The University of Warwick Estates Office

Open Water Safety Statement of Principles

INTRODUCTION

The University has a range of open water features on our campuses, including ponds, lakes, a river and streams, which enhance the environment for wildlife and the enjoyment of people of all ages. These natural features can present a significant risk to persons, especially in summer when swimming in cold water can be attractive and in winter when individuals may put themselves at risk by trying to walk on ice over water.

The University of Warwick does not support or approve the use of any area of open water for swimming or other water recreational activity to areas identified in Appendix A (Campus) and B (Innovation Campus, Stratford-upon-Avon).

For clarity, but not necessarily an exhaustive list of locations, the locations of our open water features are documented on maps in Appendix A (Campus) and B (Innovation Campus, Stratford-upon-Avon).

Approach

Safety Criteria for Management and Design
Work takes place around and in open water on campus to enhance and support biodiversity. In addition, there are legal requirements to manage the ponds and lakes for the Great Crested Newt population that exists on main campus. This includes work such as shade reduction, duckweed removal, reedmace management and silt removal. Before such work is undertaken a number of design factors will be taken into consideration to further improve safety.

Environmental Management
Where wildlife may be put at risk from pollution (oil/blue green algae/etc.) or pollution is found to be present in or entering open water, Estates Staff and/or Contractors must report such occurrences immediately to their line manager/supervisor who in turn, will notify the relevant senior officer of Estates for the appropriate action to be taken.

Risk Assessment
The Estates Grounds and Gardens Team and the Estates Team at the Innovation Campus, Stratford-upon-Avon are responsible for maintaining open water sites and having suitable risk assessments in place for the work involved. The results of these risk assessments, including any action taken to reduce or eliminate hazards, will be formally recorded in compliance with the University Risk Assessment process.

Safety Inspections/Hazard Identification

The University Health & Safety Services Team will support the Estates Grounds and Gardens Team and the Innovation Campus, Stratford-upon-Avon with routine inspections of rescue equipment, safety signs and the condition of the water and surrounding edges/banks. The results of all inspections/Hazard Identification will be recorded on the SHE system.
The Hazard assessment reports are provided as a record of our inspection of identified hazards in relation to the surroundings of open water areas. These reports are not risk assessments; they are intended to provide a helpful guide to identify known hazards.

The lists of hazards are not exhaustive and are not a substitute for anyone undertaking their own risk assessment.

Supervision of Open Water Sites

Full time supervision is deemed to be neither reasonably practicable nor the most effective response to a water hazard.

Rescue Equipment

Estates provides lifebuoys in solid and highly visible mountings around identified areas of open water, where determined by a risk assessment. These are positioned near likely points of access to the water and places where a rescue attempt may reasonably take place. This equipment is inspected by a nominated person from the Grounds and Gardens Team and results recorded along with any actions.

Provision of Information

Estates recognises that appropriate and adequate information on water safety should be provided to staff, students and members of the public to aid accident prevention. Information is made available in a number of ways i.e. student handbook and local notices.

Reporting Accidents and Incidents

Where an individual is involved in an incident or sustains injury as a result of an accident, the accident/incident must be reported on-line using the following link: http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/healthsafetywellbeing/incidents/

First Aid Provision at Open Water Sites

There will be no first aid provision in place on a site where there are areas of open water except where there is a permanent staff presence or a risk assessment has deemed it necessary. First aid equipment is carried on all Community Safety vehicles.

Ice on Open Water

Frozen water is inherently dangerous and at no time should people walk on frozen open water. Signage is displayed advising of the risks.

Responsibilities

The Director of Estates will, through the Estates Leadership Team, provide appropriate management arrangements and take measures to ensure that, so far as is reasonably practicable, all open water facilities and other areas of open water such as lakes, ponds, rivers and streams, are maintained in a safe condition.

The Head of Facilities and Customer Service and Estates Site Manager (Innovation Campus, Stratford-upon-Avon) are responsible for ensuring that the management and maintenance of lakes, ponds, rivers and streams are carried out to meet the requirements of this statement, elevating to the Director of Estates any non-conformities.
The Head of Assurance, Risk and Property is responsible for ensuring that spot checks and audits are carried out to provide assurance that activities are being carried out in compliance with this statement.

This statement will be available on the Estates intranet and externally on request.

**Review**
This statement dated July 2024 will be reviewed at least every two years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Version Number</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Authorised by: James Breckon, Director of Estates

Reviewed by:
Duncan Stiles, Head of Assurance, Property and Risk

Source Location: Estates M drive

Approval Date: 17 July 2024

Review Date: 17 July 2026

Published Location: [Link to Estates Health, Safety and Wellbeing web page](#)

**FURTHER SUPPORT AND ADVICE**
Any further information or support can be obtained from:
Alan Warwood, Head of Facilities and Customer Service

Estates Office Argent Court Coventry CV4 7AL t: 024 765 28273