Why is this important?

Food safety legislation states that food businesses should put in place a food safety management system, allowing food safety risks and hazards to be identified and have appropriate controls put in place to address these hazards.

What to do?

HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point) is a system that helps food business operators look at how they handle food and introduces procedures to make sure the food produced is safe to eat.

As part of routine inspections, an enforcement officer will check that the business has an appropriate HACCP-based food safety management system in place and that this system is being followed.

It is essential that the practices detailed in a HACCP plan are followed whilst all catering practices are taking place, ranging from initial food storage to cooking to cooling after cooking. This is essential as the HACCP plan has been written specifically for the catering practices taking place at Durham University, and therefore the appropriate hazards have been considered.

If practices were to be altered, then this would mean that other hazards may well need to be considered and documented in order for the HACCP system to be valid, which is not likely to happen.

When external bodies, for example Environmental Health Officers, visit the premises, they have the power to take enforcement action if practices taking place do not reflect those documented in the HACCP documentation. Again, it is therefore essential that the practices taking place follow those of the HACCP plan.

Check your understanding by:

What does 'HACCP' stand for?

Who might need to look at HACCP documentation?

Can enforcement action be taken if there is a lack of compliance with the HACCP documentation?

You can tell it's correct if:

There is a fully documented haccp system in place, giving a full, accurate representation of the catering operation taking place.

This haccp documentation is being followed correctly by all chefs and food assistants in carrying out their work.

Hints and tips:

Use the 'HACCP Rules' tables available, as these will provide an easy way to see the details of the HACCP system and a simple way to follow it. These can be found earlier in this pack.