

Prevention of Slips, Trips & Falls Policy

Document Control Information	
Version control	1.0
Owned by:	Health and Safety Team
Latest amendment on:	25-06-2020
Approved by:	Health and Safety Committee
Approved on:	08-04-2019
Coming into effect on:	08-04-2019
Review date:	May 2022

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1. Introduction

Many accidents reported to the Health & Safety Office are due to slips, trips and falls. Reducing slips, trips and falls is therefore a key objective. Statistics from the Health and Safety Executive show that slips, trips, and falls are the most common cause of accidents across the education, service, and manufacturing sectors. Recognising this, the Government has included reducing slips trips and falls as one of their priorities to improve health and safety performance nationally.

Injuries from slips, trips, and falls often cause pain, distress and inconvenience to the injured person and disruption to the working of the University if staff are absent from work. The common acute injuries caused include sprain, strains, bruising and fractures. Sometimes these injuries can have long term, chronic affects, which can last for many years, even for life.

2. Scope

The purpose of this procedure is to raise awareness of slips, trips, and falls and to reduce the associated hazards which affects all staff, students, and visitors on London Metropolitan University premises.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Staff, Students, and visitors

Staff, students, and visitors must take personal responsibility to prevent slips and trips and to report issues requiring maintenance or cleaning to the attention of the Estates Helpdesk as soon as possible. This includes following any local signage or rules.

Taking action to prevent immediate danger and also warning others of potential slips and trips and where possible removing trip and slips hazards.

Staff must report accidents/incidents to their Supervisor / Manager and the Health & Safety Team as soon as possible.

Students are to be encouraged to report accidents/incidents to their Lecturers, Course Administrators, Reception or as instructed at their induction.

Visitors are encouraged to report accidents/incidents to the staff organiser or reception.

Contractors operating on the University's premises will be responsible for the reporting of accidents/incidents related to their work in accordance with their own procedures. A copy of this report must be forwarded to the Safety Office via the Project/ Contract Manager (in some cases it may be more appropriate to report via the University's own accident reporting form).

3.2 Estates – Projects

Ensure that specifications for new or replacement floors are for a material that is suitable for limiting the risk of slips and trips.

Ensure that the design of buildings prevents contamination of floors, as far as reasonably practicable e.g. rainwater ingress is limited by the provision of suitable protected entrances and the provision of fixed matting.

When selecting flooring, give consideration to the following guidance:

- Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance on the selection of walking surfaces.
- CIRIA guide C652 Safer surfaces to walk on reducing the risk of slipping.

When selecting flooring, give consideration to:

- The flooring material
- Likely contaminants
- Use of the area
- Predicted user behaviour
- The surrounding environment and overall design of the space
- The footwear likely to be worn.
- Ensure that contractors apply good housekeeping standards and appropriate use of barriers when working on campus to prevent slips, trips and falls.
- Lighting surveys are carried out also during project stage.

3.3 Estates – Maintenance

Maintain surfaces and implement an action plan for dealing with unsafe conditions arising from:

- Holes, bumps and uneven or worn out surfaces on paths and roads.
- Snow, ice and leaves on external paths and roads.
- Inadequate drainage systems.
- Defective matting and flooring surfaces within common areas of buildings.
- All staff will apply good housekeeping standards and make appropriate use of barriers during works on campus
- Identifying where trends of repeated slips, trips have been identified.
- Providing sufficient lighting in buildings and grounds so that trips are prevented.
- Staff in maintenance roles are issued with the correct footwear which would include non-slip soles.

3.4 Estates – Cleaning Services

An appropriate risk assessment is carried out for the management of risks from slips and trips arising from cleaning activities.

Staff are trained in suitable safe systems of work, including:

- Preventing access when wet floors are drying
- Cleaning at appropriate times to minimise any risk to building users from wet floors.
- The correct cleaning methods for flooring types and use of chemicals
- The safe use of electrical power and extension leads and other equipment that might cause a trip hazard
- Staff are adequately supervised to ensure that safe systems of work are followed.
- Staff are issued with the correct slip resistant footwear.

4. Preventing slips trips and falls

The causes of slips, trips and falls are categorised as the following:

- Building projects
- The condition of infrastructure of the University
- Organisational arrangements
- Cleaning
- Housekeeping
- Individuals

4.1 Building Projects

Project work when undertaken should identify early on which flooring materials should be used and preventative measures to stop slips and trips.

Ensure that the design of buildings prevents contamination of floors, as far as reasonably practicable e.g. rainwater ingress is limited by the provision of suitable protected entrances and the provision of fixed matting.

4.2 Condition of infrastructure of the University

This includes the condition of the roads, paths, pavements, steps, floors, stairs etc. Maintaining the infrastructure is the responsibility of Estates who have a system for inspection and for dealing with acute problems, for example raised paving slabs, ice, and snow etc. There is also have a long-term programme for improving the condition of the University's infrastructure.

4.3 Organisational arrangements

Work should be planned, and risk assessed to minimise the creation of slip, trip and fall hazards. Careful selection of materials, equipment and work practices is needed. For example, carrying out work at quiet times and putting out warning signs, preventing water getting onto floors, designing workstations to eliminate trailing cables. Managers and supervisors should ensure that workplaces are kept safe or make arrangements to rectify problems.

4.4 Cleaning

Floor cleaning is key to preventing many slip and trip accidents as floor contamination from water, oil and dust frequently causes accidents. Effective and regular cleaning to remove contamination can reduce accidents.

Cleaning can result in slip and trip hazards from those who are accessing the areas being cleaned including the cleaner and so cleaners should always wear slip-resistant shoes when cleaning.

A-frame warning signs should always be put up by cleaners to warn others that cleaning is taking place where there are trailing cables or wet floors. Regular floor cleaning should ideally be carried out when the majority of staff, students and visitors are not in the building. Rainwater is often carried into the entrances of buildings and so the provision of mats in these areas are vital in keeping water away from the surface of a floor.

4.5 Housekeeping

Good housekeeping will go a long way to reduce the risks of slips, trips and falls. Again, everyone needs to be involved. For example, being tidy, keeping walkways clear, cleaning up accidental spills, shutting cupboard doors and drawers, taking care where items are placed and stored.

4.6 Individuals

The action of individuals themselves can reduce the number of slips, trips, and falls. For example, not rushing, not carrying excessive loads, wearing appropriate footwear, and just looking carefully where they are going.

5. References

Assessing the slip resistance of flooring <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/geis2.pdf>

Slips and trips: The importance of floor cleaning
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/web/slips02.pdf>

The Workplace and Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations Approved Code of Practice <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l24.pdf>

Preventing slips, trips and falls at work a brief guide
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg225.pdf>

Construction Industry Research and Information Association (CIRIA) safer surfaces to walk on reducing the risks of slipping
<https://www.ciria.org/ItemDetail?iProductCode=C652&Category=BOOK&WebsiteKey=3f18c87a-d62b-4eca-8ef4-9b09309c1c91>

HSE Steps, Slips and Trips e-Learning steps
http://www.hse.gov.uk/slips/step/launch_sector.htm