UCQ UNIVERSITY CENTRE QUAYSIDE

Appendix D: Terrorist Threat Policy

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1.0 Policy statement

The safety of UCQ staff and students is of paramount importance to the organisation. Actual or threatened attacks by bombs, incendiary, biological or chemical devices pose a risk to all institutions open to the public. Attacks or threats may also be made by persons with a real or imagined grievance against the Centre or those who for various reasons wish to simply disrupt normal activities. The incidence of terrorist attack on non-political and non-military targets in the United Kingdom is relatively low, although the threat level can change quickly depending on national and international events. Lone threats by disaffected or disturbed individuals remain a constant and unpredictable possibility.

UCQ has developed this Terrorist Threat Policy to assist staff and students on what to do in case this occurs at the Centre. This policy should be used in conjunction with the Safeguarding policy. Following any terrorist threat, suspicious package incident or armed attacker event, appropriate safeguarding and wellbeing support will be made available to affected staff and students.

2.0 Contact

In case of emergency, staff and students must dial 999 immediately. External calls can be made from the UCQ landlines by first dialling '9' followed by the required phone number.

The Health and Safety Strategic Lead (Michelle Elliott – 03330048470/07759561342) should also be immediately notified of any suspected terror threats (both inside and outside of normal office hours).

3.0 Bomb threats

In the case of a bomb threat, staff and students must remain calm but act quickly. The following procedures for receiving a bomb threat have been adapted from the National Counter Terrorism Security Office bomb threat guidance: https://www.protectuk.police.uk/bomb-threats

It is important that potential recipients - either victims or third parties used to pass the message - have plans that include how the information is recorded, acted upon and passed to police.

3.1 The bomb threat message

Bomb threats containing accurate and precise information, and received well in advance of an actual attack, are rare occurrences. Precise motives for hoaxing are difficult to determine but may include revenge, extortion, a desire to impress, or a combination of these and other less understandable motives. The vast majority of cases are hoaxes and the intent is social engineering, to cause disruption, fear and/or inconvenience the victim.

3.2 Communication of the threat

A bomb threat can be communicated in a number of different ways. The threat is likely to be made in person over the telephone; however, it may also be a recorded message,

communicated in written form, delivered face-to-face or, increasingly, sent by email or social media (e.g. Twitter or Instagram, etc.). A threat may be communicated via a third-party, i.e. a person or organisation unrelated to the intended victim and identified only to pass the message.

3.3 Immediate steps if you receive a bomb threat communication

Any member of staff with a direct telephone line, mobile phone, computer or tablet etc., could conceivably receive a bomb threat. Such staff should, therefore, understand the actions required of them as the potential first response to a threat message.

If you receive a telephone threat:

- stay calm and listen carefully
- have immediate access to a checklist on key information that should be recorded (see the bomb threat checklist at the end of this document)
- if practical, keep the caller talking and alert a colleague to dial 999
- if displayed on your phone, note the number of the caller, otherwise, dial 1471 to obtain the number once the call has ended
- if the threat is a recorded message write down as much detail as possible
- If the threat is received via text message do not reply to, forward or delete the message. Note the number of the sender and follow police advice
- know who to contact in your organisation upon receipt of the threat, e.g. building security/senior manager. They will need to assess the threat

If the threat is delivered face-to-face:

- try to remember as many distinguishing characteristics of the threat-maker as possible

If discovered in a written note, letter or as graffiti:

- treat as police evidence and stop other people touching the item

If the threat is received via email or social media application:

- do not reply to, forward or delete the message
- note the sender's email address or username/user ID for social media applications
- preserve any relevant electronic records and do not delete messages, emails, attachments or other evidence. Where appropriate, UCQ's IT support arrangements should be used to assist with evidence preservation.

REMEMBER! Dial 999 and follow policy advice. Seek advice from the UCQ Health and Safety Strategic Lead as soon as possible.

3.4 Assessing the credibility of bomb threats

Evaluating the credibility of a threat is a critical task, particularly if the attack being threatened is imminent. This is a tactic used to place additional pressure on decision makers. Police will assess the threat at the earliest opportunity. When specific intelligence is known to police, advice will be issued accordingly; however, in the absence of detailed information, it will be necessary to consider a number of factors:

- is the threat part of a series? If so, what has happened elsewhere or previously?

- can the location of the claimed bomb(s) be known with precision? If so, is a bomb visible at the location identified?
- considering the hoaxer's desire to influence behaviour, is there any reason to believe their words?
- if the threat is imprecise, could an external evacuation inadvertently move people closer to the hazard?
- is a suspicious device visible?

3.5 Actions to consider: Evacuation, Invacuation, Checking for Suspicious Items

Responsibility for the initial decision making remains with the UCQ Health and Safety Strategic Lead. In their absence, responsibility will pass to the most senior member of staff available. The Health and Safety Strategic Lead must not delay the decision-making process whilst waiting for the arrival of police. Police will assess the credibility of the threat at the earliest opportunity. All bomb threats should be reported to the police and their subsequent advice followed accordingly.

Evacuation

Leaving the venue will be appropriate when directed by police and/or it is reasonable to assume the threat is credible, and when evacuation will move people towards a safer location.

It is important to appoint people, familiar with evacuation points and assembly (rendezvous) points, to act as marshals and assist with this procedure. At least two assembly points should be identified in opposing directions, and at least 500 metres from the suspicious item, incident or location. Where external evacuation is deemed necessary by the Health and Safety Strategic Lead (prior to Police advice or attendance), the UCQ evacuation procedure shall be followed.

The police will establish cordons depending upon the size of an identified suspect device. Always follow police directions and avoid assembly close to a police cordon.

Invacuation

There are occasions when it is safer to remain inside. Staying in the UCQ venue and moving people away from external windows/walls is relevant when it is known that a bomb is not within or immediately adjacent to your building.

If the suspect device is outside UCQ, people may be exposed to greater danger if the evacuation route inadvertently takes them past the device. A safer alternative may be the use of internal protected spaces.

Decision not to evacuate or invacuate

This will be reasonable and proportionate if, after an evaluation by the Health and Safety Strategic Lead, the threat is deemed implausible (e.g. a deliberate hoax). In such circumstances police may provide additional advice and guidance relating to other risk management options. It may be considered desirable to ask staff familiar with the venue to check their immediate surroundings to identify anything out of place, see search considerations below.

Checking your venue for suspicious items - Search considerations

Regular searches of UCQ, proportionate to the risks faced, will enhance a good security culture and reduce the risk of a suspicious item being placed or remaining unnoticed for long periods. Additionally, if a bomb threat is received and depending upon how credible it is, UCQ may decide to conduct a 'search' for suspicious items.

Staff are advised to use the HOT protocol when determining whether an item is suspicious:

H – is it deliberately hidden

O – is it obviously suspicious

T – is it typical of the bags in the setting.

Process for suspicious items – using 4Cs

Confirm using HOT protocol

Clear the area e.g.: 100m for rucksack; 200m car or wheelie bin; 400m for large vehicle, seek a concrete or brick shelter and keep away from glass

Communicate – don't use phones with 15m of the item

Control – access to area; ask eye witnesses to report what they have seen to the police.

Media and communication

All staff and students should not reveal details about specific incidents to the media or through social media without prior consultation with police. Do not provide details of the threat, the decision-making process relating to evacuation (internal or external) or why a decision not to evacuate was taken.

Releasing details of the circumstances may:

- be an objective of the hoaxer and provide them with a perceived credibility
- cause unnecessary alarm to others
- be used by those planning to target other venues
- elicit copycat incidents
- adversely affect the subsequent police investigation

3.6 After an event

Terrorist incidents, suspicious packages, bomb threats and false alarms can be distressing and may have a significant impact on the wellbeing of staff and students. In addition to pastoral services provided by UCQ, the national Victim Support Scheme (www.**victimsupport**.org.uk) offers counselling and advice to all victims of crime. Additional support links can be found at https://ucq.ac.uk/support-links/

Opportunities to learn from the incident should also be taken and the Health and Safety Strategic Lead should arrange to de-brief to determine what went well and what could be improved upon. Feedback from all affected members of staff is important.

3.7 Bomb threat checklist

Below is the form to use when receiving a threat. Remember to:

- Stay calm and listen
- Allow the caller to speak uninterrupted
- Obtain information about the caller
- Try to get caller to be precise about the location and timing of the bomb and whom they represent
- Make notes – write down every detail

Protective Marking: Restricted when Completed

Form 5474

ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN ON RECEIPT OF A BOMB THREAT

1 Remain calm and talk to the caller

2 Note the caller's number if displayed on your phone

3 If the threat has been sent via email or social media see appropriate section below

4 If you are able to, record the call

5 Write down the exact wording of the threat:

When Where What How Who Why Time

ASK THESE QUESTIONS & RECORD ANSWERS AS ACCURATELY AS POSSIBLE:

1. Where exactly is the bomb right now?	
2. When is it going to explode?	
3. What does it look like?	
4. What does the bomb contain?	
5. How will it be detonated?	
6. Did you place the bomb? If not you, who did?	
7. What is your name?	
8. What is your address?	
9. What is your telephone number?	
10. Do you represent a group or are you acting alone?	
11. Why have you placed the bomb?	
Record time call completed:	

4.0 Suspicious mail packages and letters

Experience confirms that some devices are sent by post or courier and are designed to detonate or ignite when opened. The effects may be localised but could result in the death or serious injury of persons in the immediate vicinity of the device, including anyone attempting to open the package.

More recently there have been instances of envelopes or parcels containing harmful biological or chemical substances intended to contaminate recipients through inhalation or contact with skin or hoax substances intended to cause fear. As these substances cannot be identified until analysed, they must be treated as potentially dangerous and should not be touched under any circumstances.

Envelopes, parcels and padded jiffy bags have all been used to contain devices.

4.1 What to look for

Some things can help to identify a suspicious package and members of staff whose duties include opening mail should know these signs especially if the unit or department is engaged in sensitive work.

- The items may have been delivered by hand or posted from an unusual place.
- It may display poor or strange handwriting.
- There may be unusual smell such as marzipan or machine oil.
- Wiring or tinfoil may have been exposed by bad packaging.
- It may be unusually heavy, or its weight may be badly distributed.
- There may be excessive wrapping, or the contents may feel rigid.
- It may be wrongly addressed or come from an unexpected source.
- There may be too many postage stamps for the size of the package.
- There may be traces of powder, or the envelope may feel as though it contains such a substance.

There are only some of the indicators - in all cases if there is any doubt the item should be left alone, and the following action taken.

4.2 What to do

If a package or letter has passed through a postal or courier services it will have been subjected to fairly rough handling and should not therefore pose a threat unless opened or damaged. If it is intact:

- Leave it alone
- Leave the room immediately ensuring that everyone else does so and clear the immediate vicinity such as an adjoining room so that no one has to pass through.
- Lock the door(s) to prevent access by others and retain the keys.
- Contact the Health and Safety Strategic Lead: Michelle Elliott (03330048470/07759561342)
- Whether or not the above have been contacted telephone the police, dial 999 (or 9 then 999 for an outside line from a UK landline) and give precise details of the location remembering that you will be connected to a call centre and the operator may be unfamiliar with the UCQ layout

- Notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible (if not already contacted)
- The Health and Safety Strategic Lead should take control of the situation until the arrival of police to ensure that no one is permitted to re-enter the closed area.

4.3 Evacuating the building

If the letter or package has been damaged and there is concern as to its content, where for example there are exposed wires or some seepage of powder, safety is the chief consideration and UCQ fire evacuation procedures should be implemented by the Health and Safety Strategic Lead.

5.0 Armed attacker: RUN, HIDE, TELL

If intruders with weapons enter UCQ our aim is to maintain personal safety. There are three actions that you must consider following the Run, Hide and Tell advice provided by counter-terrorism:

5.1 RUN

- Know where you are and the location of evacuation routes. Those with you may not know – you may need to lead them out.
- Cover, remove or hide brightly coloured clothing and bags
- If you think it is safe to do so or if directed by security or Police, evacuate the area immediately and take as many people with you as possible. Make the decision quickly and remember the closest exit may not be the safe route – think before you move
- Evacuate regardless of whether others follow or not
- Do not bunch together. Although it may be tempting to do so, large groups of people present an easier target
- Leave your belongings behind
- Help other escape, if possible
- Prevent individuals from entering an area where an attacker may be
- Close any doors behind you. Do not lock them – colleagues may be behind you
- Help those with disabilities by assisting them to the nearest exit, safe area, or into an adjoining building
- Do not run across open spaces
- Follow instructions that the Police or security give you
- You will probably be told to go as far away as possible from the location. Do as you are requested and do not return until you are given permission to do so, either by checking the UCQ website or you receive a specific message from UCQ

5.2 HIDE

- Only if you cannot exit safely, seek shelter in a room where doors can be locked or barricaded securely
- Close and lock windows, lower the blinds
- Cover the glass in the door, if possible
- Block the door with furniture
- Turn off the lights
- Remain out of sight of the door(s) and window(s) – if possible, lie on the floor and in the corners of rooms rather than behind furniture in the middle of the room

- **Remain quiet and make sure phones are set to 'silent' – this is vitally important**
- Turn off any other source of noise (i.e., radios, televisions)
- Try not to panic and wait until you have clear instructions to move before doing so. You may have to wait for a considerable time
- Do not be tempted to move unless you are absolutely sure that it is all clear. An attacker may attempt to trick you into giving away your location

5.3 TELL

- Know the correct building names, room numbers and addresses
- One person in the room should call 999, advising them of your location and the number of people in the room
- Provide as much detail about the intruder as possible
- Follow instructions of the 999 Operator via phone
- If you cannot speak leave the line open so the 999 Operator can hear what is going on in the room
- Do not leave the room unless advised to do so by the 999 Operator via phone
- If the fire alarm sounds, stay where you are unless you smell smoke or are advised to leave by the 999 Operator via phone

5.4 When Police arrive

- Remain calm, and follow officers' instructions
- Put down any items in your hands (phones, bags, jackets)
- Immediately raise hands and spread fingers
- Keep hands visible at all times
- Avoid making quick movements towards officers such as holding on to them for safety
- Avoid pointing, screaming and shouting
- Do not stop to ask officers for help or direction when evacuating, proceed in the direction from which officers are entering the building
- If not directed – find a safe location out of sight of the building and behind solid cover. Walls and vehicle engine blocks are solid cover – hedges, fences and car doors are not.
- Once you have reached a safe location or an assembly point, you may be held in that area by the Police until the situation is under control, and all witnesses have been identified and questioned. Do not leave until told to do so.

6. Initial equalities impact assessment

Department: All	**Completed by:** Ben Devine, Health and Safety Officer	**Date of initial assessment:** 11/01/2022 Reviewed 3 September 2026
Area to be assessed:	HS-001 Appendix D – Terrorist Threat Policy	
Existing or new policy/procedure:	Existing	
What evidence has been used to inform the assessment and policy? (please list only)		
External guidance and requirements: ➢ Gov.uk ➢ https://www.protectuk.police.uk/ **Internal guidance and requirements:** ➢ Consultation between Health and Safety Officer and Health and Safety Strategic Lead		

1. Describe the aims, objectives or purpose of the policy/procedure		Guidance to ensure that all staff are aware of procedure in the event of bomb threat or other terrorist threat.		
2. Which stakeholders/groups are intended to benefit from this policy/procedure?		All stakeholders		
The Equality Act 2010 requires public bodies to have 'due regard' to the need to:- (1) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization (2) Advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and (3) Foster good relations between different groups		**3. Could the policy/procedure have a disproportionately negative effect impact in terms of the aims set out in (1) to (3) of the Act on any of the protected characteristics?:-** **High** **Medium** **Low** **No effect**	**4. Briefly explain how the policy/procedure furthers or prevents the aims set out in (1) to (3).**	**5. If there is a disproportionately negative impact on any protected characteristics, can it be justified on the grounds of promoting equality or any other reason? If yes, please explain.**
Protected characteristics	**Age**	No effect	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Disability	No effect	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Gender	No effect	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Gender reassignment	No effect	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Marriage and Civil Partnership	No effect	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Pregnancy and Maternity	No effect	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Race	No effect	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Religion or Belief	No effect	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Sexual Orientation	No effect	Not applicable	Not applicable

6. Has there been any consultation/engagement with the appropriate protected characteristics?		Not applicable as no PC impact identified
7. What action(s) will you take to reduce any disproportionately negative impact, if any?		None required
8. Based on the information in sections 1 to 7, should this policy/procedure proceed to Full Impact Assessment? (recommended if one or more 'High' under section 2)		No
Assessor signature:	**Approved by:** **Michelle Elliott**	**Date approved:** 11/01/2022