Safety Note 53

Food Purchasing Guidance

This guidance should be followed when a small sandwich order is required for a small internal meeting (i.e. a research group team meeting) or for low risk food e.g. biscuits for meetings/training events, and it is intended to buy food at a local shop/supermarket. For all other events, one of the two contracted food suppliers or commercial services should be used – details can be found on Procurement’s website.

Planning

• Identify a potential source e.g. local supermarket.
• Check food safety 'Scores on the Doors' website (www.scoresonthedoors.org.uk)
• If the premises has a star rating of 3 or over - then you can use it. If it doesn't exist on the database or there is no information, please contact the University Food Safety Advisor (Tel extn. 8888).

Purchasing

• A member of staff should visit the premises to purchase the food. If they drive they must have motor insurance for business use.
• Any food which needs to be kept chilled (e.g. majority of sandwiches, buffet food items, cream cakes) must be transported back to the University in a cool bag/box.
• All other food should be transported in a way that prevents it being contaminated.
• Where possible a university purchasing card should be used.

Storage

• Once back at the University, if the food is not going to be used immediately, it should be kept below 8°C.
• Ideally if the food is going to be kept longer than an hour, it should be put into a refrigerator which is operating at 5°C or below.

Serving

• Food should not be opened and served until just before it is required.
• Anyone handling food must observe good food hygiene practices (training available from H&SS)
• High risk food should be disposed of within 2 hours of removal from temperature control.