



Event Safety Guidance

Aston University is renowned for hosting successful internal and external events on campus; some with only a handful of visitors whilst others attract literally thousands of visitors. Common to all events is the need to ensure that staff, students, visitors and guests remain safe at all times. The extent and complexity of the safety arrangements will vary greatly dependant on a number of factors.

When organising an event, it is easy to focus purely activities taking place during the event. However, there will be a number of hazards arising from setup and closedown activities which must also be considered and planned appropriately.

As anyone who has organised an event before can testify, early planning is often the key to success. This applies equally to identifying what might go wrong, in order to implement control measures to reduce the risk of accidents and incidents occurring.

By answering a series of questions, event organisers can identify what needs to be done to manage the event safely. The list of questions below may help to stimulate thought:

- Have the following key personnel been consulted? Event Sponsor, Head of Health and Safety, Head of Estates Engineering, Head of Strategic Risk & Insurance?
- Do you need any special permissions e.g. temporary road closures, temporary event publicity notice, etc?
- Is the site suitable for your event?
- Have you carried out a risk assessment and recorded the significant findings; and made sure you have all the necessary health and safety measures in place?
- Have you decided who will be responsible for health and safety at the event?
- Have you provided necessary information e.g. maps, site plans, details of gas, electricity, water supply and an outline programme of events?
- Do you know how many people you are expecting to attend?
- Do you know where the entrances and exits on your site are?
- Are the entrances and exits controlled, stewarded, suitable for disabled persons, and appropriately signed?
- Do you have trained, briefed and clearly identifiable stewards?
- Have you met the needs of disabled people?
- Have you set up a reliable system of communication between key event staff?
- Are crowd control barriers necessary?
- Are emergency procedures in place and have these been agreed with the emergency services?
- Can emergency vehicles get on and off the site easily?
- Do you have effective fire control measures in place?
- Do you have adequate first aid arrangements?
- Do you need any other special arrangements e.g. for lost property, drinking water,

toilets, noise control, car parking?

- Has a person been allocated to make decisions in an emergency?
- Do you have an emergency plan?
- Are there arrangements for stopping the event during an emergency?
- Have you ensured as far as reasonably practicable that any contactors, stall holders or demonstrators are competent? Have you obtained relevant health and safety policies, training documents, public liability insurance and method statements?
- Have you agreed risk assessments for the contracted work and the preventative and protective steps that will apply when work is in progress?
- Have you obtained food safety documentation from any catering contractor?
- Have you arranged for adequate waste provision?

Sadly, health and safety is often cited as a reason for preventing events and activities going ahead where really, all that is required is a little work on the part of the organising team. Within the Health & Safety Unit we actively encourage colleagues to avoid this 'risk aversion' approach and instead embrace the challenge of organising a safe and successful event. We are therefore, available to assist event organisers in looking over event plans; reviewing risk assessments and method statements; providing advice and guidance and helping out if things do go wrong.

This guidance document and links to the University's risk assessment proformas can be found at the following webpage:

<http://www1.aston.ac.uk/staff/safety/events-activities/>

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