

Hospitality Policy

Responsibility for Policy:	Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Strategic Initiatives)
Relevant to:	All LJMU Staff and Visitors
Approved by:	ELT, 6 July 2021
Responsibility for Document Review:	Director of Campus Services- Tudor Williams
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RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

- Food Safety Act 1990 (as amended)
- General Food Law Regulation (EC) 178/2002
- Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013
- Food Standards Agency website
- Safer food, better business (Food Standards Agency)
- Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (Food Standards Agency)
- Control of Substances to Health Regulations 2004 (as amended)
- Food Standards Agency website

RELATED POLICIES & DOCUMENTS

SCP48 Food Safety and Hygiene

New Guidance proposals –

External Hospitality

By

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Estate & Facilities Management

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. **As we return to campus and commence onsite activities, it is timely to reconsider our approach to hospitality.**
2. **It is proposed that all requests for hospitality should utilise the internal service.**
3. **There is a significant risk from using external caterers, many of whom do not comply with the same level of health and safety regulations. There is evidence that some external caterers have low food hygiene ratings but our current process of management lacks governance and due diligence.**
4. **The University is responsible for ensuring compliance with food safety legislation when food is offered on Campus. Any breaches of food safety legislation can have significant implications and greatly damage the University's reputation.**
5. **The University has recently appointed a Head Chef and Front of House Manager. The Catering Department now has the capacity and expertise to provide a high quality and competitive hospitality service.**
6. **This proposal would also retain the service 'in house' in the same way to most other services in the University. The internal team upholds other university core values such as - utilise Fairtrade ingredients, uphold the living wage and use local, sustainable products and consumables.**
7. **Using external providers will be permitted but only if the internal catering cannot fulfil the booking or in exceptional circumstances.**
8. **A framework of external suppliers will be implemented for such occasional, managed by the internal team**
9. **Catering for ERDF or ESIF grants must be purchased using School or Faculty funds, not the Grant funds. It is not permissible for grant funding to be used when buying catering requirements for these research projects.**
10. **ELT are to be requested to endorse the policy by pledging their agreement and disseminating within areas of responsibility to ensure compliance**

1. **Background**

There are occasions when it may be necessary to provide catering, and other associated facilities to enable the University's business to progress smoothly. Examples of this would include providing hospitality for external visitors, visiting lecturers, external contributors to research work and visiting business contacts with whom the university either has or is seeking to develop a working relationship.

In addition, hospitality is ordered by staff for a number of other reasons including -

- Staff internal meetings
- To support student activity
- Executive internal meetings
- Supplier meetings
- Events
- Open days / Applicant days

Food and drink is generally supplied by the internal catering department, plus a number of external companies

With issues around food safety, this document clarifies and offers guidance as to how the University should procure and utilise hospitality to minimise risk.

2. **Why we need to have a policy**

It has been noted that staff previously booked hospitality for a wide range of meetings and events, and are using a widespread number of different suppliers. This presents few of the issues described below:

- **Food Hygiene.**

2 years ago the University was issued a 1* rating for its central kitchens. This led to a huge improvement in standards and operating procedures which allowed us to gain back a 5* rating. We have noted that some staff are using suppliers with low food hygiene ratings or are purchasing hot food items and then transporting to university for consumption. These risks to staff, students and visitors have to be contained and minimised

- **To improve governance.**

Especially around food hygiene, it is not easy to manage multiple external suppliers and know who in University is ordering food, so minimal accountability.

- **Cost saving**

Internal offer is VAT exempt

- **Improve efficiency.**

The internal team has capacity to manage more bookings without an increase in overheads, so helping to reduce overall expenditure.

- Internal Offer has improved.

There has been a significant improvement in the quality and consistency of the internal over the last 18 months and service is flexible with what it could offer.

- Corporate reputation

Not having proper oversight of other suppliers could cause corporate damage and significant reputational damage if there was an event such as a food hygiene issue or food poisoning.

- Other suppliers.

It has been noted that some catering suppliers have previously been providing food on our premises at events with minimal auditing of their procedures.

- Climate emergency

The internal team works hard to limit delivery mileage from our suppliers, To support the universities Climate Emergency commitment, we would not want to support unnecessary deliveries to Campus from external supplier. This often involves multiple visits throughout the day to service an event.

- Financial efficiency

We estimated that pre pandemic approximately £125k is spent each year with external catering suppliers. This does not include procurement card spend which is difficult to track. Approximately £70k of this sum was spent with just one supplier, however as bookings are made individually we currently do not receive any kind of volume related discounts.

This policy provides guidance regarding the management of these requirements.

3. Internally funded catering policy

- University approved catering facilities must be used, unless there are extenuating circumstances to meet the requirements of the University.
- All catering bookings must be booked via the Internal Catering Team via I buy / the helpdesk. These systems will be enhanced further in - the new Academic Year – 21/22 to make booking process as seamless for users as possible
- Bespoke orders can be accommodated or discussed by contacting the Head of Catering
- We propose to move towards establishing a framework of suitable external suppliers. Colleagues in Procurement, will assist with this establishment, and this will then be managed by the Catering Team. The supply base will be utilised, only

in the event Internal Catering do not have capacity to accommodate any given event.

- If required, external bookings will be placed, managed and invoiced with the supplier by the Catering Team.
- External suppliers must meet minimum thresholds for food safety; quality and cost.
- The catering team will monitor and audit external providers against food hygiene regulations and if they are not compliant , they will be removed / suspended from the Framework
- Catering for ERDF or ESIF grants must be purchased using School or Faculty funds, not the Grant funds. It is not permissible for grant funding to be used when purchasing catering requirements for these research projects.

4. **External / conference and events policy**

- All external conference / catering business must utilities the internal LJMU catering options in the first instance.
- If an external customer is keen to use an external company, then the Conference and Events team must use the established framework, as due diligence will have been undertaken. In the event that a customer insists on an alternative catering company, then they must sign a disclaimer , exempting LJMU from any issues arises from the use of the said company
- A 20% rebate will need to be applied to any external catering provider. This will cover the costs associated with auditing, administration and the loss of this business. This charge will also cover potential cost of utilities and waste removal.
- An example of Liverpool City Council policy for external caterers is provided in Appendix 1 – we would look to implement a similar level of governance

5. **Recommendation**

That a new policy for the purchase of hospitality should be implemented as soon as possible but would hope to be in place by 1st September 2021.

Appendix 1 – LCC Policy for External Caterers



External Caterers

Liverpool Town Hall requires of an external caterer who is to provide food, whether for sale or events catering purposes check that:

The caterer has public liability insurance - a copy of their insurance certificate is required;

The caterer's premises are registered with the Local Authority;

Premises that sell or supply food for more than 5 days in any 5 weeks period must be registered with the local authority. Copy of the most recent Environmental Health report is required. Food business operators must have in place, implement and maintain a food hazard analysis procedure based on the principles of HACCP.

The caterer's staff have food hygiene training. Food handlers and business operators must be trained to the required level of instruction, for example:

- Food handlers; Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering
- Supervisors; Level 3 Award in Food Safety in Catering
- Manager/owner; Level 4 Award in Food Safety in Catering

Copies of their certificates required.

Any arrangements made any Caterers are wholly between the hirer and the Caterer and will not and cannot involve Liverpool City Council. However, Liverpool Town Hall does require any Caterer who provides services on the premises to pay a fee to Liverpool City Council to cover the overheads and administrative costs incurred by Liverpool Town Hall in providing the venue and facilities.

Liverpool City Council requires 20% catering commission from the overall net cost.