

Guidance for Managing Asbestos in Schools

The Asbestos at Work Regulations include a duty to manage asbestos. This applies to asbestos present in the fabric of buildings or as a component in items of equipment.

The regulation requires the identification of asbestos, assessment of its condition and monitoring of its condition and repair or removal if necessary. This information must be recorded.

The Estate Office is responsible for managing asbestos incorporated into the fabric of University-owned buildings and maintains an Asbestos Register for each building. This records known locations of asbestos, the results of condition surveys and any work done to the asbestos.

Schools are responsible for managing asbestos contained in equipment owned or controlled by them.

Actions Relating to Building Modifications and Maintenance Work

Work involving disturbance or penetration of the building fabric could result in exposure to asbestos if present, for example drilling into or through walls, or removal of wall, floor or ceiling panels or components. Consequently the Estate Office must be contacted prior to any such work in order that the asbestos register can be checked. This should be done through notifying the Helpdesk, allowing at least 7 days for this. Should asbestos be present and removal required, this is classified as licensable work and a minimum of a further 2 weeks must be allowed in order that the necessary statutory advance notifications can be submitted to the Health and Safety Executive.

If maintenance work is to be carried out which could disturb Asbestos which is friable i.e. likely to release asbestos fibres when worked on, then the greater the risk of exposure. Maintenance work which disturbs materials such as asbestos insulation is classified as Notifiable Non-Licensed Work (NNLW) which must be notified, 'on line' to the HSE. A record of the job details should be maintained and from April 2015 medical examinations provided for staff involved such work. Maintenance work which disturbs; but does not loosen fibres in bonded materials such as asbestos cement boards can normally be treated as non-licensed work and non notifiable. Further guidance is available at - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/licensing/notifiable-non-licensed-work.htm>

Information on potential sources of asbestos in buildings is contained in some summary slides. More detailed information is available in the appendix from HSE document **HSG264**.

Actions Relating to Equipment

Asbestos-containing components such as gaskets, seals, refractory linings, or thermal insulation that could possibly be found in older laboratory, workshop or kitchen equipment used at high temperature or with corrosive substances.

Schools are required to ensure that:

1. Equipment containing asbestos is identified
2. The condition is assessed and monitored
3. If the material is damaged or deteriorating it is repaired or removed
4. A record of condition checks and of any remedial work is kept
5. An inventory of asbestos-containing equipment is kept by the School
6. The Estate Office must be notified of asbestos-containing equipment to so that this can be added into the Asbestos Register

Assistance for Schools is available via the Estate Office. Should confirmation of the presence of asbestos, assessment of its condition, or its repair or removal be required then the Estate Office Helpdesk should be contacted to arrange for an approved contractor to carry out the work. This will be charged to the School.

The inventory of asbestos-containing equipment must identify the items of equipment, their location, the components concerned, and whether they are accessible or not. Where the components are accessible then there should be a record of the findings of regular checks on it. Asbestos-containing material is considered to be in poor condition if the exposed surface is in a state where there are areas of visibly loose fibres that may be released by minimal disturbance.

Where asbestos-containing components are not accessible and are completely enclosed within the equipment regular checks are not necessary since there will not be any exposure to asbestos during normal operation. However, it is important that the presence of asbestos-containing components is readily known to enable the correct and safe disposal of the equipment.

Equipment should either be labelled to clearly indicate that it contains asbestos or the fact be recorded in operating instructions or other documentation that is readily available and brought to the attention of those who may disturb the material when using the equipment. Any work on the equipment that could disturb the components must be covered by a risk assessment to prevent exposure.