

University of Roehampton

Fire Safety Policy

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University of Roehampton

Fire Safety Policy

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1. Statement of Intent

- 1.1 This University of Roehampton Fire Safety Policy establishes the principles and framework by which fire safety will be governed, managed and continually improved. It states the University's commitment to ensure the University's campus and other locations under its control are safe places for working, living, studying and visiting.

This policy outlines the responsibilities, arrangements, controls and other provisions designed to ensure that fire safety is efficiently and effectively managed, and meets the requirements of relevant legislation and standards. It is the framework for the Fire Risk Management System and is supported by a separate collection of fire safety procedures.

- 1.2 The University will, so far as reasonably practicable:
- Safeguard all relevant persons from death, injury and ill health from fire and smoke
 - Minimise the risk of fire and limit the spread of fire and smoke if it occurs
 - Minimise the potential for fire to disrupt teaching and routine University business, to destroy or damage unique research materials, buildings, equipment, valuable works held by the University, and harm to the environment
 - Comply with the requirements of legislation and codes of practice relating to fire and fire safety (see 4.2 below)

2. Application

- 2.1 This policy applies to all relevant persons on or in the vicinity of University premises - employees, including temporary and contract workers, partner organisations, students, visitors and the public.
- 2.2 This policy is overseen by the Health & Safety Office who will review the policy at least annually, in response to legislative or procedural change, or following any significant fire event or near miss affecting the University campus.

3. Aims & Objectives

The aims and objectives of the policy are to:

- Define fire safety duty holders and responsibilities of University staff
- Achieve and maintain compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and related legislation (see 4.2 below)

- Adequately control and mitigate the risk of fires and explosions, seeking to ensure the University's buildings and equipment are maintained in a safe condition, and that activities and events are managed safely
- Seek to ensure building projects and refurbishments are planned and managed in a way that ensures conformity with fire safety and building safety legislation
- Seek to ensure an effective response to fire emergencies on the University campus with proportionate resources to manage the emergency, including:
 - identifying the cause of fire alarm activations
 - first response firefighting by trained staff
 - evacuation supervision and facilitating the evacuation of anyone who needs assistance to leave a building in an emergency
 - liaison with the Fire and Rescue Service and other emergency services
- Reduce the number of unwanted fire alarms generated in University premises by:
 - Optimising fire detection and alarm systems
 - Maintaining automatic fire detection and alarm systems in effective working order
 - Training and information for staff and students to reduce activities and behaviours that lead to unwanted fire alarms
 - Using appropriate disciplinary procedures for dealing with those who interfere with fire detection and alarm systems or behave in a manner that causes unwanted fire alarms
- Adopt a clear and consistent approach to fire safety and communication about fire safety matters within the University
- Promote a proactive and effective fire safety culture as part of the fire risk management system

This Fire Safety Policy applies to all premises and activities under the University's control. It establishes the framework by which the University intends to meet its fire safety duties. Where properties (or any part thereof) do not fall under direct University control, this policy does not apply to the owners/managers of those properties, except to the extent that the University obtains assurance from the management of these properties that similar standards are maintained.

4. Legislation

- 4.1 Fire safety is a priority for the University, and it will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the risk from fire will be well-managed in compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- 4.2 The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (also known as the Fire Safety Order, or FSO) is the primary fire safety legislation in England and Wales. The FSO focuses on fire prevention and protection in all non-domestic premises, the common areas and flat entrance doors in domestic premises, external wall

systems, and applies to all workplaces, teaching spaces, common areas of residences, indoor and outdoor events at the University. It defines general fire precautions and fire safety duties of the Responsible Person to protect anyone who may be lawfully on the University's premises, and anyone in the vicinity of University premises who may be at risk in the event of a fire or explosion.

4.3 Other legislation relevant to this policy:

Fire Safety Act 2021

Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

Building Safety Act 2022

Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

The Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002

The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015

The Building Regulations 2010 Approved Document B Vols 1 and 2

Equality Act 2010

Housing Act 2004, with regard to fire safety

5. Responsibilities

- 5.1 The Responsible Person under the FSO is the employer (the University). Executive responsibility for the implementation of this policy and functions related to the statutory fire safety requirements¹ of the FSO are managed by the Vice Chancellor (on behalf of the University) and are duly delegated to the Chief Operating Officer who has appointed the Director of Estates and Campus Services, the Associate Director of Health and Safety, and the Fire, Health and Safety Adviser as the 'competent persons' to assist in undertaking preventive and protective fire safety measures.
- 5.2 Fire safety responsibilities are described in the Fire Safety Procedure 00032 - Fire Safety Roles and Responsibilities.
- 5.3 The Associate Director of Health and Safety and the Fire, Health and Safety Advisor monitor governance of fire safety compliance at the University.

¹ Duties include taking general fire precautions; making suitable fire safety arrangements; fire risk assessment; regular inspection and maintenance of fire protective construction, systems and equipment; provision of training and information; co-operation and co-ordination between duty holders; adequate fire prevention and detection; maintaining means of escape and exits; consideration of risks to young persons and people with disabilities; measures to reduce or eliminate risks from dangerous substances; emergency measures; procedures for serious and imminent danger and danger areas; provision of access and water supplies for the Fire and Rescue Service.

- 5.4 Regular meetings take place between the Health and Safety Office, Senior Leadership and other stakeholders to review higher level fire safety actions and progress with fire safety improvement projects, and to facilitate continuous improvement.
- 5.5 Everyone employed by the University, including contractors, has a general duty to take reasonable care for the safety of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts or omissions concerning fire safety, and must co-operate with the University concerning any duty or requirement made under the FSO.
- 5.6 The Chair of the University Health, Safety and Welfare Committee is responsible for ensuring that fire safety is adequately considered by the Committee.
- 5.7 Heads of Professional Services Departments and Deans are responsible for promoting fire safety and for ensuring that sufficient fire wardens are appointed as required by this policy. The Health and Safety Office should be consulted over the appointment and training of fire wardens.
- 5.8 Fire wardens. As a general rule for smaller buildings there should be a minimum of two or three trained fire wardens per floor and preferably more to provide resilience in the event of absences. In large or complex buildings, or where there is a higher risk of fire, more fire wardens will be necessary to ensure that evacuations can be managed safely, and the fire wardens can carry out their duties safely. All Senior staff and line managers are expected to be trained as fire wardens.
- 5.9 In shared occupancy buildings i.e. those occupied by more than one Academic or Professional Services department, the senior staff of those departments are responsible for co-operation and co-ordination of fire safety in those buildings.
- 5.10 All employees with line management responsibility must ensure that their direct reports have received instruction on the fire evacuation procedure for their workspace, that they have completed their mandatory fire safety training, fire warden training for those with that duty, that local fire safety procedures and precautions are followed, and that any fire safety concerns are reported promptly to the appropriate team.
- 5.11 All employees must ensure that they understand the fire evacuation procedure for their workspace, complete their mandatory fire safety training, comply with local fire safety procedures and precautions, and report any concerns about fire safety to their line manager who will ensure that the matter is referred to the appropriate team.
- 5.12 Individual employees are accountable for their actions and omissions in relation to fire safety. Failure to observe this policy and the supporting procedures may lead to investigation and formal sanction up to, and including, dismissal dependent upon circumstances.

6. Fire Risk Assessment

- 6.1 The University Health and Safety Office is responsible for ensuring that suitable and sufficient fire risk assessments are undertaken for all occupied premises at the University of Roehampton. Current fire risk assessment reports are held by the Health and Safety Office.
- 6.2 Fire risk assessments are carried out by a competent and third-party accredited fire risk consultant with suitable skills, knowledge and experience. The fire risk assessments must be maintained up-to-date with actions taken to address deficiencies (where applicable), and shall be appropriately reviewed or renewed:
- At least annually for all Halls of Residence, licensed premises, catering facilities, workshops and places where dangerous substances² are used or stored
 - Biennially in respect of offices and teaching spaces
 - Following a fire, or fire alarm activation where evacuation was impeded or ineffective, e.g. an obstructed exit route or defective equipment
 - In the course of any significant building refurbishment, extension, remodeling or change of use

7. Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres

- 7.1 Workplaces, teaching spaces and activities³ to which the provisions of the Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002 apply must be assessed for fire risk and other risks in accordance with the current legislation. Advice from the Health and Safety Office must be obtained.
- 7.2 Individual departments are responsible for maintaining a register of dangerous substances used and stored by the department. A copy of the register must be provided to the University Health and Safety Office for inclusion in the appropriate building emergency information pack.

8. Inspection, maintenance and testing

² Dangerous substances include any substances used or stored at the premises that could, if not properly controlled, cause harm to people as a result of a fire or explosion. They can be found in nearly all workplaces and include such items as solvents, paints, varnishes, flammable gases, such as liquid petroleum gas (LPG), dusts from machining and sanding operations and dusts from foodstuffs.

³ This includes all workshops and trade yards at the University.

- 8.1 All fire safety systems and equipment must be tested and maintained in compliance with the requirements of legislation and recognised Codes of Practice, with all remedial work completed within a reasonable time. It is the responsibility of Estates and Campus Services, Campus Security, and Library, Technology & Media Services for the inspection, maintenance, testing, fault identification and remedial works, asset management and record keeping required of fire safety-related systems, equipment and passive fire protection including but not limited to:
- *fire, heat and smoke detection;*
 - *fire alarm and alert systems;*
 - *emergency lighting systems;*
 - *fire extinguishers and fire blankets;*
 - *fixed fire suppression systems;*
 - *fire doors and their ironmongery and self-closers;*
 - *fire escape routes;*
 - *fire resisting construction and fire separation;*
 - *fire dampers;*
 - *fire curtains;*
 - *automatic and manual opening smoke ventilation;*
 - *lightning protection systems;*
 - *electrical and gas appliances and systems;*
 - *dry and wet risers;*
 - *private fire hydrants and firefighting water supplies;*
 - *maintenance of access provision for fire appliances and firefighters;*
 - *refuge point electronic voice communications systems;*
 - *fire safety signs; and*
 - *arranging service contractor visits.*
- 8.2 All inspection, maintenance, testing, servicing and compliance records must be retained by the relevant operational department and will be produced when or if required by the Health and Safety Office, internal or external auditors, insurance risk assessors, fire risk assessors and regulatory authorities.
- 8.3 The Health and Safety Office is responsible for procuring, servicing and maintenance of the evacuation aids, and fire safety audits, reviews and fire risk assessments.
- 8.4 Recorded inspections of all fire escape routes and common areas should be completed at least weekly in all campus buildings by trained staff. Deficiencies should be identified and rectified within a reasonable time.
- 8.5 Staff and students are encouraged to immediately report fire safety faults or concerns; for example, missing or damaged fire extinguishers, alarms that are difficult to hear, obstructed fire escape routes, damaged fire doors and self-closers, and behaviours likely to increase fire risk to the Estates and Campus Services Service Desk or to Security Emergency if there is imminent danger.

9. New buildings and alterations

- 9.1 When new buildings or alterations to existing buildings are being planned, the project manager shall ensure that the proposed construction, contractors, and materials meet the requirements of current fire safety and health and safety legislation and codes of practice, current Building Regulations, Building Safety Act, and that the project includes provision for any necessary fire engineering consultancy, fire risk assessments or reviews. The Health and Safety Office must be consulted at an early stage in the project planning for new buildings and alterations, including remodeling, refurbishment and change of use of existing buildings or rooms within them.

Contractors will be managed and monitored by the University Project Manager who shall apply for any necessary permits to work, and follow the University's Contractor Code of Practice. Contractors shall immediately notify the project manager of any interference with passive and active fire protection and inform the Head of Security of any requirement to interfere with or isolate smoke and heat detection, fire protection or fire suppression systems.

Hot work must be managed safely and require specific daily hot work permits, this applies to both internal operatives and external contractors. (*refer to the Hot Works Procedure 00039*)

- 9.2 Following the completion or handover of new buildings and refurbishments, the Project Manager shall ensure all necessary and relevant O&M, Health & Safety File, Regulation 38 Fire Safety Information, testing and commissioning certificates, Building Control and any other regulatory authority approvals are obtained and made available to relevant persons including the Health and Safety Team and those responsible for maintaining fire and other safety systems. Asset management and suitable ongoing compliance testing, servicing, and planned maintenance programmes shall be implemented for all new fire and safety related installations, equipment, and systems. All records and building fire safety information sources must be kept complete and up to date.

10. Fire alarms and evacuations

- 10.1 Campus Security personnel are the first responders to fire alarm activations and will follow the agreed call-out protocol (*refer to Fire Safety Procedure 00033 - Fire Brigade Call-out Protocol*) in respect of summoning the London Fire Brigade.
- 10.2 Campus Security personnel attending fire alarm activations shall exercise management and control of people evacuating from the building, directing them

toward the fire assembly point⁴, ensuring safety by keeping people away from traffic routes, supporting the firefighters by keeping people away from fire appliances and other fire service vehicles and ensuring that people do not re-enter the building until it has been verified as safe to do so (*refer to Fire Safety Procedure 00034 - Security Duties for Fire Alarm and Fire Event Response*).

- 10.3 If a fire alarm activates or if a fire is discovered, fire wardens within the building shall instruct occupants to evacuate promptly, without putting themselves at risk sweep their designated areas including rooms where evacuation may be delayed and assist persons who cannot evacuate unaided to reach a refuge point. After their sweep fire wardens should report any concerns to Security personnel or to the person taking charge of the evacuation. Outside the building, fire wardens shall direct occupants to the designated fire assembly point and await further instructions from the person taking charge of the emergency response.
- 10.4 All staff shall evacuate promptly in the event of a fire alarm, as well as supervise any students or visitors in their presence and direct them to the designated fire assembly point. Failure to evacuate during a continuous fire alarm may result in disciplinary proceedings.
- 10.5 In the event that the Fire Brigade was not called in response to the fire alarm activation, the decision to allow staff to re-enter will be taken by the senior Security staff present.

11. Fire drills

- 11.1 The University shall carry out at least one fire evacuation drill per building each year, normally at the beginning of the new academic year, to familiarise staff and students with the fire evacuation procedures. (*refer to the Fire Drill Procedure 00038*)
- 11.2 Additional fire evacuation drills may be carried out at the discretion of the University Health and Safety Office, for example following any change to evacuation procedures or to repeat an unsatisfactory drill.
- 11.3 The responsibility for selecting the timing and dates for a fire drill is that of the Health and Safety Office which may choose, but is not obliged, to consult the Directors or Heads of Departments, Deans, and other relevant staff, who may be affected by the fire drill.

⁴ The Health and Safety Office establishes the location, identification and communication of fire assembly points.

- 11.4 Staff and Students who hold a PEEP may be informed of planned fire drills. They may be invited to take part in the drill to exercise the use of the refuge points and demonstrate communication protocols.
- 11.5 Each fire drill will be carried out by Campus Security and observed by a member of staff from the Health and Safety Office who will create a report to record drill performance and any deficiencies or lessons learned from the drill. Reports will be shared with relevant staff.

12. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)

- 12.1 The University must consider the safe evacuation of all relevant persons who may need assistance to evacuate from a building during an emergency. The University must provide assistance, communications, equipment, places of relative safety, and make reasonable adjustments to ensure their safe evacuation. Anyone with a permanent or temporary physical or mental impairment or learning difficulty may need assistance to evacuate and may require a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan. The PEEP will be created by the Health and Safety Office in consultation with the person requiring it. (*refer to Fire Safety Procedure 00036 - Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans*)
- 12.2 PEEPs are mandatory for all University employees who may require assistance during an emergency evacuation. The affected employee and their line manager are responsible for initiating the PEEP process.
- 12.3 PEEPs are strongly recommended, and are required to be offered, to relevant students and this should be through initial contact with Disability Services.
- 12.4 PEEPs for visitors and contractors must be offered through information provision but are not mandatory.

13. General employee fire safety instruction

- 13.1 All University employees must familiarise themselves with the fire evacuation procedures for the buildings they occupy and visit. Fire action notices are displayed in every University building and can be found near storey exits and final exits, normally adjacent to fire alarm manual call points. The fire action notices describe what to do and where to go if there is a fire alarm, if someone discovers fire or smoke, the campus emergency telephone number and the locations of designated fire assembly points.

- 13.2 All University employees must ensure they are familiar with alternative means of escape where these exist.
- 13.3 University employees are required to complete the mandatory training assigned to them, including the eLearning Health and Safety Induction and Fire Safety Awareness.
- In addition, all employees must: Observe all fire safety instructions, information and training
 - Co-operate with the University on matters of fire safety
 - Not misuse or interfere with any building fabric or equipment provided in connection with assuring fire safety
 - Report any relevant risks or deficiencies in and around the university buildings, or with fire safety equipment, arrangements, or procedures.
 - Take steps to reduce or mitigate risks and inform the Health and Safety Office accordingly.
 - Ensure any visitors evacuate the building in the event of a fire alarm and go to the fire assembly area.

14. Academic staff fire safety instruction

- 14.1 Teaching staff including visiting lecturers and short course tutors should make their students aware of the evacuation plan for the room and building in which they are taught. This extends to lecture rooms, halls and theatres.
- 14.2 In all teaching spaces and lecture rooms the lecturer or other staff member present must take charge of the students and ensure that they evacuate in the event of a fire alarm.
- 14.3 Upon a continuous fire alarm activation the member of teaching staff must direct their students to the nearest safe escape route and ensure that all students leave the room and go to the fire assembly point, or refuge point if they need assistance to evacuate. Teaching staff may be required to assist someone with a PEEP to get to a refuge point, or to reassure them, and contact Security Emergency if necessary.
- 14.4 At the assembly point the member of staff must assemble the class, remain with them and notify Campus Security of any students who cannot be accounted for.
- 14.5 In addition, all teaching staff must:
- Observe all fire safety instructions, information and training
 - Co-operate with the University on matters of fire safety
 - Not misuse or interfere with any building fabric or equipment provided in connection with assuring fire safety
 - Report any relevant risks or deficiencies in and around the university buildings, or with fire safety equipment, arrangements, or procedures.

- Take steps to reduce or mitigate risks and inform the Health and Safety Office accordingly.
- Ensure any visitors evacuate the building in the event of a fire alarm and go to the fire assembly area.

15. Student fire safety instruction

- 15.1 All new resident students and flat leaders must receive and complete mandatory fire safety eLearning within their first two weeks. Failure to complete this induction eLearning will result in their accommodation access being revoked until the induction has been completed. All non-resident students are required to complete the same eLearning. All students must also observe all instructions, information and training intended to observe fire safety.
- 15.2 The Fire, Health and Safety Adviser provides additional face-to-face training to flat leaders.
- 15.3 Fire drills for each student residence will, whenever practicable, be completed during the first six weeks of the new academic year.
- 15.4 Students must familiarise themselves with the fire evacuation procedures and escape routes for the areas in which they study, attend classes or lectures, and for their accommodation provided by the University. In turn, they must be given sufficient opportunity by the University to disclose any relevant medical conditions or disabilities that would affect their ability to escape a building in the event of fire.
- 15.5 In addition to co-operating with the University on fire safety matters, students must:
- Not misuse or interfere with any building fabric or equipment provided in connection with assuring fire safety.
 - Report any relevant risks or deficiencies in and around the university buildings, or with fire safety equipment, arrangements, or procedures.

16. Reporting and investigation of fire incidents

- 16.1 All fire alarms, fire events, and all fire safety related incidents that Security have responded to will be reported by Security staff using the designated reporting procedure.
- 16.2 Initial investigation, witness statements and evidence collection will be made by the Security personnel attending the event in accordance with normal security procedure.
- 16.3 Follow-up actions arising from incident reports will be determined by the University Health and Safety Office upon receipt of the incident report, who will ensure that relevant parties are contacted as soon as practicable to discuss remedial actions.

- 16.4 Following a more serious fire or fire related incident, the Health and Safety Team will send a notification of the incident details to the relevant Head of College, Head of Department, Dean, and other senior staff as appropriate, along with the Trades Union Health and Safety representatives.
- 16.5 The Director of Estates and Campus Services and the Head of Security will investigate technical issues with fire safety equipment and systems, and inform the University Health and Safety Office of their conclusions.
- 16.6 As per the Fire Investigation and Reporting Protocol 2024 SOP HS 00046 all fire events and incidents will be fully investigated. Campus Security and the Health and Safety office will co-ordinate the investigations. Staff, students, contractors and visitors may be requested to attend interviews to establish the sequence of events of fire incidents. A fire Investigation report will be issued by the Health and Safety Office to relevant parties.
- 16.7 If a fire, regardless of whether it is indoors or outdoors, is suspected to have been started maliciously, Security shall report this to the Police and obtain a crime number.
- 16.8 Key stakeholders will work in partnership to resolve issues identified in the incident reports and fire investigations.

17. Fire safety training provision

- 17.1 The online eLearning fire safety training is administered by the Health and Safety Office for students, and HR Learning and Development for staff.
- 17.2 The Health and Safety Office will provide additional risk-based fire safety training where required. The Health and Safety Office should be contacted for further advice.
- 17.3 Fire warden training is provided by HR and the Health and Safety Office.
- 17.4 Fire Safety Risk Management training for the Responsible Person and Senior Leadership Team is provided approximately annually and delivered by an external fire safety expert.
- 17.5 Mandatory and recommended training for those with fire safety responsibilities are described in the *Fire Safety Procedure 00032 - Fire Safety Roles and Responsibilities*.

18. Emergency response plan

18.1 The University Emergency Response Plan must be activated in the event of any significant fire affecting one or more buildings.

18.2 A significant fire is any fire that causes or is likely to cause any of the following:

- The death or serious injury of any person
- Damage likely to prevent reoccupation of all or part of any building
- Damage to equipment or facilities that will seriously interrupt the function of the University or services provided by the University
- Significant environmental damage or pollution
- Significant adverse publicity or a significant level of wider concern for the safety of staff and students

19. Related procedures and other documents

- Fire Safety Roles and Responsibilities SOP H&S 00032
- Fire Brigade Call-out Protocol SOP H&S 00033
- Security Duties for Fire Alarm and Fire Event Response SOP H&S 00034
- Duties of Fire Wardens SOP H&S 00035
- Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPS) SOP H&S 00036
- Fire Safety Premises Use Definitions SOP H&S 00037
- Fire Drill Procedure SOP H&S 00038
- Hot Works Procedure SOP H&S 00039
- Fire Alarm and Fire Event Response in Laboratories H&S 00040
- Silent Alarm and Double Knock 2022 H&S 00041
- Fire and Emergency Procedure for Radiation Incident SOP HS 00042
- Fire Investigation and Reporting Protocol 2024 SOP HS 00046
- Contractor Code of Practice