

Loughborough University Heating Policy (Updated August 2022)

Introduction

This document details the University's heating policy for the Loughborough and London campuses for autumn and winter 2022/23. It is informed by the impact of the unprecedented surge in global energy costs and our commitment to reduce the university's carbon footprint. Energy is used mainly to provide, heating, hot water and electrical power.

The temperature parameters outlined have been deemed appropriate and are in-line with Government and HSE compliance requirements.

- The core heating season operates from 1st October – 30th April inclusive.
- Temperature controls will be set to provide a temperature in occupied spaces between 18°C and 20°C. (*Previously the policy was 19-21°C*).

Energy Costs

Loughborough University spends a significant amount on gas and electricity - currently forecast to be £17 million annually (an increase of £7m in 2021/22). There is a high probability that costs could increase beyond £17m.

The University belongs to a consortium of HE institutions that purchases energy from the market up to 18 months ahead to secure the best possible deals – this is known as 'hedging.' However, the volatility in global markets means that there are no 'affordable fixed rate' deals on the market and the consortium and thereby the University is being exposed to a greater percentage of 'unhedged' prices.

The University is also committed to reducing its energy consumption and emissions and has set a target to achieve "net zero" scope 1 and 2 carbon (gas and electricity) emissions by 2035.

Continuity of supply

The Government has prepared contingency plans to ration electricity and gas supplies if demand exceeds capacity and this is most likely when the winter temperatures are very low. If rationing is introduced, heavy industry will be asked to reduce demand first, but it is possible that other sectors such as HE will not be immune from interruption of supply. Contingency planning to address loss of power has been exercised and plans exist to shed load on the Loughborough campus to prioritise supply to specific buildings and facilities.

Reducing demand

Temperature control is one of the most cost-effective ways of reducing our energy demand and this policy sets out how this will be approached. Loughborough University will operate its heating systems in a manner designed to achieve appropriate thermal conditions for staff, students and campus partners undertaking work and study on its premises.

E&FM will make every effort to operate heating systems efficiently and, in a manner, to minimise unnecessary energy use and cost and to reduce the carbon emissions arising from their operation. There are some areas where the degree of control is not possible at present, but improvements to controls are being addressed in those locations. To help the university

deliver a sustainable heating service, students and staff are requested to report over-heating or undesirable temperatures to the Estates and Facilities Management Helpdesk:

Telephone: 01509 222121

Heating Season

The core heating season operates from 1st October – 30th April inclusive.

In the event of unseasonal weather conditions during September and May, E&FM will monitor the weather forecast, building conditions and budget forecast to consider if heating can be extended or reduced outside of the core heating season. During the summer months, planned maintenance is implemented on the heating systems and during these periods no heating will be available. At the start of the heating season, due to the size of the heat networks it may take several days for all the heating systems to reach full operating temperature.

Target Temperatures

During the heating season, the University aims to heat occupied spaces to a temperature of between 18°C and 20°C throughout all academic, support, residential and LUSEP tenant areas during normal working hours. Reducing the temperature by 1°C delivers significant carbon and budget savings and is consistent with the University's ambition to be deliver a sustainable future for all.

Heating Times

Most of the heating services across the University are controlled by a central Building Management System (BMS). The BMS will automatically start and stop the heating systems to ensure target temperatures are maintained. A typical heating schedule is detailed below:

Building	Weekdays	Weekends
Academic	As Timetabled (+1 hr before)	Off
Support	0800-1700	Off
Residential	0700-1000 & 1600-2300	0800-2300
Library	Library Opening hours	Library Opening hours
Sports	As booked	As booked
LUSEP & other campus partners	In Accordance with Individual Tenancy Agreements	

Energy conservation

Regular reviews will be undertaken with key members of staff to ensure that heating times accurately reflect the occupancy and operation of buildings, including:

- Operations Managers.
- PS Directors for buildings where P/S colleagues are based and there is no Ops Manager or equivalent.
- Domestic and Residential Services Manager.
- Sports Capital Strategy and Maintenance Manager.
- Library Facilities Manager.
- LUSEP Technical Property Manager.

If the energy situation becomes critical, the university may appoint 'Energy Wardens' who would be responsible for monitoring and advising on energy conservation measures within buildings.

Christmas and Easter Holiday Periods

To reduce the energy costs and emissions, the University will aim to isolate the heating services to any building that will be un-occupied over the Christmas and Easter Holiday periods. Consultation with the above staff will be undertaken to establish which the buildings that can be safely isolated. In any building where the heating is isolated, frost protection will be maintained.

Portable Heaters

The use of portable electric heaters is PROHIBITED unless exceptional circumstances prevail. Exceptional circumstances will be determined by Director E&FM in consultation with the COO.

If heating systems fail or are not capable of providing the required level of heating temperature set points, the E&FM Maintenance team may issue “approved” portable electric heater on a temporary basis until the heating issues are resolved. Prior to the issue of any “approved” portable heaters the Estates and Facilities Management Electrical maintenance team will undertake an assessment of the local electrical infrastructure to ensure it has sufficient capacity to accommodate any additional loads.

For Health and Safety reasons, only portable heaters issued by the Estates and Facilities Maintenance team will be allowed to be used within Loughborough University buildings. E&FM reserve the right to remove any unauthorised portable heaters at any time.

- Only University supplied portable heaters are to be used and any that are authorised must have a valid PAT test.
- Portable heating constitutes an increased fire risk to buildings and occupants.
- Portable heating can cause localised high temperatures which can impact on the BMS and may result in the main heating systems to the area and other parts of the building being switched off.
- The electrical systems are not designed for heavy load equipment such as portable heaters, and this can cause overload to occur leading to failure of circuits or even entire electrical systems.
- There are significant increased costs associated with operating electric heaters.

How Can You Help to Stay Comfortable?

It is difficult to satisfy everyone’s needs in terms of thermal comfort and therefore building users should take reasonable measures to adapt to the environment and limit the effects of extremes in temperature:

- Ensure radiators are not obstructed by furniture.
- Only open windows when radiators are off and when rooms need to be cooled down.
- Dress appropriately for your own comfort levels considering the weather and working environment.
- Be prepared to wear an additional layer or consider warmer clothing as appropriate.
- Adjust thermostatic radiator valves to control radiators rather than open windows.
- Appreciate that one person’s view of an acceptable temperature may not be the same as other building users – thermal comfort is very subjective.

Statement on equalities

As stated above, thermal comfort is a very subjective matter. However, there is evidence which demonstrates that women may be more likely to feel the cold than men, and so could be more affected by lower heating. Similarly, those with health problems (particularly those relating to circulatory, respiratory and mental health conditions) may also be more affected by lower heating.

Whilst we anticipate that the mitigations and guidance outlined in this policy will prove effective in both keeping colleagues comfortable and reducing our energy costs, we are taking a proactive approach to ensuring that additional layers can be provided by the University with no additional cost to colleagues.

Should any colleague feel that the mitigations in place are not sufficient for their needs, they should, in the first instance, discuss this with their line manager who will support them in determining any additional appropriate measures. Should colleagues not feel comfortable doing so, they may also wish to reach out to our staff networks, such as Maia and the Staff Inclusivity Group.

Reporting Heating Problems

Any issues relating to the heating system should in the first instance be reported to the Estates and Facilities Management Helpdesk: Telephone: 01509 222121
<https://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/fm/helpdesk/>

Roles and Responsibilities

The Director of Estates and Facilities Management will be responsible for the implementation of the heating policy. Delivery of the policy will be exercised by the Energy Manager, Controls and Systems Support Engineer and Maintenance Services Manager.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Estates and Facilities Team.

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