

EVENT MANAGEMENT

Health and Safety Guidance

August 2025

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Introduction

Events require careful planning and coordination to ensure they run smoothly and safely. This guidance endeavours to assist those who wish to hold an event to determine the level of organisation they will need to undertake. It is a guide to the considerations that event organisers need to address, the agencies they may need to contact and the amount of time needed to organise the event without causing undue pressure on themselves or on those who are asked to support the planning and operation of each event.

Event Planning

It is strongly recommended that event organisers start to contact the correct people as early as possible. This should be at least six to eight weeks in advance of the desired event date but may be even longer for large or complicated events. Advice can be sought from the following teams:

- Central Events Team (events@port.ac.uk)
- Health Safety and Compliance Team (hsservicedesk@port.ac.uk)
- Estates Helpdesk (estates.helpdesk@port.ac.uk)

From these conversations, a decision will be made on whether the event will require an Event Management Plan (EMP) which needs to be submitted to hsservicedesk@port.ac.uk once complete.

Events that do not require an EMP

It is not necessary to follow this process for events that are considered business as usual for the University such as lectures, meetings, working groups that take place within core working hours or are regular authorised club / society meetings that only involve staff and students.

Some events do not need to follow this process as they have an approved management process with a dedicated working group, such as:

- Graduation Ceremonies
- University Undergraduate Open Days and Open Experience Days
- Inaugural lectures
- Sports events in Ravelin Sports Centre using standard equipment (not involving external parties, license requirements, alcohol or additional catering)

Events that are likely to require an EMP

An event management plan is likely to be required for events that take place within a University building or University owned outdoor space and involve one or more of the following criteria:

- Potentially controversial subject matter (seek advice from corporate-governance@port.ac.uk)

- Out of hours working (core University working hours are Monday – Thursday 08.30 – 17.15 and Friday 08.30 – 16.15; however, some buildings have different core hours)
- External catering suppliers
- Alcohol requirement (subject to approval and may require an entertainment licence)
- Additional support required such as electrical power distribution, additional lighting, waste management or cleaning
- External contractors (gazebo / marquee hire, portable generators, etc)
- Requires Security and / or Caretaker support
- Outdoor events (only on University premises)
- Persons attending who are under 18 years old
- Additional requirements (over and above existing arrangements) due to attendance of people with mobility impairment, sensory impairment or learning disabilities.
- Requires a temporary fire risk assessment (due to additional fire loads or changes to existing fire escape routes)
- If non-employees are expected to attend
- Events that are organised by students or student societies
- The event will have more than 100 people attending (this will trigger additional considerations such as access control and enhanced emergency procedures as well as other considerations such as extra security, first aid cover, toilets or welfare facilities).

Event Approval Process

Event Management Plan

Where an EMP is deemed to be required, this must be completed as fully as possible and must be submitted at least 4 weeks prior to the event (preferably at least 6 to 8 weeks for large or complex events) to ensure the University approving parties have adequate time to consider whether the event is approved. It will also give all supporting agencies enough time to be able to adequately support the event.

Risk Assessment

Most events are likely to require a risk assessment, even if an event management plan is not required. The event risk assessment is an evaluation of the significant hazards and risks associated with the event to ensure appropriate control measures are put in place to reduce the risk of harm to event staff and attendees as far as is reasonably practicable.

Common hazards associated with events may include:

- Slips, trips and falls
- Manual handling
- Working at height
- Noise
- Electricity
- Weather
- Safeguarding
- Aggressive behaviour
- Food safety
- Temporary structures (i.e. marquees)
- Cash handling
- Crowd control
- Fire

The Health, Safety and Compliance Team provides regular risk assessment training to staff who are required to carry out risk assessments. Where required, event organisers can request support with event risk assessments by emailing hsservicedesk@port.ac.uk.

Fire Risk Assessment – If an event is likely to introduce additional fire risks (in addition to the existing building fire risk profile) advice must be sought from the University Fire Safety Manager. A temporary fire risk assessment may be necessary. For further advice, contact hsservicedesk@port.ac.uk.

Approval

When the EMP, RA and any other supporting documentation (such as floor plan layout, contractor risk assessment or public liability insurance details) have been submitted, the relevant University approving and supporting parties will consider the information provided and seek clarification of any points that need resolving.

When all aspects have been clarified and the relevant approving parties are satisfied that all arrangements are in place, written approval will be provided to the event organiser.

Additional Guidance

Booking of Rooms or Spaces for Events

If the desired venue for an event is a lecture theatre or other bookable space, the event organiser will need to ensure they secure the booking before planning anything else. Where the event is planned to be held in an area that is not bookable (such as building atriums or outdoor spaces), they must seek permission to use that space to ensure it will not clash with other activities such as teaching, exams or other planned events or conferences.

Enquiries should be made to uoprooombookings@port.ac.uk.

Enquiries about availability of venues for events should be made as early as possible, particularly if the event is organised during busy periods such as graduation and exam periods.

Numbers of Attendees at Events

When calculating the number of attendees to events, it is most important to determine the maximum number of persons who will be in the venue at any one time. This enables planning to be made regarding the numbers of seats required (where applicable), the fire escape capacity of the building and also security requirements. For advice, contact hsservicedesk@port.ac.uk.

It is also often useful to calculate the overall total number of attendees at an event in order to calculate requirements for tickets, catering, information leaflets, etc.

Catering and Alcohol

If catering is ordered from and supplied by the University Catering Team, this will not require further approval. However, where event organisers wish to provide catering and refreshments from an external source, self-cater or wish to serve alcohol, this can only be approved by the Commercial Manager. This is to ensure that the University will not fall foul of any licensing requirements or food hygiene standards.

For specific advice contact catering.events@port.ac.uk or reservations@port.ac.uk.

Premises Entertainment License

The University holds a premises license from the local authority allowing employees and students to be able to play music or show films on campus to an audience as well as supply or sell alcohol and host boxing, wrestling or mixed martial arts events. There are certain conditions with this license to ensure events like this are properly controlled. Therefore, for all enquiries regarding events that wish to incorporate any licensed activities, please contact reservations@port.ac.uk for advice.

External Suppliers

External suppliers of goods and services for events must be approved suppliers to the University and must be procured following the University finance and procurement regulations. Contact procurement@port.ac.uk for further advice. They must also ensure that any employees or subcontractors to the supplier are qualified and competent to carry out the service they are engaged to provide.

In addition, all suppliers must provide suitable and sufficient risk assessments and method statements that cover the specific services and equipment they will provide as well as holding adequate public and products liability insurance (minimum £5 million, but this may need to be at least £10 million for higher risk activities). Contact insurancesupport@port.ac.uk for further advice.

Marquees and Temporary Structures

All temporary structures may only be installed by competent persons and there must be suitable and sufficient safe systems of work to ensure the installation is safe and is planned in conjunction with all other agencies and providers. Marquee providers must have a minimum of £10 million public liability insurance.

No temporary structure may be anchored to the ground using stakes or pins due to the risk of impacting underground services. The only method of anchoring will be with counterweights (such as water or concrete weights).

During construction and deconstruction of these structures, the event organiser must ensure that there is adequate segregation of the work area to prevent staff, students, visitors and the public from being affected by the work. The best solution is to fully close access routes to prevent access to the work area (where practicable).

When a structure has been installed (and prior to the event starting), the event organiser must arrange for a member of the Health Safety and Compliance Team to carry out a safety review to check for trip hazards, accessibility, fire precautions and other hazards.

Electrical Equipment and Installations

For small portable electrical equipment that will only be used indoors and be plugged into existing 230v 3 pin plug sockets, the equipment may be used provided it has an in-date portable appliance test (PAT).

Any other temporary electrical equipment, lighting or installations (whether independently powered or that need to plug into UOP external power supplies) must be installed in accordance with BS 7909:2023 (Temporary electrical systems for entertainment and related purposes – Code of practice) and must be installed and managed by a competent engineer and must have a valid in date certificate of inspection and test by a competent person.

If electrical support or advice is required, contact estates.helpdesk@port.ac.uk and request assistance from the Estates Electrical Managers.

Security

For small events it is often acceptable for Campus Security to be able to provide adequate security presence using their existing on-site team. However, this must always be confirmed in advance. In some cases, the event will be large or complex and will require additional security which is likely to need to be provided by an external SIA approved security provider. This will be to ensure that suitable cover is in place to control access and egress, monitor behaviour and oversee the security of valuable items such as cash and bar stock.

Contact estates.helpdesk@port.ac.uk or campus.security@port.ac.uk for advice.

Young Persons (Under 18)

If an event is intended for or will be attended by persons under 18 years of age, they may be accompanied by parents, teachers or external group leaders. If the responsible adults will be university staff, a separate Safeguarding Risk Assessment will be required to ensure appropriate safeguards are in place. This may include appropriate ratios of staff to attendees, DBS checks, procedures for using the toilet, collection arrangements and an appropriate safeguarding contact for the event.

In the event of any safeguarding concerns, the [UoP Safeguarding Policy](#) should be followed.

Reasonable Adjustments & Access Requirements

The University has a legal obligation under the Equality Act 2010 to anticipate and consider any reasonable adjustments individuals may require when engaging with University-related activities. Access to some University buildings already include measures such as ramped access, passenger lifts and hearing loops. However, event organisers should actively seek to understand any reasonable adjustments an individual may require to access an event in order to not compromise their experience. If there are known specific requirements for an event that are not already in place, organisers should endeavour to implement these as soon as possible. Should they require advice on what reasonable adjustments may be possible or how to implement them, contact Disability Advice within Student Support Services via asdac@port.ac.uk.

Stewarding of Events

The event organiser is responsible for ensuring that their event has a suitable number of staff present who are dedicated and briefed on their duty to manage the event adequately and safely. This is in addition to any security staff who are employed to oversee the security of an event.

Incident Reporting

If an incident occurs during an event (injury, near miss, damage to property or wilful disruption), this should be reported as an incident using the university [HS1 Form](#) so it can be investigated as necessary to prevent future similar occurrences.

Sustainability

Consider the potential environmental impacts from the event and how these could be mitigated.

If products are purchased for the event, aim for ones with a low environmental impact that come from local suppliers where practicable. Be mindful of the waste that may be created from the event, and what steps can be taken to follow the waste hierarchy, prioritising prevention and reduction of waste. For example, consider whether catering is needed for the event and try to request only what is needed, rather than overordering. Advertising streams could prioritise digital and word of mouth, rather than printed supplies.

Utilities (electricity, gas and water) are all connected to environmental impacts, so steps should be taken to reduce usage where possible. For example, opening / closing windows could maintain sufficient ventilation and temperature and ensure lights are turned off when the event is finished.

Organisers can also encourage their attendees to make sustainable travel choices. Try to remind them about the options they have, such as train, bus, park and ride, and active travel (cycling, walking). Where possible, include information on where the nearest bike facilities, bus stops, and train stations are.

Waste Management

For small events there may be no requirement to provide additional waste management provision. Existing waste provision may be adequate. However, this will be dependent on the type and scale of each event. Event managers are responsible for ensuring that all waste is cleaned up and removed from the venue throughout the event and after it has finished.

To that end, they must consider whether additional waste bins may be required. If additional and / or non-standard (such as glass) waste receptacles are required, it is strongly recommended to request this at least 35 days in advance of the event in order to enable the waste contractor to organise the additional resources.

For additional support, contact estates.helpdesk@port.ac.uk.

Caretaker Support

If caretaker assistance is required either for the set up and pack down of an event or during an event, this must be requested as early as possible to give enough time to plan and organise the resources required. Depending on the level of support required and whether it is outside of normal working hours, there may be a charge to cover the services provided.

For advice and additional support, contact estates.helpdesk@port.ac.uk or russell.bissett@port.ac.uk.

Additional Cleaning Support

Event organisers have a responsibility to plan their event so spills can be cleaned up locally during the event. However, if at the planning stage, it is known that specific room cleaning will be required in preparation for or after an event, contact estates.helpdesk@port.ac.uk. This is likely to be chargeable so advanced booking is essential.

If there is an urgent, unforeseen need for professional cleaning services during an event, the event manager should call Estates Helpdesk on 023 9284 6677 (during normal working hours) or Campus Security on 023 9284 3418 (outside of working hours).

Building Heating and Ventilation

In order to save energy and cost, the heating and ventilation systems in buildings are programmed to be switched off or at least reduced during periods where buildings are not in use. If an event is planned for periods that are outside of normal working hours, it may be necessary to ensure that building heating and ventilation will be operating normally for the duration of the event. Contact estates.helpdesk@port.ac.uk to request an extension of building services operating times.

Publicity and Internal Communications

If an event is intended to require any publicity (advertising, photographs, film clips) and / or the event has internal news value, the event manager should contact the University Press Office - pressoffice@port.ac.uk.

Grounds Maintenance Support

For certain events, there may be some form of grounds maintenance requirement in preparation for the event (such as provision of flowers or grass cutting). This must be planned in advance to ensure the request can be fulfilled and it will be chargeable to the event budget. If this is required, contact estates.helpdesk@port.ac.uk.

Prayer Rooms

Event organisers may be asked whether there are any prayer facilities during certain events. The university has dedicated prayer facilities on campus, however, any specific enquiries should be directed to chaplains@port.ac.uk.

Contingency Planning

It is possible that events may be disrupted unexpectedly. However, event organisers should consider how they would react to foreseeable adverse occurrences such as wet weather at outdoor events, emergency on campus or event cancellation. A plan should be made in advance (where applicable) for alternative event arrangements and ensure there is a means of communicating changes to event attendees.

Animals on Campus

Assistance dogs are fully protected under the Equality Act 2010 and are allowed into all public spaces, including cafes and restaurants.

Where events are specifically designed to have animals involved that are not assistance dogs, there must be a full assessment and prior planning in advance of the event to ensure that adequate arrangements are in place, risk assessments are undertaken, animal handlers have appropriate levels of accreditation (where required) and appropriate insurance is held.