

Temperature in the Workplace Standards

1. Aims

The heating and cooling of buildings are responsible for almost half of our total CO₂ emissions. The aim of this document is to define the thermal comfort conditions that are both environmentally responsible and provide a comfortable working environment for our staff and students.

2. Carbon Reduction Targets

UWE's Sustainability and Carbon Management Plans commit us to achieving a 22.5 % reduction in scope 1 and 2 CO₂ emissions by 2020/21 against a 2005/6 baseline to meet HEFCE requirements.

These targets are challenging and the responsible use of UWE's heating and cooling systems is critical to success, as highlighted by the Carbon Trust who state that overheating of a typical office by just 1°C can increase energy costs and carbon emissions by 8%.

3. Thermal Comfort

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) recognise that thermal comfort is difficult to define due to a range of environmental and personal factors and that the best that you can realistically hope to achieve is a thermal environment that satisfies the majority of people in the workplace.

Environmental factors include the temperature of the surrounding air and other objects, humidity and the velocity of air moving across the space. Personal factors include clothing insulation and the level of physical activity.

4. Temperatures

The HSE state that temperatures in the workplace are covered by the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992, which place a legal obligation on employers to provide a "reasonable" temperature in the workplace. The Approved Code of Practice suggests a minimum temperature in workrooms should normally be at least 16°C – or 13°C if much of the work indoors involves severe physical effort. These temperatures are not absolute legal requirements; the employer's essential duty is to determine what reasonable comfort will be in the particular circumstances.

Whilst there is no legal maximum, the HSE recommends that employers should consult with employees or their representatives, to establish sensible means to cope with high temperatures and this document is intended to provide practical advice to alleviate the effects of prolonged high temperatures.

Heating

Based on guidance published by the Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers (CIBSE), the University seeks to heat buildings to the following temperatures during daytime occupancy hours and within the heating season:

Student Accommodation:	22°C
Offices:	21°C
Corridors and Circulation space in all buildings:	18°C
Sports Facilities:	16°C

The use of portable electric or other forms of supplementary heating to achieve elevated temperatures can interfere with the correct operation of the main heating system controls and potentially impact on the comfort of your colleagues.

In addition, UWE's Fire Guidance: Fire Risk Assessment – Common Actions guidance document states that some types of portable heaters create an unacceptable fire risk within buildings and should not be used.

Cooling

The University provides cooling systems for research purposes and other specific activities where stable temperatures are required e.g. server rooms. Due to the high installation, operating, maintenance and regulatory compliance costs associated with cooling systems, the University does not support their use for comfort cooling applications.

However, where such systems are already installed they shall not be used to provide space temperatures lower than the following values:

Server Rooms:	25°C
All other areas:	23°C

5. Improving Your Comfort

The University accept that there is no single temperature value which is universally regarded as being thermally comfortable and therefore recommend that individuals may also need to consider the following advice if feeling:

Too Cold

- Do not assume if radiators are cold that the heating is defective as the control system may have detected temperatures have reached the required level.
- Check that radiators and other heaters are switched on and are not obstructed.
- Check that thermostatic radiator valves (where fitted) are set correctly.
- If cooling systems are fitted ensure they are not operating unnecessarily.
- Ensure doors and windows are kept closed.
- Try to avoid working in draughty locations.
- Drink hot drinks.
- Dress appropriately as wearing extra layers is often all that is required to feel warm.

Too Hot

- Check that radiators and other heaters are switched off.
- Check that thermostatic radiator valves (where fitted) are set correctly.
- Use doors and windows to create air movement through the area. However, if your area has a cooling system keep windows and doors closed.
- Use blinds or curtains to reduce heat from direct sunlight.

- Wherever possible switch off office equipment and lighting as they add heat to the area.
- During prolonged periods of hot exceptionally hot weather if possible work during the cooler parts of the day.
- Drink cold drinks.
- Dress appropriately as comfortable loose clothing can make you feel cooler.

For any further support or guidance with regard to this Policy please contact the Energy Team at: energyteam@uwe.ac.uk.

To report a technical issue or fault, please contact the Helpdesk on 222.