

Thermal Comfort Policy

Document Control

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the policy document is to set out the thermal comfort in buildings across the University of Lincoln's estate.
- 1.2 This policy adheres to [Health and Safety requirements](#) and aims to manage our heating and cooling systems effectively, to support the delivery of university activity whilst managing energy costs and carbon emissions associated with energy consumption.
- 1.3 The university aims to provide a comfortable working environment for all estate users.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all buildings operated by the University of Lincoln.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 Building occupants should consider that thermal comfort is highly subjective, and affected by factors such as air temperature, air movement and humidity as well as individual preferences.
- 3.2 It is expected that staff, students, visitors, and tenants take personal responsibility for their comfort by wearing suitable and adequate clothing for the season.
- 3.3 It is expected that occupants of the building will take reasonable measures to maintain a building's temperature, for example by closing doors and windows and by using installed blinds, as needed.
- 3.4 Any concerns or queries regarding heating should be reported to the [Estates Support Desk](#).

4. Thermal Comfort – Heating (non-residential buildings)

- 4.1 Heating will not generally be provided from May until September, unless extremely unseasonable weather is experienced. The heating season will commence when internal and external temperatures indicate that buildings are routinely falling below comfortable temperatures for extended periods, or when a minimum temperature of 16°C cannot be regularly achieved.
- 4.2 Within the heating season, during a building's opening hours, all spaces, wherever practicable, will be heated to a minimum of 16°C. The university aims to heat utilised spaces to approximately 20°C.
- 4.3 The use of individual heaters presents a health & safety risk, as well as interfering with a building's heating systems, and are therefore not permitted.

5. Thermal Comfort – Cooling (non-residential buildings)

- 5.1 Air conditioning is not fitted as standard throughout the university.
- 5.2 Where present, mechanical cooling will be set as default to 24°C and, where some user control is available, will be restricted to cool no lower than 23°C. In smaller offices and teaching spaces, cooling will not be activated automatically but will be available for use when required.

- 5.3 Desk and room fans may be used provided they are compliant with all electrical regulations and PAT tested in accordance with the University of Lincoln's Control of Electricity at Work Policy.
- 5.4 Alternative and natural measures for cooling spaces or reducing heat gain will be prioritised over installing new mechanical cooling, and the university will only consider installing air conditioning where all the following criteria apply:
- 5.4.1 Alternative measures for cooling a space, including natural ventilation, have been fully utilised and shown to be insufficient, and;
 - 5.4.2 Temperatures are shown to be consistently and regularly over 27°C (or 25°C in spaces where personal protective equipment is required), and;
 - 5.4.3 Colleagues could not reasonably work elsewhere, and;
 - 5.4.4 Spaces are in regular and consistent use throughout the summer period, and;
 - 5.4.5 The installation of air conditioning is feasible, practicable, affordable and adequate funding for the works can be identified.
- 5.5 The university aims to achieve the temperatures described, however on days when extreme external temperatures are experienced this may not be possible.

6. Exceptions to the Thermal Comfort Policy (non-residential buildings)

- 6.1 There are some exceptions, where the Thermal Comfort Policy may not be applied, this may include:
- 6.1.1 Laboratories and specialist spaces;
 - 6.1.2 Rooms with heat generating equipment;
 - 6.1.3 Extenuating circumstances relating to specific health requirements whereby temperatures are detrimental to health, as recommended by an occupational health professional via PPC (People, Performance and Culture) department.

7. University Controlled Residential Buildings

- 7.1 Between September and May, the university aims to heat all living spaces (bedrooms, kitchens & indoor sitting areas) in student accommodation to a temperature between 18°C and 22°C. Cooling is not fitted in any residential space.
- 7.2 The use of additional plug-in heaters presents a health & safety risk, as well as interfering with a building's heating systems, and they are therefore not permitted.
- 7.3 Any queries over temperature in accommodation should be referred to the Accommodation Team in the first instance.

8. Maintenance and Compliance

- 8.1 The heating and cooling systems are maintained by the Estates Department. Every effort is made to minimise inconvenience to building users, but there may be occasions when a shutdown of service is unavoidable.
- 8.2 This policy complies with Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers, Health and Safety Executive and Carbon Trust guidelines, national health recommendations and sector best practice.

9. Supporting Policies and Documents

- 9.1 [Carbon Management Plan](#)
- 9.2 [Environment and Energy Policy](#)
- 9.3 Space Management Policy