



Health & Safety Drinking & Eating Policy

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¹ or earlier if change in legislation or on risk assessment

Amendment Control

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Policy Summary

The university has designated eating and drinking areas across all of its campuses. These include specific areas such as refectories and cafés where hot and cold food and drink can be purchased, or brought in, and consumed.

There are other areas including kitchen break out rooms, outside picnic seating areas and other social spaces, within the university premises, where food and beverages are also permitted to be consumed. Eating and drinking may be permissible in certain study areas, computer labs and other teaching spaces.

Certain areas within the university, such as laboratories and workshops, have a strict no eating and drinking policy.

This policy is a guide for staff, students, contractors and visitors on eating and drinking on university premises.

For guidance in this policy eating and drinking refers to:

- Hot and cold food
- Hot and cold beverages

Beverages refers to non-alcoholic soft drinks.

No alcohol is permitted to be consumed on university premises unless part of an organised event.

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1. Introduction

Food and drink can be purchased, or brought in, and consumed on university premises.

There are designated areas where eating and drinking is permitted such as refectories, cafés and other social spaces.

Due to the nature of certain work activities taking place on campus there are areas within the university, such as laboratories and workshops, where the consumption of food or drink is strictly prohibited.

Areas where machinery, equipment or hazardous substances are present, and there may be a risk of cross contamination, have a strict no eating or drinking policy.

This policy is a guide for staff, students, contractors and visitors on areas within the university where:

- Eating and drinking is allowed
- Eating and drinking may be permissible
- Eating and drinking is prohibited

2. Designated eating and drinking areas within the university

- **Refectories** – these are communal areas within all 3 campuses where hot and cold food and beverages are prepared, purchased and consumed.
- **Cafés** – smaller, communal areas on all campuses where hot and cold food and beverages are prepared, purchased and consumed.
- **Kitchen break out areas** – found on certain campuses these are small rooms with tea and coffee preparing areas, microwaves and fridges. They also have seating areas.
- **Outside picnic benches** – outside seating areas where eating and drinking is permitted.
- **Other outside areas** – other outside areas, such as grassy areas where eating and drinking is permitted.

3. Other areas within the university where eating and drinking may be permitted

Hot food can produce odours which may disturb others working in the area, so although food may be permitted in these following areas, it is recommended that it is cold food only.

- **Personal accommodation such as office space** – it may be permitted to drink or eat at your desk area in your office but care must be taken when disposing of any waste food and waste wrappers or containers – see section on disposal of food waste.
- **Library areas** – Certain areas within libraries may allow cold food as well as hot and cold beverages to be consumed. Any beverages must be in cups or bottles that have spill proof lids.
- **Computer labs** – It is permitted to eat and drink in computer lab areas but is very important to clear and clean up the area when you are finished.
- **Other areas** – There are other areas within campus buildings such as small break out seating areas where the consumption of food and drink is permitted but again any waste wrappers or containers or waste food must be disposed of properly.
- **Teaching areas** – Food and drink may be consumed in teaching rooms and lecture theatres.
- **Meeting rooms** – Food and drink can be consumed in meeting rooms.

4. Areas within the university where eating and drinking is not permitted

4.1. Laboratories and workshops

Eating and drinking is prohibited in all laboratory and workshop areas especially if hazardous substances are being used. Where hazardous or other harmful substances are present there is always a risk of cross contamination.

- Eating, drinking, chewing gum and taking medicines in laboratory and workshop areas where hazardous substances are present is strictly prohibited.
- Food, drinks, cups, bottles and other drinking and eating utensils should not be permitted in laboratory and workshop areas where hazardous substances are handled and stored.
- Any glassware used for chemical preparation should not be used for consumption or preparation of food or drink.
- Where a risk of injury or damage to equipment exists as a consequence of eating or drinking then any consumption of food or drink must be prohibited.
- Rinsing or filling of drink containers or food containers in designated lab sinks is allowed only if no other sinks are available and only if the water in these sinks has been passed as drinkable and if the sink area is not contaminated with hazardous materials.
- Food and drink containers must not be stored in laboratory or workshop areas and washed drinking cups, food containers or eating utensils may not be dried on laboratory drying racks.
- Food, beverages, cups, and other drinking and eating utensils should not be stored in areas where hazardous chemicals are handled or stored.
- Glassware used for laboratory operations should never be used to prepare or consume food or beverages.

- Laboratory fridges, ice chests, cold rooms, ovens, and so forth should not be used for food storage or preparation.
- Laboratory water sources and deionized laboratory water should not be used for drinking water.
- If a designated eating or drinking area can only be accessed by going through the laboratory or workshop area then only covered food or drinks may be carried through the lab/workshop. Travel mugs with lids are appropriate for carrying hot drinks. It is not allowed to eat or drink while passing through the laboratory or workshop area.
- Food waste, wrappers, containers must not be placed in laboratory rubbish bins or other areas where food is not allowed as this may be considered evidence of food or beverage consumption within the laboratory.
- Designated fridges for storage of food and drink should be located outside the laboratory or workshop areas.
- Fridges used to store chemicals and other research materials must not be used for storage of food and drink.

Good laboratory practice

Good laboratory practice seeks to eliminate the potential route of exposure from hazardous substances. The Good Laboratory Practice guidelines prohibit the consumption of food or drink when hazardous substances are present. In addition good laboratory practice incorporates standard laboratory hygiene and the use of appropriate Personal Protective Equipment such as eye protection, lab coat, protective gloves etc. when working with hazardous substances and this again makes the consumption of food or drink in these areas prohibited – see section on Personal Protective Equipment.

Most laboratories and workshops will have this signage on the door:



4.2. Other areas across the university where eating and drinking is not allowed

- External chemical storage areas.
- Any areas where the ingestion of harmful substances is a possibility.
- Plant rooms.
- Switch rooms.
- Roof spaces that are not designated eating areas.
- Toilets and changing areas.
- Storage and cleaning cupboards.
- War Poets collection room at Craiglockhart.
- Stairwells where eating or drinking may cause a slip or trip.
- Any areas in the university where you may be blocking a fire exit.

5. Exceptions to the Guidelines

Laboratory Areas

There are certain laboratory-based activities where eating and drinking may be permitted as part of a laboratory experiment protocol. These can only be done when:

- There is an approved risk assessment in place.
- The staff and students are made aware that this exception is in place for a scientific experiment and that any further eating or drinking is strictly prohibited in the laboratory.
- That anybody consuming food or drink must wash their hands before and after.
- That all hazardous substances are removed from the area where possible.
- That the laboratory area is cleaned before and after any experimental work.

6. Handwashing

Hands should be washed before consuming any food or drink. This is especially important if working in a laboratory or workshop area, where hands could be contaminated with the specific chemical or hazardous substance.

Hand washing using soap and water is important when entering and leaving any laboratory, workshop or any workplace where harmful and hazardous substances are present.

There are hand washing facilities, which includes a means for washing and drying hands, across the university in toilet areas and kitchen break out rooms as well as in laboratory areas.

7. Personal Protective Equipment

Where Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is provided it is imperative that it is worn at all required times and that hands are washed after the removal of any PPE that has been provided for hand protection.

Hand washing facilities, which includes a means for washing and drying hands, should be available in the laboratory or workshop where the workplace activity took place. Where applicable hand moisturiser should be available.

If there are no hand washing facilities in the laboratory or workshop area then hands should be washed in the nearest available suitable facility.

8. Drinking and Eating – Health & Safety

8.1. Self service areas in refectories and cafés

- Trays are available for carrying any food and drink.
- Use lids provided for any hot drinks.
- Use a bottle with a lid if filling up a water bottle from a water tap/fountain.
- Take care when walking with hot food and/or drink.
- Report any spillages immediately.
- Report any incidents, accidents or near misses using the [university accident reporting form](#).

8.2. Kitchen break out rooms

- Kettles
 - Take care when pouring water from a kettle
 - Clean up any spillages immediately
- Microwaves
 - Ensure microwaves are kept clean
 - Wipe up any spillages in or around the microwave
- Hot water/cold water mixing taps
 - Take care with hot water
 - Clean up any spillages immediately

Report any health and safety concerns regarding equipment in the kitchen areas immediately to healthandsafety@napier.ac.uk

9. Hydration

Good hydration is one of the most important parts of the diet. Fluid is so important that when levels drop only slightly, we begin to feel the consequences. Low levels of fluid in the body can cause headaches, poor concentration and a dry mouth.

When working in laboratories or workshops or other areas where eating and drinking are not allowed it is very difficult to keep hydrated and these work areas can become very hot. A drinks bottle can be kept outside the laboratory or workshop area, perhaps in a locker, where the beverage can be consumed safely away from the work area. Drinks bottles should not be stored in laboratory or workshop areas.

10. Disposal of waste food and wrappers

It is important to ensure that any waste food wrappers, containers and food waste is disposed of properly. Food waste and food containers or utensils which have not been cleaned can cause bacteria to grow and cause ill health. Food and food containers left out can also attract vermin such as mice.

The university has rubbish bins all around its campus buildings including in refectories, cafés, kitchen areas and in open public spaces.

The university has a recycling policy and there are rubbish bins for items which can be recycled.

The following rubbish bins are available on all campuses:

- **General waste bins** – these are for any waste wrappers or waste containers or any other rubbish which is non-recyclable.
- **Recycling waste bins** – these are for any waste materials which can be recycled. This can include plastic bottles, paper and cardboard.
- **Food waste bins** – these are for any food waste including apple cores and banana skins etc.