The Procedure

In the event of a **possible** case of meningococcal meningitis or septicaemia, no public health measures are required. The treating doctor will liaise with the Health Protection Team.

In the event of a **probable** or **confirmed** case of meningococcal disease, the Health Protection Team will contact the Head of Health and Safety or Health and Safety Manager in the first instance to advise of diagnosis.

If they cannot be reached or it is out of hours **Security Control (0131 455 6119)** should be contacted.

On receipt of the call, Security Control should take the following actions:

- ❑ Confirm the name, date of birth, address and contact number of patient.
- ❑ Request the details of hospital where the patient was diagnosed (including name of treating doctor and contact telephone number).
- ❑ Confirm the study and year of study (if patient is a **student**)
- ❑ Confirm the current location and condition of the patient
- ❑ Confirm the name of the individual reporting the case.
- ❑ Regardless of whether the patient is a **student** or **member of staff** the **Head of Health and Safety or Health and Safety Manager** should be contacted in the first instance (this procedure applies with within or outwith normal working hours **NB** Out of hours contact details are held by Security Control)

Action to be taken by the Head of Health/Health and Safety Manager in the event of a probable or confirmed case

The Head of Health and Safety/Health and Safety Manager will coordinate the University's response to the situation and should take the following actions:

- ❑ Contact Health Protection Team if a student/staff member has notified a university official (**0131 465 5422/5420**). Note that the normal expectation of that HPT will contact the University if they have been notified of a case of a communicable disease.
- ❑ Contact the Director of Finance and Operations who will consider whether an incident response team should be pulled together to manage the incident in liaison with NHS Lothian.

The following members of staff may be asked to join the incident response team depending on the severity of the incident:

- ❑ The Director, Strategy and Planning & Secretary to Court (x3209)
- ❑ The Director of People & Services (**if the patient is a member of staff**) (x6277)
- ❑ The Head of Student Wellbeing & Inclusion (**if the patient is a student**) (x2902)
- ❑ The Senior officer with responsibility for Student Accommodation (x3710) (**if the student is in university accommodation**)
- ❑ The Director of Marketing & External Relations(x6321)
- ❑ Head of Communications (x 6018)
- ❑ The Director of Property & Facilities (x4662)
- ❑ The Director of Student Services & Academic Registrar (x2404)

In the case of probable or confirmed case of Meningitis it is recommended that the contact numbers for the Meningitis Research Foundation and Meningitis Now be widely published as these organisations have trained staff who can offer specific expert advice and guidance. They will be notified in any event by NHS Lothian Public Health but liaison between these organisations and the University is recommended at the earliest possible stage.

[Meningitis Research Foundation](#) 0808 80 03344

[Meningitis Now](#) 0808 80 10388

Action to be taken by the Health Protection Team in the event of a probable or confirmed case of meningitis

- ❑ Interview the patient and her/ her relatives/ friends to identify close contacts
- ❑ Arrange for prophylactic antibiotics to be issued to the individuals identified as close contacts
- ❑ Notify any relevant specialist third party organisations, for example the meningitis charities.

The Health Protection Team will generally make direct contact with close contacts of patients with a communicable disease. The University may be required to make contact with wider groups of staff/ students with pre-prepared messages, if necessary.

Any other appropriate actions will proceed as identified by the Health Protection Team and in accordance with the University's established [Communicable Diseases Plan](#).

Data Protection/ GDPR

Information relating to a student or staff member's health should not normally be shared internally beyond those staff who require it for their role or with students, or externally with third parties including parents or outside agencies without the staff member's express written permission.

On rare occasions it may be deemed necessary to share information with a third party such as the emergency services without a student or staff member's permission. This should only be done in exceptional circumstances, in "life or death" situations where it is in the individual's vital interests to do so. This should only be done in consultation with the relevant line manager and on the advice of [Governance & Compliance](#).

In these rare occasions, strictly limited information proportionate to the situation that has arisen may be disclosed to University staff or third parties, including health care professionals. If any such data is to be provided by email rather than verbally, this must be done appropriately and by taking the necessary precautions- by marking any message as strictly confidential and externally by encrypting the email in accordance with University policy. All information must be stored in line with the University's Data Protection Code of Practice. Further information can be obtained from [Governance & Compliance](#).

Support for Students and Colleagues

Support for both staff and students should be made available in light of raised concerns about communicable diseases, especially if a significant event such as an extensive hospital admission, surgery or death has occurred. Support may include, but is not limited to emotional and psychological support, extenuating circumstances, health advice and return to studies for the affected individuals.

APPENDIX 4

ACTION PLAN FOR MENINGITIS AWARENESS RAISING – STUDENTS AND STAFF

Raising awareness of meningitis to both staff and students is a vital part of the overall planning for dealing with a case or outbreak of the disease. In accordance with the Universities UK Management Guidance (Managing meningococcal disease (septicaemia or meningitis) in higher education institutions) which is endorsed by the National Meningitis Now the actions detailed in the Action Plan overleaf should be followed.

OBJECTIVE	METHOD	BY
RAISING AWARENESS AMONGST STUDENTS		
Provide information and advice on meningitis, including advice that students should check if they have received the MenACWY vaccination. Also include contacts details for meningitis charities	Information posted for new students prior to matriculation. Information posted on Student Portal Display posters and leaflets (from Meningitis Now) throughout the University and in all University flats Encourage students to register with a GP (check vaccination status) during key collection. Invite representatives from Meningitis Now on campus during Meningitis Aware week. Information on symptoms on student PC lock screens.	Prior to the start of Trimester 1
Provide information and details of available meningitis vaccinations to international students who may have not been routinely vaccinated.	Student Portal (plus all of the above)	Prior to the start of Trimester 1
RAISING AWARENESS AMONGST STAFF		
Ensure PDTs know their role in giving some information and defusing anxiety.	Staff intranet Briefing student residence and security staff on the symptoms of meningitis	Throughout the academic year
Information and advice available to all staff.	Staff intranet Leaflets and posters Health Promotion Days	During Trimester 1

APPENDIX 5

ADMINISTRATION OF ANTIBIOTIC PROPHYLAXIS and Vaccination

In the event of there being a cluster of cases of Meningococcal Infection (Meningitis/Septicaemia) occurring in a student or member of staff from Edinburgh Napier University, the health protection team may deem it appropriate to offer antibiotic prophylaxis to a larger group of students, halls, or staff.

The Health protection team may also need to set up a vaccination clinic for students and staff in the event that there is a cluster or outbreak of cases affecting the university.

A large area requires to be identified with a specified layout. The area requires to be accessed at short notice and set up without delay. Consideration also requires to be given to advice and information on the programme to the target group and to other staff and students.

The designated area is the Craiglockhart Chapel at Craiglockhart Campus. Should the Chapel be unavailable for any reason the Merchiston Triangle at Merchiston Campus should be made available and the same layout procedures applied.

The designated area will be divided into specific sections with a separate entrance and exit:

Reception Area

2 Large Desks

4 Chairs

List of names, room number for students

List of staff names

Information Sheets (provided by NHS Lothian Department of Public Health Medicine)

Pens

2 – 4 persons to staff point

Drinking Water

1 Large table

Supply of drinking water in jugs/cooler container

250 disposable cups

Health protection area 6 small desks

12 chairs

Jug of drinking water

Small supply of disposable cups

Waste paper bin

Disposal Point

2 large disposal bins for paper cups

1 container for waste water

Waiting Area

12 chairs for those requested to remain in the area. The Head of Campus Services will be notified to co-ordinate setting up the area as per the layout plan and dismantling when the exercise is complete.

The Senior Officer with responsibility for Student Administration and the and Director of People & Services will be contacted to provide a list of names of students and staff and to circulate information to staff and students in conjunction with the Director of Information Services.

The Senior Officer with responsibility for Marketing & External Relations will be notified to arrange provision of information of the programme as advised by NHS Lothian and to liaise with the press office of NHS Lothian. A telephone hotline number may need to be set up for worried parents and students (see Appendix 5, page 15), expert advice can be provided by the meningitis charities listed in Appendix 2, page 12, both operate a 24 hour helpline and offer expert advice.

The Senior Officer with responsibility for Facilities Services will be notified to arrange provision of disposal bags/bins and disposal thereafter. Where necessary NHS Lothian will provide the relevant disposal of any clinical waste.

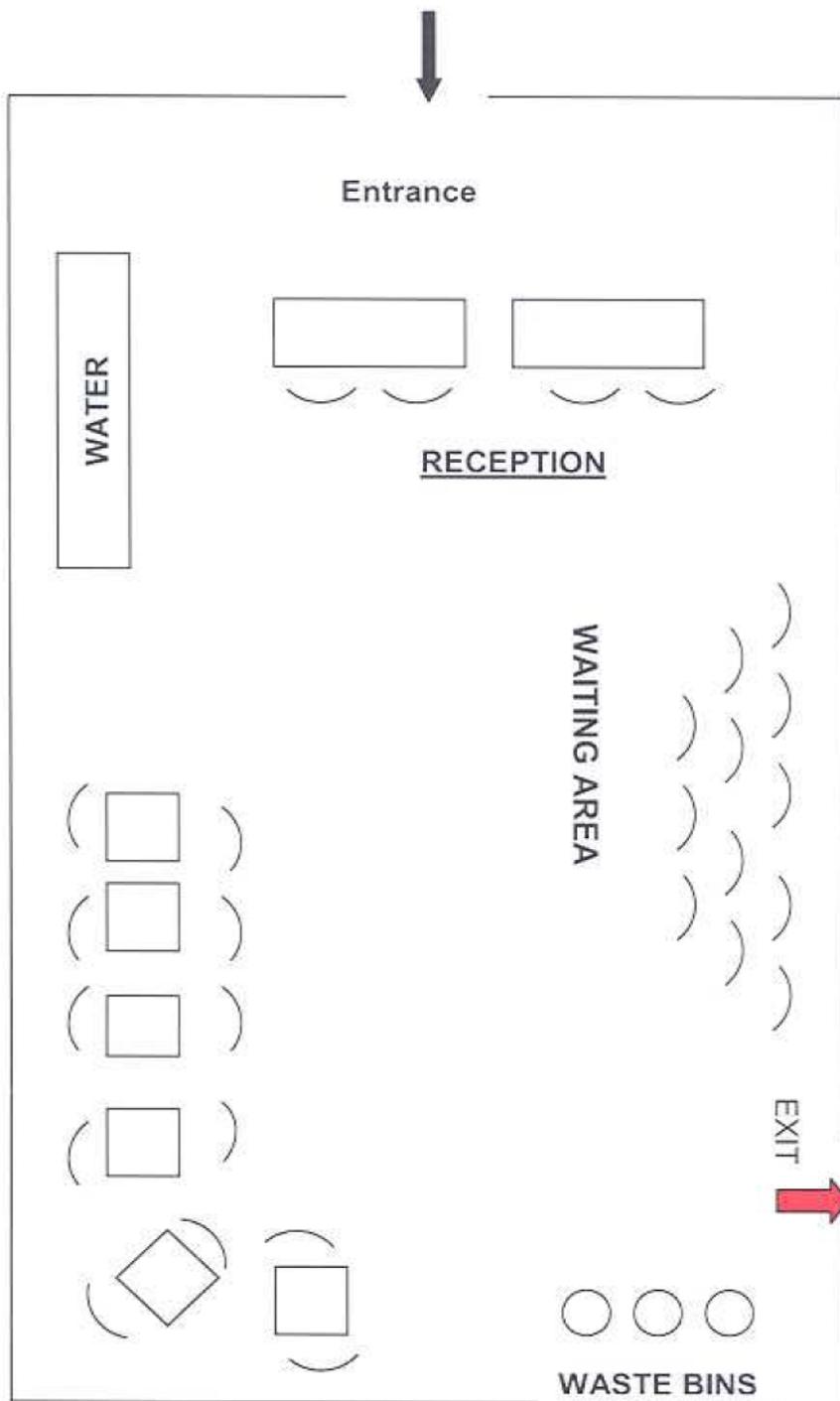
The relevant Facilities Manager will be notified to arrange the provision of drinking water, jugs and disposable cups and the removal of when the exercise is complete

Drinking water will be available and in the event of this not being possible bottled water will be made available.

Central Security Control at Sighthill will be notified of the time of the programme and the anticipated numbers likely to attend.

To facilitate access for students the programme may be required to be provided in the evening with a further session for staff or non-attendees.

FLOOR PLAN



MENINGITIS: EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION BETWEEN EDINBURGH HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

In response to the publication of updated guidance by Universities UK on managing cases of meningitis, it has been agreed by Edinburgh's major higher education institutions that it would be beneficial to set up more defined communication links for sharing information between institutions should a suspected or confirmed outbreak of the disease occur.

As such, in the case of a suspected or confirmed outbreak, the senior administrative contact responsible for managing each institution's response will be informed. The relevant contact details are as follows:

Heriot-Watt University

Academic Registrar & Director of Student Services
Heriot-Watt University
Edinburgh, EH14 4AS
Telephone: 0131 451 3368

Queen Margaret University

Assistant Secretary: Registry and Academic Administration
Queen Margaret University
Queen Margaret University Drive
Musselburgh, EH21 6UU
Telephone: 0131 474 0525

The University of Edinburgh

Deputy Director, Health and Safety
Charles Stewart House
9-16 Chambers Street
Edinburgh
EH1 1HT
0131 651 4258

Edinburgh College

Chief Operating Officer
Sighthill
Work: +44(0)131 650 2144