

Source UoB is committed to reducing the risk to members of the community and visitors with regards to the provision of food and the consumption of allergens in food which could lead to an allergic reaction.

Statement

Source UoB is not able to guarantee a completely allergen free environment, rather to minimise the risk of exposure, encourage self-responsibility, and plan for effective response to possible emergencies.

Objectives of this policy

To promote awareness of the nature of food allergens and bring these to the attention of students and staff.

To provide clear guidance to all catering staff on their responsibilities for the provision of food to the student body at the University community and visitors with a confirmed food allergy.

To ensure appropriate information and support is available for staff.

Allergy Labeling Legislation

From 13 December 2014, legislation (the EU Food Information for Consumers Regulation 1169/2011) requires food businesses to provide allergy information on food sold unpackaged. There are also changes to existing legislation on labeling allergenic ingredients in prepackaged foods. More information about the European legislation can be found on the European Commission website.

The legislation only covers information about major allergens intentionally used as ingredients. They do not cover allergens present following accidental contact.

Background: What is a food allergy?

Food allergies involve the body's immune system. The body reacts to certain allergens in food by producing antibodies, which can cause immediate and sometimes severe symptoms such as: itching or strange metallic taste in the mouth; swelling of the throat and tongue; difficulty in swallowing or speaking; abdominal cramps, nausea and vomiting; skin hives (nettle-rash) anywhere on the body; and in most extreme cases difficulties in breathing and a severe fall in blood pressure (anaphylactic shock). In extreme cases this can prove fatal.

Who is at risk?

Anybody can develop a food allergen or intolerance at any time in their life irrespective of whether they have consumed the food previously. A person with an allergy is at risk even if they consume a small amount of the food allergen.

The proportion of the UK population with a true food allergy is approximately 1-2% of adults and 5-8% of children which equates to around 1.5 million in the UK. In addition, about 1:100 of the UK population has coeliac disease and needs to avoid gluten.

Common Food Allergens

Cereals containing gluten, (i.e., wheat, rye, barley, oats, spelt, kamut or their hybridized strains) and products thereof

Crustaceans and products thereof

Eggs and products thereof

Fish and products thereof

Peanuts and products thereof

Soybeans and products thereof

Milk and products thereof (including lactose)

Nuts i.e., almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, cashews, pecan nuts, Brazil nuts, pistachio nuts, macadamia nuts and Queensland nuts and products thereof

Celery and products thereof

Mustard and products thereof

Sesame seeds and products thereof

Sulphur dioxide and sulphites at concentrations of more than 10 mg/kg or 10 mg/litre expressed as SO2

Lupin and products thereof

Molluscs and products thereof.

People may report allergies to other foods not on the above list. Most common in the UK are kiwi, peas, other legumes (beans etc), other seeds and other fruits and vegetables. In some cases, people only need to avoid these when raw and can have them cooked.

Responsibilities

The Head Chef, or in their absence a member of their team, is responsible for ensuring that food containing allergens are clearly labelled and recorded.

The Head Chef will ensure that the kitchen has stock or can access the necessary stock ingredients to offer suitable alternatives for people with allergies, intolerances and coeliac disease. This includes wheat/gluten free bread and pasta, and alternatives to cow's milk and butter/margarine spreads (e.g. milk free spread). Soya, lactose free and oat milk are available upon request.

The Head Chef will ensure that allergen information is provided on all food/listed in the list of 'Common Food Allergens'. This information will be supplied in Allergy Data Sheets, which are kept on file in the kitchen.

Staff Training

All chefs must also attend the following mandatory courses:

Food Hygiene Certificate

CIEH Level 2 Food Safety

A recognised training course on Food Allergy Awareness 21.

All training records will be maintained by the Cluster Manager. The records will also show annual refresher training.

Casual service staff must be trained on food allergy awareness and in-house procedures by the Head Chef or designate before commencing work.

All dishes which are produced in-house will be from standard ingredients from our nominated suppliers.

Where allergenic ingredients are packaged openly/loosely, they are stored separately, in sealed containers, to reduce the risk of contamination.

Equipment/utensils used in the preparation of food for people with a food allergy are cleaned according to standard procedures which under normal circumstances should be sufficient. When cooking food for people with a food allergy or intolerance the chef will wear gloves and will wash their hands before and in between preparation tasks.

Where dishes contain common allergens, they are clearly labelled at the servery.

Food Service

Normal food handling procedures should apply (e.g. washing hands, wearing disposable gloves and aprons)

Staff are aware to keep serving utensils separate to avoid cross contamination

All tables are cleaned with an appropriate solution

Good communication

Staff are trained to escalate any concerns a student or visitor may have regarding a food allergy or intolerance to a line manager if they are unsure.

What should University students and visitors do?

As soon as you join the University, please pass any information regarding any known food allergies to the Catering Department.

Please advise the Head Chef & the Cluster Manager if you have a life-threatening food allergy. A meeting will be set up where all concerned attend to put in place a protocol. If you carry lifesaving medication like an EpiPen, you should always carry this medication with you when you are in the University.

At mealtimes, you should check the Data Allergy Sheet on display. If you are allergic to a food that is not on the regulatory list, it will not be included on the Data Allergy Sheet provided.

You should make yourself known to a member of the service staff to communicate clearly your food allergy. Information regarding your food allergy will be known to the Kitchen if you have passed on this information and have signed in for the meal.

For student breakfast and dinner, you should only eat the food on offer if you are content that the person you have informed about your food allergy has clearly understood everything you have communicated.