

Food Safety Series (No.2)

December 2016

## Catering Options

### A Guide for Departments and Faculties

#### WEB VERSION



#### Introduction

Departments may wish to provide refreshments for a variety of meetings or functions, ranging from tea and biscuits through to a full meal. This guide is designed to assist in selecting the most appropriate option when organising catering and aims to encourage best practice and ensure legal conformity.

It is an offence under the Food Safety Act 1990 to supply any food or drink that is not safe for human consumption.

Departments must ensure that where refreshments are provided they take all reasonable precautions to guarantee the food and drink supplied are safe. It is not only the caterer that can be prosecuted for a breach of food safety but also the University and/or individuals responsible for employing the caterer.

#### General

All food and drink must be prepared, stored and consumed in appropriate areas (not laboratories/workshops) that are free from sources of contamination e.g. biological (pathogens, GM), chemical (oils, acids, degreasers etc.), physical (dust, swarf etc.).

Individuals, who prepare or handle food, even if it is not part of their main duties, must be trained in food hygiene to a level appropriate to their role (see the 'Food Hygiene Training' leaflet).

Any department with catering facilities other than those used solely by staff/students for the storage and preparation of their own food/drink must

register with the local Environmental Health Department as a food premises.

The *University Catering Service* may be able to suit departmental requirements. For more details, please visit [www.unicen.cam.ac.uk](http://www.unicen.cam.ac.uk).

#### Decide the type of catering required

This excludes the normal preparation of beverages and biscuits by staff, for themselves or visitors.

##### **A**

Light refreshments (low risk)

*Examples of which include hot and cold beverages, biscuits, nuts, crisps etc.*

##### **B**

Other refreshments / main meals (higher risk)

*Examples of which include sandwiches and canapés, hot or cold buffets, served lunches or dinners etc.*

##### **C**

Catering provided by an external third party embedded on University premises e.g. Tate at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Graysons at the Alison Richard Building (higher risk)

#### If "A"

Departments may provide their own catering or food and drink must be purchased from a reputable supplier. Where practicable, ingredients should be purchased from a Preferred Supplier listed with the Central Purchasing Office. For more details, please visit [ww.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/purchasing](http://ww.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/purchasing).

All low risk food stuffs e.g. biscuits, tea/coffee, crisps, nuts, cakes (not cream) must be stored in sealed containers or packets in an appropriate place, where they

cannot become contaminated in any way, until required.

Fresh milk, cream cakes etc must be refrigerated at least below 8°C, but ideally below 5°C, until required and used within their 'use by' date or 2 days from purchase if unwrapped and undated. Long life milk can be stored at room temperature but once open must be treated as fresh and used within 2 days.

Hands must be washed before preparing food and there must be a potable (drinking) water supply for making beverages.

### **If "B"**

Catering in the "B" category must follow all of the requirements for "A", plus the following.

Departments obtaining sandwiches or other food to supply hospitality for a meeting or function must use the *University Catering Service* or one of the Preferred Suppliers listed with Procurement Services.

Sandwiches and buffets should be ordered to arrive just before they are to be served. On receipt food must remain covered. Cold foods must be refrigerated (below 8°C, ideally below 5°C) until used.

Once removed from refrigeration all cold food must be eaten within 4 hours or thrown away. Hot food must be kept hot (above 63°C) or eaten within 2 hours. After this time it must be thrown away. This includes situations where surplus food from a meeting/function is left out for students or staff.

Departments are discouraged from self-catering due to the risks involved. However for very small numbers this might be unavoidable. In which case food must be purchased only from a major leading

supermarket or fast food outlet and receipts kept for traceability purposes.

Strict controls must be implemented during storage, preparation and service to ensure the safety of the food and compliance with all relevant legislation. This includes occasions when departments purchase pre-packaged sandwiches etc, cut them into smaller units and transfer them to a plate for service.

Any member of staff involved in such activities should be trained to the required standard to ensure understanding of basic food hygiene and legal requirements.

### **If "C"**

In the case of embedded third party outlets only catering providers that have been awarded contracts by Procurement Services following a tender may be used.

### **Other leaflets in the Food Safety**

#### **Guidance Notes Series**

- 1 Food Safety – An introduction to legislation for University premises
- 3 Staff Kitchens and Tearooms – General hygiene requirements
- 4 Food Hygiene Training Requirements
- 5 Guidance on Departmental Barbecue Safety
- 6 Purchase, Delivery and Storage of Food
- 7 Preparation and Service of Food
- 8 Personal Hygiene Requirements for Individuals Preparing or Serving Food
- 9 Cleaning and Pest Control in Food

Preparation Areas

- 10 Food Safety Guidance for Departmental Christmas Parties
- 11 Food Safety for Charity Events – A guide for departments and faculties

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