

Cyclist safety

Many staff and students cycle to and from campus, and on local roads. It's a healthy, cheap and environmentally friendly way of getting around – but are you safe?

On one dark night in November, University Security stopped over 100 cyclists on campus who were using their bikes without any lights. With dark clothes and no reflective gear, many were almost invisible to other road users, including car drivers and pedestrians.

So we'd like to encourage University cyclists to stay safe by following the advice given here. At the same time, drivers share the same roads, we can all reduce the risk of accidents by acting responsibly.

Be seen and heard

Lights – You won't be seen unless you have lights. It is a legal requirement in the UK to show a white front light and a red rear one when using your bike at night. You must also have a red rear reflector and amber pedal



reflectors. Quick flashing LEDs are best for being seen - they really work!

Reflective clothing – A reflective vest or jacket is best at night and fluorescent yellow or orange materials in the day. Even if it's not dark, reflective clothing will help make you

visible in the rain and in overcast conditions. From a car driver's viewpoint, at night a reflective band on a moving part of your anatomy (e.g. ankle) works better than a Sam Browne belt. A reflective rucksack cover is very effective from the rear.

Bell – Simple, low cost and essential for cycling round campus. Used with consideration, it warns pedestrians that you are coming, and gives them time to move to the side.

Helmet – “if you like your face the way it is wear a helmet”! A helmet won't save you in a collision, but it may help protect you against head injury in a low speed accident on campus.

Hi-Viz vests are available from Whiteknights House Reception, cost £2.

Rules of the road

Show drivers what you plan to do in plenty of time. Always look and signal before you start, stop or turn. Make eye contact with drivers and let them know you've seen them. Don't weave between lanes or change direction suddenly without signalling.

On campus paths, watch out for people who might find it difficult to move out of your way, such as older people, children and people with disabilities.

Use your bell to let people know you're there.

Be prepared to slow down or stop if necessary.

Cyclists and the law

Remember it's against the law for cyclists to:

- jump red lights, including lights at pedestrian crossings;
- cycle on pavements;
- cycle the wrong way up a one way street;
- ride across pedestrian crossings, unless it's a toucan crossing with a sign saying that cyclists can do so.

Drivers

Give cyclists plenty of room. They may need to move out suddenly, especially in windy weather and on bad road surfaces. Potholes and cracks are a big obstacle for cyclists, who have to go round them.

When you overtake cyclists, give them as much room as you would give a car. When you turn left, watch for cyclists on the inside.

Look behind you for cyclists before opening your door.

When cyclists turn right, you may have to wait behind them – just as you would for a car. Don't squeeze past or get impatient.

Make an extra check for cyclists at junctions and roundabouts.

Dip your headlights if a cyclist is coming the other way so you don't dazzle them.

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