



FIRE SAFETY POLICY

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University of Roehampton

Fire Safety Policy

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1. Introduction

- 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 set of fire safety procedures.

- 1.2 The University will, so far as reasonably practicable:
- Safeguard all relevant persons from death, injury and ill health as a result of 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 the environment
 - Comply with the requirements of legislation relating to fire and fire safety (see 4.2 below)

2. Application

- 2.1 This policy applies to all relevant persons - employees, including temporary and contract workers, partner organisations, students, and visitors.
- 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

The aims of the policy are to:

- Define fire safety duty holders and responsibilities of staff
- Achieve compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and related legislation (see 4.2 below)
- Adequately control risk of fires and explosions by applying the principles of prevention, ensure the University's buildings and equipment are maintained in a safe condition, and that activities and events are managed safely
- Ensure building projects and refurbishments are planned and managed in a way that ensures conformity with fire safety legislation

- 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 fire-fighting
 - evacuation supervision and facilitating the evacuation of anyone who needs assistance to leave a building
 - 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 behavior 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 unnecessary fire alarms
- Adopt a clear and consistent approach to fire safety within the University and to communication on fire safety matters
- Promote a proactive and effective fire safety culture as part of the fire risk management system

4. Legislation

4.1 The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRO) is the primary fire safety legislation in England and Wales. The RRO focuses on fire prevention in all non-domestic premises and applies to all workplaces, teaching spaces, halls of residence, indoor and outdoor events at the University. It covers general fire precautions and fire safety duties required to protect the University as employer, employees of the University, anyone who may be lawfully on University premises, and anyone in the vicinity of University premises who may be at risk in the event of a fire.

4.2 Other legislation relevant to this policy is contained in:

Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

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

Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

Equality Act 2010

5. Responsibilities

- 5.1 The Responsible Person under the RRO is the employer. Functions related to the statutory fire safety requirements¹ of the RRO are delegated by the Pro Vice-Chancellor who has appointed the Director of Campus Operations and the Head of Health and Safety 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 2020.
- 5.3 The Head of Health and Safety and the Fire, Health and Safety Advisor exercise governance of fire safety compliance at the University.
- 5.4 Every member of staff 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 RRO.
- 5.5 The chair of the University Health and Safety Committee is responsible for ensuring that fire safety is adequately considered by the Committee.
- 5.6 Heads of Department 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.
- 5.7 The numbers of fire wardens per building is dependent on the fire risk and the use to which the building is put. As a general rule there should be a minimum of two 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 may be necessary to ensure that evacuations can be managed safely and the wardens can carry out their duties safely. Flat Representatives will fulfil the role of fire wardens in University student residential buildings and receive relevant training. The Health and Safety Office must be consulted about any deviations from these expectations.
- 5.8 In shared occupancy buildings i.e. those occupied by more than one academic or support department, the senior managers of those departments are responsible for co-operation and co-ordination of fire safety in those buildings.
- 5.9 All staff with line management responsibility for others 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

¹ These duties include general fire precautions and safety arrangements, fire risk assessment, fire protection systems maintenance, training, co-operation, prevention and detection, escape routes and exits, procedures for serious and imminent danger.

precautions are followed, and that any fire safety concerns are referred promptly to the Health and Safety Office.

- 5.10 All staff 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 Health and Safety Office.
- 5.11 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 Health and Safety office is responsible for ensuring that suitable fire risk assessments are undertaken for all occupied premises at the University of Roehampton and maintained up-to-date and reviewed appropriately. Current fire risk assessment reports are held by the University Health and Safety Office.
- 6.2 Fire risk assessments must be maintained up-to-date and shall be reviewed:
 - At least annually for all Halls of Residence, licensed premises, catering facilities, workshops and places where dangerous substances² are used or present
 - Biennially in respect of offices and teaching spaces
 - Following a fire, however slight, 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 extension, remodeling or change of use
- 6.3 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.

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.

² Dangerous substances include any substances used or present at work 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. Maintenance of fire safety systems and equipment

- 8.1 As set out in *Fire Safety Procedure 00032 - Fire Safety Roles and Responsibilities*, the inspection, maintenance and testing of the fire detection and alarm systems, emergency lighting, portable fire-fighting appliances, fire curtains, fire related signs, fire doors and related ironmongery at the University is the responsibility of the Head of Security and Logistics who will manage the associated accredited contractors and keep records of all such maintenance and testing.
- 8.2 As set out in *Fire Safety Procedure 00032 - Fire Safety Roles and Responsibilities*, the inspection, maintenance and testing of lightning protection systems, portable electrical appliances, fixed electrical systems, automatic opening smoke ventilation and fire dampers is the responsibility of the Head of Technical Compliance who will manage the associated accredited contractors and keep records of all such maintenance and testing.
- 8.3 As set out in *Fire Safety Procedure 00032 - Fire Safety Roles and Responsibilities*, the inspection and servicing of evacuation aids is the responsibility of the Fire, Health and Safety Advisor who will manage the associated accredited contractor and keep records of all such inspection and servicing.

9. Inspection, maintenance, testing, servicing and fault reporting

- 9.1 It is the responsibility of Estates and Campus Services, Campus Security and Logistics, and Library, Technology & Media Services for the inspection, maintenance, testing, fault identification and remedial works, asset management and record keeping required of fire safety 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 ironmongery; fire escape routes; fire stopping 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 communications systems; fire safety signs; and arranging service contractor visits.
- 9.2 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 enforcing authorities.
- 9.3 The Health and Safety Office is responsible for procuring, servicing and maintenance of the disabled evacuation aids, and fire safety audits, reviews and risk assessments.
- 9.4 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, behaviours likely to increase fire

risk; to the Estates and Campus Services helpdesk, through their line manager or their academic supervisor.

10. New buildings and alterations

- 10.1 When new buildings or alterations are being planned, the project manager shall ensure that the proposed work meets fire safety legislation and building regulations requirements and that the project includes provision for any necessary fire risk assessments or reviews. Contractors will be managed by the project manager and shall apply for any necessary permits to work and abide by the University 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 and Logistics of any requirement to interfere with smoke and heat detection. The Health and Safety Office must be consulted at an early stage in the project planning for new buildings and alterations, including remodeling and change of use of existing buildings.

Hot works 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*).

11. Fire alarms and evacuations

- 11.1 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.
- 11.2 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 fire fighters 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*).
- 11.3 If a fire alarm activates or if a fire is discovered, fire wardens within the building shall instruct occupants to evacuate promptly, 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.

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

- 11.4 All staff shall evacuate promptly in the event of a fire alarm, supervising any students or visitors in their presence and directing them to the designated fire assembly point.
- 11.5 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 officer present.

12. Fire drills

- 12.1 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 new staff and students with the fire evacuation procedures. (*refer to the Fire Drill Procedure 00038*).
- 12.2 Additional fire evacuation drills may be carried out at the discretion of the University Safety Office, for example following any change to evacuation procedures or to repeat an unsatisfactory drill.
- 12.3 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 Heads or Directors of Departments, or other relevant staff, who will be affected by the fire drill.
- 12.4 Staff and Students who have completed a PEEP may be informed of planned fire drills. They will be invited to take part in the drill to exercise the use of the refuge points and demonstrate communication protocols.
- 12.5 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.

13. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)

- 13.1 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, equipment, places of relative safety, and make reasonable adjustments to ensure their safe evacuation. Anyone with a permanent or temporary physical or mental impairment 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*).
- 13.2 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.
- 13.3 PEEPs are recommended, and are required to be offered, to students and this should be through initial contact with Disability Services.

13.4 PEEPs for visitors and contractors must be offered through information provision, but are not mandatory.

14. General employee fire safety instruction

14.1 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 assembly points.

14.2 All University employees must ensure they are familiar with alternative means of escape where these exist.

14.3 University employees are required to complete the mandatory training assigned to them, including the Health and Safety Induction and Fire Safety Induction.

15. Academic staff fire safety instruction

15.1 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.

15.2 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.

15.3 Upon a fire alarm activation the member of staff must direct the 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.

15.4 At the assembly point the member of staff must assemble the class, remain with them and notify Campus Security of any student who cannot be accounted for.

16. Student fire safety instruction

16.1 All new resident students and flat reps must receive and complete fire safety training within their first two weeks.

16.2 The Health and Safety Office provides additional training, similar to that for staff fire wardens, to flat reps.

16.3 Fire drills for each Hall will take place during the first six weeks of the new academic year.

16.4 Students must familiarise themselves with the fire evacuation procedures for the areas in which they study, attend classes or lectures, and for their accommodation provided by the University on or off campus.

17. Reporting and investigation of fire incidents

- 17.1 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.
- 17.2 Initial investigation and evidence collection will be made by the Security personnel attending the event in accordance with normal security procedure.
- 17.3 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.
- 17.4 The Deputy Director of Estates and Campus Services and the Head of Security and Logistics will investigate all technical issues and inform the University Health and Safety Office of their conclusions.
- 17.5 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.
- 17.6 Key stakeholders will work in partnership to resolve issues identified in the incident reports and fire investigations.

18. Fire safety training

- 18.1 All employees must complete the online e-learning fire safety training module annually. Line managers must ensure that new employees complete the training module within their first week in the workplace and that all their direct reports complete this training module annually.
- 18.2 The online e-learning fire safety training is administered by the Health and Safety Office and HR.
- 18.3 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.
- 18.4 Fire warden training is provided by the Health and Safety Office.
- 18.5 Mandatory and recommended training for those with fire safety responsibilities are described in the *Fire Safety Procedure 00032 - Fire Safety Roles and Responsibilities*.

19. Emergency response plan

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

19.2 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

20. 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
- Contractor Code of Practice