

University of Bristol Space Policy

This Space Policy has been drafted to bring the document into phase with the University Estates Strategy 2013-18. Recognising that the Estate is one of the University's key resources, and more specifically the provision of adequate space suitable to meet the variety of functions required is integral to the delivery of the University's Vision & Strategy.

Property costs, arising from the occupation of space is the second largest expense encountered by the University after staffing costs. As such it is critical that the University retains and enforces proper systems for the management, monitoring and allocation of the use of space:

1. All space is ultimately owned by the University, rather than individual departments. The University will manage the allocation of space through Policy & Resources Committee (UPARC) devolving the responsibility for space allocation in the first instance to the Capital Investment Programme Board (CIPB) and the Estates Office.
 - a. CIPB are the usual body to take bids for new space having consulted with the Estates Office on any project proposal, or to bid for funds in order to adapt space; or in the case of a Department disputing a decision made by the Estates Office the final arbiter of any such space allocation decision.
 - b. The Estates Office, through the Director of Estates and Space & Asset Management team will ensure the day to day principles of effective space management are upheld and any agreed space standards implemented.

2. Allocation of space does not imply permanence, but rather a commitment from the University based upon a continuing justification in consideration of University-wide space needs and in response to changing priorities.
 - a. CIPB will consider the grant of space to specific initiatives on a time limited basis. For example the expected research grant period, or grants of space will be managed by Space & Asset Management on a landlord / tenant basis with the occupants notified in advance of their requirement to advance a further business case for the continued activity.
 - b. Primarily this applies to grants of space outside of the core building/s for each School or Department.

3. All University land and property assets will be managed and maintained by the Estates Office, this includes the responsibility for all purchases, disposals and leasing transactions. Including lets of University space to third party organisations, spin-out companies and wholly owned subsidiary companies.
 - a. The Estates Office should be responsible for collection of all rental income, management of leases, rent reviews and general landlord and tenant issues.
 - b. Where appropriate departments may levy reasonable service charges arising from a tenancy in University managed space, these will be invoiced alongside rental invoicing by the Estates Office and transferred to back departments.
 - c. Spin-out, arm's length organisations and wholly owned subsidiary companies will be required to pay the full cost of alterations to leases and licences to occupy University space unless specific exclusions are sought via CIPB.
 - d. Circulation and balance spaces (toilets, showers, cleaner's cupboards and plant rooms) are the responsibility of the Estates Office and are not to be considered as part of the "useable" demise of a building occupant.

4. The Estates Strategy set out the parameters for future space requirements, providing planning over a five to ten year period. The adopted strategy sets out optimal locations, types of space likely to be required and is the umbrella for all policies relating to ensuring space is well maintained and fit for purpose.
 - a. To support the drafting of future Estates Policies the Estates Office will undertake investigations, audits and develop proposals that review the allocation of space.
 - b. A forward plan will be generated to take into account key performance indicator data, University Strategic Performance Indicators (SPIs) and benchmarked against comparator higher education institutions.

5. University space is of finite supply, and property is by its very nature inflexible around marginal provisions for new staff or other aspects of University function.
 - a. When recruiting staff consideration must be given to the accommodation requirement for new posts ahead of advertising for the post, with due consideration of the relevant applicable space standards.
 - b. Consideration of space constraints must be given during the formation of new programmes, or bids for additional research activity/equipment.
 - c. It must not be assumed that there is available resource surplus, managed centrally, for reallocation to meet needs.
 - d. Timescales for amending the estate must be factored into planning for changes to the organisation that will impact on the estate itself. The Estates Office will advise on those constraints where consulted.

6. Should under-utilisation of space be reported by the Estates Office there will be a need to produce a mutually agreeable plan for the occupying department to surrender spaces that can be meaningfully re-assigned to other University departments.
 - a. Spaces cannot be temporarily removed from departments, and surrender of piecemeal spaces will not be acceptable.
 - b. Where project work requires relocation of staff (decant) over a long period, space records will be amended to reflect the new occupation. The right for the department to re-occupy the space is agreed by the CIPB project approval that has led to any necessary decant of staff.
 - c. Vacant space will not be assigned on a first come, first served basis. Potential future uses need to be included within decision making processes, as such bids for space within the University may be held within the approval process whilst alternatives are assessed and appraised.

Policy Approved – UPARC September 2015

For Review – Alongside drafting of any new Estates Strategy from 2018