



Temperatures - Maximum / Minimum

Health and Safety legislation states that the temperature in indoor workplaces during working hours shall be reasonable, although the Regulations do not specify a minimum or maximum temperature.

However, in work areas where people work for more than short periods of time, the recommended minimum temperature is generally considered to be at least 16 degrees Celsius. However, the temperature in any workplace will depend upon a number of factors, including the nature of the workplace and the type of work being carried out. In areas where heavy physical work is carried out the temperature should be at least 13 degrees Celsius.

Although there is no maximum temperature stated in the regulations, the acceptable zone of comfort for most persons is roughly between 13°C (56°F) and 30°C (86°F), with acceptable temperatures for more strenuous work activities concentrated towards the bottom end of the range, and more sedentary activities towards the higher end.

In areas where the preferred temperature can not be achieved, e.g., kitchens, cold rooms, etc, additional factors can be implemented to achieve a more comfortable environment, including shading of windows, insulation of pipes, air coolers, thermal clothing, etc.

Anyone who has concerns about the temperature or humidity in their work area should in the first instance, discuss the problem with their line manager, School Safety Adviser or Buildings Manager if applicable.

For temporary periods of high / low temperatures the Department of Estates and Buildings may be able to provide air fans / heaters on loan. Alternatively, individual departments may prefer to purchase such equipment for their own use. The Department of Estates and Buildings may also be contacted for advice on the insulation of pipes and/or consideration of permanent air cooling / heating systems, where necessary.

In addition, Estates and Buildings will advise on window coverings such as blinds. Please report any defects in heating to Works Division via EBIS in the first instance.

Persistent problems should be referred to Candice Schmid, occupational.hygiene@ed.ac.uk, 51 4261, the University's Health and Safety Adviser for advice.

Further advice on how to stay cool during short periods of warm weather during the summer months please see Heat wave.