

Drones/Small unmanned aircraft systems - Guidance for use

Small unmanned Aircraft Systems (SUAS) are a new and evolutionary component of the aviation system, offering several new and exciting opportunities, as well as a number of challenges. Unmanned aircraft come in a variety of shapes and sizes, ranging from small handheld types up to large aircraft, potentially a similar size to airliners and, just like manned aircraft, they may be of a fixed wing design, rotary winged, or a combination of both.

Unmanned Aircraft may also be referred to as: * Drones * Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) * Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) * Model Aircraft * Radio Controlled Aircraft Regardless of the name used, they all share the common characteristic that the person responsible for piloting the aircraft is not on-board it. Just like any other aircraft however, an unmanned aircraft must always be flown in a safe manner, both with respect to other aircraft in the air and also to people and properties on the ground.

This guidance has been provided to signpost BU staff and students who operate drones within the university in relation to any work related activities or study undertaken by students.

Under new legislation announced on the 22 July 2017 drones will have to be registered and users will have to sit safety awareness tests under [new rules to better regulate their growing use](#).

The proposed bill - to be published in spring 2018 - would ensure that owners of drones weighing more than 250g would need to register, sit a test and also have to register details of their drones to improve accountability and encourage owners to act responsibly.

Owners/Users will be able to register online or through apps, under plans being explored by the government. The introduction of this registration follows safety research that concluded drones could damage the windscreens of helicopters.

In addition, the new drone safety awareness test means owners will have to prove that they understand UK safety, security and privacy regulations. This will ensure all safely operate drones and follow the '[Drone Code](#)' issued by the government.

The changing legislative and tightening of the rules around drone operations is still evolving and will be further updated in spring 2018.

Following consultation across several faculties and users of drones at BU, and the need to ensure the university was/is complying with current legislation a '[Drone Operations Manual](#)' has been produced.

All staff and students who intend to fly a drone must ensure that they comply with this document.

Useful links

- [BU SUAS/Drone Operations Manual](#)
- [CAA Commercial Operations Authority License](#)
- [Dronesafe.uk](#)
- [Daily Telegraph News item Nov 2017](#)
- [BBC News item Nov 2017](#)