



Guidance on waste for Cleaning Services staff

The law says that everyone must **keep waste safe**. We must also make sure that we **put it into the correct containers and bins** so that it can be disposed safely and legally. We want to make sure that waste that can be recycled isn't mixed with waste that can't be and we especially want to be sure that waste that might cause harm isn't mixed with other waste.

What part do Cleaning Services staff play in this?

You play a very important role in the correct management of University waste. By following the guidelines given here, and those given during your training, you are helping to make sure that the law isn't broken and will be helping to protect people and the environment.

What issues are important for Cleaning Services staff?

1. Keeping different types of waste separate

The University produces many different types of waste for example:

- Waste that can be recycled – like paper and cans
- Waste that can't be recycled – like sandwich wrappers
- Special types of waste from laboratories – some waste from labs may be just ordinary paper etc but some of it may be capable of causing harm to people or to the environment.

As a result it is very important that cleaning staff who deal with waste know what they can and can't handle and what they must leave for others to deal with.

Cleaning staff should only handle the type of waste that is to go into the external general or blue recycling bins or that can be uplifted by Estates & Buildings.

Your supervisor will point these out to you but if you are in doubt about what waste can go into any bin you must ask.

When you take waste out of the building to the outside bins you should make sure that waste for recycling goes into the blue recycling bins and the waste that cannot be recycled should go into the black bin. In some areas there are no bins beside the building and arrangements are made for Estates & Buildings to collect the waste. If this applies to your work area then your supervisor will give you alternative instructions.

2. Keeping waste secure

You are also important in making sure that waste isn't blown about the campus or scavenged by animals.

- Make sure that you use the correct bags, bins or other containers that are supplied for the waste.
- Don't allow the waste to spill out of the containers and make sure that bags are securely tied so that waste can't blow away.
- Don't leave waste where animals or birds can forage in it.
- Never leave waste at the side of an outside bin, if the bin is full and you can't put your waste into it then report this to your Supervisor immediately.

If you spot a problem with any bin or container report this to your Supervisor. This applies to equipment both inside and outside of buildings.

If you are instructed to leave waste at a particular place so that Estates & Buildings can uplift it make sure that:

- the waste is put out at the correct time of day for uplift and is not left lying all day or overnight.
- any bag containing waste is securely closed
- waste will not blow away or spill

3. Working in a laboratory area

When you start work for the first time in an area that includes a laboratory, or if you shift to a different laboratory area, you should not begin to work until you have had some guidance from the Cleaning Supervisor for that area. The Supervisor will introduce you to the manager of the laboratory area and, together, they will make sure that you are informed about how you should work in that area. They will point out the bins you should empty and make sure that you know those you must not touch. From then on you must follow these instructions but if you are unsure about anything then you should speak to the Cleaning Supervisor who will, if required, involve the laboratory manager.

Laboratories often produce waste that can be harmful and you should not be involved in dealing with this. They also usually produce a mixture of general waste (like paper and packaging) that you would be expected to deal with. It is therefore important that if you are working in any laboratory you **only handle, remove or deal with waste that is contained in black bags**. Staff in these areas are trained to make sure that only waste that is not harmful is put into black bags.

In a laboratory you must only handle, remove or deal with waste that is contained in black bags. NOT waste that is in any other type of bag or box.

REMEMBER – if you are unsure about anything, or if you see something about the way waste is being described, stored or disposed that you think is not right then contact the area Cleaning Supervisor immediately.