

Scent-Free Guidelines

University of Windsor Statement on the Use of Scented Products

The University of Windsor recognizes the need to maintain an indoor environment that supports the University community at work, study and at play. While the issue regarding the health effects of perfumes and other scented products in internal environments and workplaces may be somewhat controversial, listed below are some of the symptoms which have been reported as adversely affecting a person's health due to scented products:

- headaches
- dizziness, light-headedness
- nausea
- fatigue
- weakness
- insomnia
- malaise
- confusion
- loss of appetite
- depression
- anxiety
- numbness
- upper respiratory symptoms
- shortness of breath
- difficulty with concentration
- skin irritation

The University of Windsor represents all of its community including students, faculty and staff in its support of the efforts to create a scent-free University. In consideration of the difficulties that exposure to these products cause sensitive individuals, the University encourages faculty, staff, students and visitors to avoid the use of scented personal care products.

Guidelines for Employees

If you are an employee who suffers reactions to scented products and there is a scent in your surroundings that is causing you to have a reaction, you should do the following:

The direct approach – If the scent is being worn by someone in your office and you know the person well, you could approach them directly. Explain what the problem is—what you think you are reacting to and explain the kind of reaction(s) the fragrance triggers.

- Ask him or her to visit this website <http://www.uwindsor.ca/equity> for more information.
- Ask your coworker to consider switching to unscented products.

The indirect approach – If you feel that direct contact with the scent would worsen your reaction or if you don't feel comfortable approaching the person wearing the scent, speak to your supervisor. If necessary, ask your supervisor to relocate you to another area until the scent is gone. If you become ill, follow the normal procedures for reporting illness at work. If the situation does not improve, seek further advice by emailing the contact on this website.

If you have sensitivities towards scents and start working in a new department, or you have recently developed an adverse reaction to fragrance:

- Tell your supervisor and co-workers.
- Explain what causes your reactions and what kind of problems you are experiencing. Ask for their assistance. Offer more information by directing them to this website: www.uwindsor.ca/equity
- Ask your supervisor to alert those people responsible for facilities management in your building so they can warn you when activities such as painting, varnishing, fumigating or carpet cleaning are scheduled.

If you are an employee who is wearing a scented product(s) and you are approached by another employee or your supervisor:

- Do not take the request to refrain from using scented products as a personal affront — this is about the impact of chemicals on people, not about you.
- Work with others to find out what product or products are causing the reaction.
- Educate yourself about the need for a scent-free program.
- Become part of the solution and switch to fragrance-free products.

Whenever discussing this issue please remember not to be confrontational or hostile; and focus on the fact that education is key