




**SHOWER AND CHANGING  
FACILITIES IN ACADEMIC AND  
OFFICE BUILDINGS SPECIFICATION**

# Document Approval

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## 1.0 PURPOSE

This specification defines the University's requirements for showers, changing and storage facilities for staff and students needing to shower or change clothes at their work/study. The specification aims to ensure that those requiring showers to make themselves presentable for their work or studies have reasonable access to appropriate facilities to do so. Facilities should be available within a reasonable distance to the workplace, attractive, functional and user friendly, and provided at a sufficient level to avoid the need for excessive queuing.

Those needing to shower are frequently (but not exclusively) likely to be individuals who choose to cycle or run for their commute to work, and wish to shower and change to make themselves presentable for the working day. The University (via its Travel Plan) is keen to support those choosing not to drive to the University and therefore keen to support these individuals by providing a suitable level of facilities.

## 2.0 SCOPE

The policy covers academic and office buildings on the three main University campuses. It does not extend to cover emergency showers required for labs; showers provided for sports facilities or showers in private residences or halls of residences.

Where there is a conflict between this policy and national policies such as building regulations or disability access requirements, the national guidelines must take precedence.

## 3.0 SHOWER ACCESS IS NOT RESTRICTED TO BUILDING USERS

All showers in university academic buildings must be made available for use by university staff and students, regardless of their department. Shower access may not be restricted to those people based within the building. Exceptions are made for showers in areas of buildings requiring special security clearance (eg category 2 labs), and laboratory emergency showers.

The above position was agreed at Estates and Facilities Committee on 05/12/2013 following a recommendation from Environment and Sustainability Committee, and circulated to Heads of Departments via a memo on 6/1/2014.

Open access university showers and their access arrangements are listed on the University shower map, available to download from Sustainability Services cycling webpage: <https://sites.reading.ac.uk/sustainability/travel/cycling/>

### **3.0 WHEN TO PROVIDE SHOWERS AND CHANGING FACILITIES**

In order to improve the availability of showers and changing facilities on our campuses. All new buildings on campus must provide shower facilities that are attractive, functional and user friendly, and made available for university staff and students to use. They should not be built in restricted access areas.

Building refurbishments, and bathroom refurbishments should consider the possibility of including shower facilities depending on space available and proximity of alternative shower facilities.

### **4.0 LEVEL OF PROVISION**

- Showers must be unisex or provided equally for both sexes, at a rate of 50:50.
- As a minimum shower provision must meet local and national guidance relating to level of and provisions for accessible showers.
- Showers should be provided at a rate of 1 shower per 100 building users (staff and students).
- It is often preferable that the showers within a building or area are grouped in a single location to facilitate ease of use, opportunity to provide a higher level of additional facilities, and reduce need for queues. The policy seeks to strike a balance between providing facilities a reasonable distance from all academic buildings, but more than one facility in each location to minimise queues.

### **5.0 SPACE AND QUALITY REQUIREMENTS**

- The space should be functional, robust, easy to maintain and provide a friendly and welcoming environment.
- The size of a shower cubicle (shower tray) should be a minimum of 90cm wide by 90cm deep (for accessible showers the minimum size would be greater than this).
- Changing areas must be provided separate to the shower tray, The changing area should be appropriately sized for at least the number of showers provided, allowing sufficient space away from any showers to keep peoples clothes dry. Toilet cubicles cannot be counted as changing facilities.
- Showers and changing facilities must include facilities to hang or store clothing and equipment while changing or showering, e.g. bench seat and/or hooks.
- The shower rooms must have adequate ventilation in line with industry standards
- The showers must have good drainage that works effectively.
- The shower head should be adjustable in height.

## **6.0 WATER EFFICIENCY**

- Showers should be push button so they can't remain on unnecessarily. A 1 minute time delay is recommended – long enough to not be annoying to users and short enough to avoid wasting water.
- A water flow rate of between 5-10 litres/minute is recommended as providing a good balance between water efficiency avoiding wasting water and good enough to give people a decent shower.

## **7.0 ADDITIONAL FACILITIES**

Changing areas will ideally include hair drying facilities and a mirror with a shelf underneath and a light above for ease of making oneself presentable for work. Arrangements would need to be made for the ongoing maintenance of these.

## **8.0 STORAGE AREA / LOCKERS FOR SHOWER EQUIPMENT**

- A storage area / lockers for shower user equipment (towels, shower gels, spare clothes etc) would ideally be included. Consideration must be given to the management of the locker facilities.

## **9.0 DRYING SPACE FOR WET CLOTHES**

- For large facilities – those with 6 or more showers for both genders in a single location / area of a building, a separate drying space for wet clothes would ideally be included.