

Procedure for Dealing with the Spread of a Large Scale Infectious Agents or ‘Notifiable’ Disease			
Policy ...	Code of Practice...	Guidance ...	Procedure✓
Organisation-wide✓		Local...	
Approved by the University Health & Safety Committee			
Chairperson: Dr Manuel Alonso		Date: May 19 th 2025	Review date May 2028
The purpose of presenting this documents to the University Health and Safety Committee			
Standard 3 year re-fresh✓		Changes in practice and/or legislation...	New Policy...

1. Objectives

The primary aim of this procedure is to provide a framework for coordinating the University's response to any widespread infectious or notifiable disease including a coronavirus or flu pandemic, or other biological agents; reducing the impact on health of residents, staff and students while delivering core business activities and maintaining the essential services.

This procedure is summarised and presented in Table 1.

2. Definition of an Infectious Agents or 'Notifiable' Disease

Any serious infectious disease of humans, caused by a bacterium or a virus that occurs naturally and spreads rapidly, causing widespread disruption in business activities. Any infectious agent or toxic chemical that could in theory be engineered for deliberate use causing widespread disease.

A **notifiable** disease is one for which regular, frequent, and timely information regarding individual cases is considered necessary for the prevention and control of the disease.

Notification of a number of specified infectious diseases is required under the Public Health (Infectious Diseases) 1988 Act and the Public Health (Control of Diseases) 1988 Act.

Such an outbreak can lead to a significant disruption of university activities and have a considerable impact on business continuity.

3. Procedure

This procedure is to be followed in the event of an outbreak of an infectious disease caused by any natural or man-made agent, to safeguard the safety and security of all staff and students and to provide information and maintain business continuity.

The staff listed in Appendix 1 are the core members of the Infectious Disease Working Group (IDWG) and have the Vice-Chancellor and President's authority to act for the University in the event of an outbreak of an infectious disease like a pandemic, respiratory disease, pandemic flu or any other infectious agent. They shall direct the University's response until relieved by a more appropriate authority or person, or until such time as the alert state is closed.

The main function of the Working Group is to assemble as soon as an alert is received to discuss the situation, gather information and provide advice to the University. The working group will also be responsible for disseminating information and co-ordinating activities and interacting with the emergency services.

4. Notification and Initial Response (see the check list in Table 1)

The initial response depends on the specific nature of the infectious agent and the advice from the International and Government agencies. During the initial alert stage of a disease the officers will assemble at the first opportunity to establish the following points:

- a) Consider the level of alert;
- b) Examine the information provided by the World Health Organisation (WHO), Health Protection Agency (HPA) and other Government agencies;
- c) Examine liaison with other emergency services and agencies as appropriate;
- d) Review business continuity planning;
- e) Activate the Incident Management Plan- identify staff and students at greater risk;
- f) Ensure that any appropriate staff and student emergency contacts have been updated (review Residences contact list);
- g) Establish communication links with staff and students
- h) Brief PR
- i) Establish what other immediate action needs to be taken on site
- j) Plan future meetings

5. Authority

Members of the Working Group listed in Appendix 1 have authority to take all steps necessary to minimise spread of infection and disruption to the business continuity. These steps **may** include:

- Reviewing the alert stage and arranging meetings as necessary;
- Liaising with all government agencies and the Primary Care Trust (PCT);
- Establishing an Incident Control Centre with adequate communications;
- Informing staff and students, arranging briefing meetings as necessary;
- Suspending activities;
- Reviewing IT related communications
- Issuing policies and guidance on absence management;

- Requiring assistance from staff, compatible with staff capabilities;
- Continuing to introduce control measures and remedial action as required;
- Liaising with the Incident Officers;
- Reallocating accommodation as necessary;
- Reviewing the situation on daily basis;
- Keeping Executive Board informed at all times.

Decisions will be commensurate with risk but should err on the side of safety and security and should be in line with the advice given by the Government agencies. In the case of a **deliberate release** of toxic agents speed may be of the essence. The IDWG and Incident Officers will seek to consult as necessary with those who have relevant expertise, local knowledge, and will be guided by the Emergency Services.

6. Hand-Over and Assistance

From first notification, the IDWG will maintain a timed log of actions taken, instructions issued, and persons contacted. If in control for any length of time, they may require further assistance for specific tasks.

The IDWG will hand over control of the University's response to a more appropriate Government agency if requested but shall remain responsible for maintaining business continuity in accordance with BCP.

Appendix 1 Members of IDWG idwg@brunel.ac.uk

1. Head of Health, Safety and Environment
2. Associate Director of Student Services
3. Head of Security & Emergency Planning
4. Human Resources Representative
5. University Health Centre representative
6. Health, Safety and Environment Officer (Scientific Advisor Biology & Radiation)

Additional members of staff shall be called up to form part of the IDWG as required such as*:

1. Assistant Director of Estates and Facilities
2. College/Institute Management
3. Site Services Manager
4. Senior Service Delivery and Compliance Manager
5. Timetabling Manager
6. Head of Content, Comms and Digital Experience

**This list is not exhaustive and those required to assist will be depend on the situation.*

Meetings

The IDWG shall meet at least twice per year in June and December, and as and when required by any concerns raised regarding infectious diseases.

Table 1 Management Action Plan

At the notification stage of a pandemic outbreak affecting a member of Brunel University

Situation	Actions	Responsible
Student(s) off campus Possible or Confirmed case(s) UK Alert Level 2	Head of Health, Safety & Environment (HHSE) to be informed and will liaise with UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), and LBH Public Health team as required. HHSE to inform senior managers as required.	HHSE, IDWG, Brunel Health Service
	If containment is necessary; isolate and identify the close contacts	UKHSA will advise HHSE, Student Accommodation, Student Services, IDWG
	Issue advice note to students on the same course – email, mail, poster notes as necessary Make sure the A-List of residents is up to date.	HHSE will liaise with UKHSA for appropriate advice to circulate and will communicate this to Accommodation teams, and Student Services
	Make sure the contact name and emergency numbers for the Primary Care Trust (PCT) and other health care advisers is known and up to date.	HHSE, IDWG, Student Services.
	Establish an incident room – Assemble the Infectious Diseases Group, check help lines and brief staff especially SS, Counselling, UBS.	IDWG
	Notify local press and immediate community	Communications team liaising with HHSE
Students on Campus Same Block or Flat UK Alert Level 2	Keep flat or block isolated – regardless of containment requirements Issue advice note and set up a central info management to provide help Take advice from UKHSA Explore the possibility of sending the unaffected student(s) home	HHSE, SS, Accommodations managers, IDWG, Security

	Identify an isolation flat or unit if needed to maintain isolation – discuss with security Provide emergency supplies, including food, protective clothing and cleaning materials	Accommodation managers, Security, IDWG
	Brief Accommodation staff, SS Centre, Counselling. UBS Keep the SMG informed	IDWG, Accommodation Managers
	Issue advice note to students in the affected area and the staff working there Prepare info sheet for the staff Await confirmation from UKHSA	IDWG, Accommodation Managers, SS
	Upon confirmation from UKHSA: Brief Executive Dean of Colleges and College Management , update the info to staff Contact parent(s) of affected student (s) Make sure the emergency contact lists are up to date. Provide appropriate support to students returning home and those who cannot. Consider cancelling hospitality arrangements, conferences, College functions	HSET, Security SS IDWG, IMT, Finance
	Cancel any leave, prepare emergency staff list Notify and update local press and immediate community	HR Comms
A number of cases in Several Halls University wide, students and staff UK Alert Levels 3-4	If not done already, assemble IMT Update staff and issue advice on absence management	COO, HHSE, HR IMT
	Follow UKHSA advice and await further advice from other Government agencies Monitor progress and consider the following actions as and where necessary In addition to all the actions taken previously, limit movement of people in and out of campus as necessary.	IDWG, IMT, Security
	Keep blocks isolated, if possible relocate unaffected students	Security, Operations
	Cancel key University events	Executive Board , Events,

		Accommodation Conferencing
	Identify essential staff and grant leave to all others or cancel leave pending further information	HR, Heads of Depts
	Review management of essential services. Re-assign duties. Ask for volunteers	Ass.Dir of Estates; Head of Content, Comms and Digital Experience; Student Services
	Issue emergency supply of protective clothing and essential food for those in the isolation units – self isolation is still recommended	IMT organise and plan future meetings
Post Alert - Recovery	Examine the RA and assess performance against risk and put in place the appropriate measures necessary for the future management of a similar situation	Executive Board, IMT, IDWG All Directors and Heads