

Catering code of practice

The sale of food within the United Kingdom is controlled by the Food Safety Act 1990. The University is committed to providing catering services which meet the requirements of the Act and associated regulations.

Rules governing the provision of catering services within the University

The University complies with the Act through its Food Safety Policy and Codes of Practice, which are followed by all University-provided catering services and subject to regular audit. General Manager Hospitality has full authority in all respects to ensure compliance with the Act.

The policy of the University is all catering provided within the University is supplied by the University caterers. If they could not themselves deal with a specific booking, they would be responsible for arranging the services of a reputable private catering company having checked public health policy and procedures.

Should staff in a department be considering bringing in their own food for an event, it is important to understand the legal status of food. The Food Safety Act relates only to food that is being sold, but 'sale' is defined to include the supply of food in the course of a business, whether it is sold or given away. If a department provides food to visitors to the department, that food would be deemed to have been 'sold' and would be within the scope of the Act.

In the event of a prosecution under the Act, such as a case of food poisoning, the onus is on the accused to prove their innocence, by convincing the court that they have taken all reasonable precautions and exercised due diligence to avoid the commission of an offence.

Prosecution can carry a fine of up to £20,000 and/or imprisonment of up to two years.

Members of University staff are strongly advised not to make their own private catering arrangements, as in doing so they are taking on a responsibility in law for the supply. This responsibility rests with the University's catering departments where they are the supplier of catering services.