

Liverpool Hope University
Health and Safety

Fire Safety of Motorised Wheelchair Attachments – Guidance Note

1. Purpose

This guidance note outlines the fire safety considerations associated with the use of motorised wheelchair attachments (e.g. power assist devices and clip-on drive units) at Liverpool Hope University and is intended to support safe use, charging, and storage of such devices on campus.

*This guidance does not apply to e-scooters, e-bikes or e-hoverboards, which are not permitted to be charged on campus.

2. Background

Motorised attachments for wheelchairs are increasingly common and can improve independence for wheelchair users. These devices use lithium-ion batteries, which can present fire risks if not properly maintained or charged. The University is committed to supporting accessibility while maintaining a safe environment for all users.

3. Fire Safety Considerations

3.1 Battery Type and Quality

Most attachments use lithium-ion batteries. These are generally safe when sourced from reputable suppliers and fitted with integrated Battery Management Systems (BMS). Only quality equipment with appropriate CE or UKCA markings and evidence of compliance with safety standards (UN 38.3, BS EN 62133) should be used on campus.

3.2 Charging Practices

- Always use the manufacturer-provided charger.
- Charging should be undertaken in well-ventilated areas away from combustible materials where possible.
- Do not store or charge devices on escape routes, communal areas, or near flammable materials.
- Charging points must be kept clear of obstruction and allow safe evacuation if necessary.

3.3 Storage and Handling

- Store devices and batteries away from heat sources, direct sunlight, or moisture.
- Any device showing signs of damage (e.g. swelling, overheating, leaking) must not be used/charged and reported to Campus Services immediately.

3.4 Inspection and Maintenance

- Regular user checks are encouraged.
- Follow the manufactures guidance on battery inspection and maintenance.

3.5 Institutional Risk Management

- Staff or students using powered mobility devices are encouraged to inform Student Life and the Health and Safety Advisor to ensure reasonable adjustments are supported and fire safety considerations are assessed.
- Devices should not obstruct corridors, access routes, or fire exits.
- Where required, Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) will be created in collaboration with the user.

4. Summary

Motorised wheelchair attachments are welcome at Liverpool Hope University, and when used consistent with manufacturer instructions and this guidance, are considered safe, however *any usage and introduction to the University must be consulted with the University Health and Safety Advisor to assess the attachment equipment before use.*

For further information or support, please contact:

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