Royal Holloway University of London
What to do to when organising external catering services

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1. College policy on the provision of food
The College’s policy on catering is that all catering should be supplied in-house. This is to protect the College from legal claims for compensatory payments from anyone consuming food prepared, offered or sold by the College.

More detail on the content of the policy is contained in the College document: Royal Holloway Policy on organising external Catering Services.
2. What to do.

These are the steps you must follow if you or your department intend to supply food or use catering services that have not been approved by the College Campus Services or SU catering operations and are not provided by Campus Services or the SU. This includes instances where it may be necessary because you are servicing a venue remote from the campus eg. for a conference in another city.

Prior to food service:

- Identify if the department or society need to be registered under the Food Premises Registration Regulations 1991.
- Audit the potential food/catering supplier. See the notes in section 3.
- Contact the local authority which the food/catering supplier is registered with to determine whether they have any outstanding food safety notices or penalties and establish their food hygiene rating score.
- Carry out a “food safety risk assessment” of the type of operation and the place where the food is to be handled, prepared, stored and served.
- Make sure that the designated preparation and service areas have the appropriate equipment and materials for the safe handling of food eg hand wash facilities, the correct storage environment, calibrated temperature probes, sanitiser.
- If food is to be provided by an external caterer obtain a copy of their food safety risk assessment, and check that it is satisfactory and copies of any third party certifications to national standards that they hold.
- Establish if all the College staff who you intend to handle the food are fit to do so. This can be achieved by all food handling staff completing the staff health questionnaire “Staff food safety health questionnaire” and the “Food handler declaration”. Guidance on the required standards is given on the Food Standards Agency document, “Food handlers: fitness to work”
- Arrange for food hygiene instruction and training for staff who handle or serve the food commensurate with their duties and in-line with your legal obligations.

On the day:

- Keep records on who has supplied the food, the name, address and contact phone number.
- Check the deliveries of the food. Record the findings of all temperature checks.
- Clean the area/utensils/equipment where the food is to be stored, prepared or served with an appropriate food-grade cleaning agent before and after service.
- After service make sure that all food waste is disposed of in closed waste sacks in the appropriate waste bins.
- Take and record the temperature of the foods as identified in the risk assessment.
- Make sure that the temperature regulations are met at all times before, during and after the food service.
- Make sure that any food that requires temperature control for safety reasons and has been served on an ambient display is disposed of at the end of the exemption
time window allowed under the regulations, or it is returned to refrigerated storage until eaten or thrown away.

- Ensure waste is removed and stored in way that will ensure that pests are not encourage or future contamination of the area is not a risk.

**After the event:**

Keep all records for the food service for a period of six months. These records must include information on:

- the event organiser and service staff details
- where the food was purchased from or who supplied the food: including all certification information
- cleaning schedules
- food temperature data
- staff training

3. Auditing a supplier

It is part of the College's policy to complete an audit of all food suppliers. There are two forms that can be used to establish suitability to supply the College, these are on the web page with this document.

The “Mobile External Caterers Food Safety Questionnaire is a simple document that is used for suppliers who operate from a mobile premise, for example, a mobile ice cream van or a hog roast supplier; or for someone who may serve their ambient product on a table in a hall for example at the garden party.

The Royal Holloway Supplier Food Safety Questionnaire is more detailed document used for higher risk catering suppliers and larger companies offering a more comprehensive service in terms of catering operation and products supplied.

The process includes:

- sending the form to the supplying company;
- checking that all the relevant sections of the returned forms have been completed; query and clarify any points that are of concern
- contacting the company's local Environmental Health Department to confirm that the company is actually registered with them and to find out if there are any outstanding legal actions pending
- checking with the company to see if they have received accreditation from a third party auditing body such as the British Retail Consortium, British Sandwich Association, SALSA or Support Training Services.
- Confirm the “Food Standards Agency Food hygiene rating” for the supplier /company. Suppliers to the College must have a score of 4 or 5 to be approved.
Where a company has been audited against a recognised standard by a third party or it has a Food Standards Agency Food Hygiene Rating of 4 or 5 this is accepted as a means of satisfying the Colleges ‘due diligence’ defence in respect of their suitability to supply.

If a company has not got a third party auditor and does not complete a satisfactory audit form and confirmation of suitability to supply cannot be obtained from their Environmental Health Department then a physical audit of their operation is necessary to establish suitability to supply the College. This can be done by the departmental health and safety co-ordinator or other competent member of staff. Alternatively, a request for an audit by the Environmental Health Supervisor in Campus Services may be made and there will be a cross-departmental charge for time; or by using the College’s third party external auditor, Support and Training Services (STS) whose details can be obtained from the Environmental Health Supervisor.