



Fire Safety Policy

Reviews and Revisions

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Policy Statement

Fires cause loss of life and damages property and businesses every year.

Northumbria University seeks to avoid such losses by managing fire risks to prevent fires if possible and to have in place safety and contingency procedures that mitigate the harmful effects of a fire should it occur. This policy explains how these responsibilities are to be managed and how the fire risks are to be controlled. In the main, this will encompass all University owned or leased buildings on campus, and also off-campus residences and buildings used by the University but owned and managed by other parties.

The University has responsibilities imposed under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 in relation to fire safety, in which it is required to take the initiative in managing fire risks in its buildings.

Where appropriate, fire safety training and instruction will be given, together with the provision of safety devices, equipment and instructions to carry out the duties in a safe and proper manner.



2. General Management Arrangements for Fire Safety

2.1 The Responsible Person

The Board of Governors as employer is designated as the 'responsible person' under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. The Board delegates operational responsibility to the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer, who oversee management arrangements for fire safety.

Campus Services Department

The Director of Campus Services is the building landlord for all University owned buildings and is responsible for:

- Ensuring the buildings that constitute the University's estate are safe for occupants to use at all times;
- Fire safety in relation to all aspects of building design and development, new build works, alterations and refurbishments;
- Fire safety in relation to the maintenance of and minor works to all buildings;
- The control of contractors, in so far as they affect fire safety;
- Ensuring that an Emergency Evacuation Plan is developed and implemented by Campus Services Facilities Management for each building on campus;
- Co-ordinating the response of the University with the emergency services;
- Monitoring the operation of fire alarm systems and related building fire precautions and ensuring the outcome is recorded in the Fire Log Book;
- Assisting occupants in the evacuation of buildings in a fire, through Security and Facilities Support Assistant staff;
- Ensuring that practice drills are organised and conducted twice a year in teaching buildings and once a year in non-teaching buildings.

Day to day responsibilities are delegated to Assistant Director, Facilities Services (Responsible Person Campus Services)



2.2 Faculties and Service Departments Management Groups

Pro Vice Chancellors and Service Directors should ensure:

- They can evacuate their staff, students and visitors in the event of a fire by appointing adequate numbers of Fire Marshals in accordance with the Emergency Evacuation Procedure;
- Those members of staff with specific duties under the policy e.g. Fire Marshals receive appropriate training within 3 months of their appointment to the role;
- They manage fire risks and conduct housekeeping to prevent fires in accordance with Section 12 of the policy;
- That their staff are encouraged to report any defects in buildings which may impact upon fire safety;
- That the relevant sections of the Fire Risk Assessment are actioned in a timely manner.
- That when hosting external events in University premises, the Emergency Evacuation Plan for the building is conveyed to the person in charge of the event.
- Monitor and inspect local arrangements, to ensure that fire precautions and prevention measures are in place and are working as intended,
- That their managers/supervisors (including academic research and teaching/post graduates) ensure that all activities and processes are assessed for fire safety and suitable control measures implemented in accordance with the Universities Fire Safety Strategy/Standards

2.3 All Staff

It is the duty of all staff to assist management in its efforts to protect people and comply with fire safety law by ensuring that their work does not create fires or encourage the conditions under which a fire could start. They should assist their colleagues by raising the alarm if they discover a fire and follow the instructions given to them by Security or the emergency services.

2.4 Human Resources

Human Resources will administer the annual on-line fire safety training for all staff and arrange additional training of specific persons and groups in relation to more specialised roles such as the Fire Response Team and Fire Marshals. This training will be refreshed every 3 years.



2.5 Fire Safety Manager

The Fire Safety Manager will;

- Support the University, to, promote, meet, deliver and maintain statutory fire safety obligations.
- Ensure Fire Risk Assessments are carried out for all premises
- Review all fire safety risk assessments as necessary.
- Provide liaison and support on all matters relating to fire safety provision within the University
- Liaise where appropriate, with external enforcement agencies, Local Authority Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) on all statutory fire safety matters.
- Ensure all fire incidents are investigated and actioned accordingly.
- Maintaining, developing and revising appropriate fire safety guidance, training and other resources to support the University to meet its responsibilities under the RRFSO and this policy.
- Making available appropriate training and instruction and information for Fire Wardens

2.6 Faculty Lecturers

Lecturers are responsible for the safety of their students when in class and must make themselves aware of the fire procedures for the buildings in which they lecture.

They must ensure that students under their supervision are aware of what to do on hearing the fire alarm.

On hearing the evacuation signal which is a continuous or intermittent sounding of the fire alarm, the lecturer should ensure everyone leaves the building by the nearest, safest available exit route in a calm and orderly manner, and proceed to the designated emergency evacuation assembly point allocated to the building as identified [here](#).

The lecturer must endeavour to ensure their students remain at the assembly point until a clear instruction from the Lead Evacuation Coordinator/Fire Safety Manager/Fire and Rescue has been given to re-enter the building.

2.7 Contractors

All contractors must familiarise themselves with this Fire Policy and local procedures in accordance with their [Contractor Induction](#) requirements, (Section-13 refers)

Where contractors are on site, it will be the duty of the relevant person with the responsibility for the works undertaken by them, to ensure;

- The appropriate level of fire safety provision is incorporated within any contract agreement, works schedule, or risk assessment and



- Where such works are likely to impact on the existing fire provision, notification must be communicated to the Fire Safety/Health and Safety (Facilities & Projects) Manager for their consideration.
- They assess the fire safety risks arising from their works / activities and implement control measures in accordance with the “principles of control”
- Co-operate with the University on all matters of fire safety and comply with all reasonable instructions relating to fire safety given by authorised members of the University
- that they, and all staff falling under their control, have received appropriate information, instruction and training to enable them to comply with this policy and the University’s emergency arrangements.

Contractors will also require to be made aware of the Fire Action Plan relevant to the area they are working in or likely to attend.

Where any work requires to be undertaken that is likely to involve the application of naked flame or mechanically induced heat source a ‘Hot Works Permit’ must be acquired and agreed prior to the commencement of such works.

Persons responsible for managing contractors for any work, a [Contractor Induction Process](#) guide provides useful information of your responsibilities to ensure the contractor is correctly and adequately inducted.

2.8 Visitors

Members of the Public or other Visitors require to be advised of the evacuation plans for any relevant premise they access. To ensure this is accomplished adequate ‘Fire Action Notices’ are adequately displayed at prominent locations in proximity to ‘Call Points’.

Where possible those responsible for the visitor should be managed in such a way as to ensure they can account for all their visitors within the premises at any given time to ensure safe evacuation.

2.9 Disabled/Impaired Persons

Every individual who has either permanent or temporary disability/impairment/disorder which may affect their ability to recognise that an emergency is taking place or to evacuate a building unaided will have a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) drawn up.

Further guidance to the responsibilities and PEEP development can be found [here](#).

Wheelchair users must notify their line managers/tutors of the details of their PEEP. If, due to the nature of the illness/injury/condition, the individual cannot be removed from their wheelchair without risk of serious injury, movement to a point of temporary refuge will be considered as part of their PEEP.



Disabled/Impaired persons are advised to familiarise themselves of the local fire arrangements and any disabled provisions e.g. refuge, call points, deaf alerts or visual fire indicators, fire evacuation routes for their respective places of work/study.

2.10 Persons with Specific Responsibility

Further ensuring the effective implementation of the requirements of this Policy, others are nominated to perform certain specific duties. Details of the roles created by the adoption of this Policy to perform the following functions can be found [here](#).

2.10.1 Fire Marshals

Fire evacuation can be achieved more easily with the support of a team of staff who are routinely familiar with the building. Fire Marshals are chosen from resident staff who occupy the building to best utilise to support safe and efficient evacuation procedures and provide assistance and support to the Fire Safety Manager and/or Lead Evacuation Coordinator, and/or Fire and Rescue Service as necessary.

Faculties and Service Departments are responsible to internally resourcing and maintaining adequate Fire Marshal provision of their respective buildings/areas of responsibility.

A list of appointed Fire Marshals can be found [here](#)

The Fire Marshal list provides details of who and where your nearest appointed trained Fire Marshals are located and their area of responsibility during an evacuation.

3. Building Fire Risk Assessments

The Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) is a methodical assessment of fire hazards in the building fabric, plant and services, hazards arising from activities, ways that people use a building weighed against the type of structure and the fire precautions that are in place. The purpose of the FRA is to identify any improvements needed to achieve a satisfactory level of fire safety, both in preventing fires or minimising their effects.

The Assistant Director - Facilities Services will ensure that a competent person is appointed to undertake FRA in all buildings owned and managed by the University.

The competence of the Fire Risk Assessor will be demonstrated by requiring that they have achieved a nationally recognised certificate of competence and that they are registered with an organisation that is a member of one of the professional body registration schemes or has achieved certification by a certification body that is UKAS accredited.

The Assistant Director Facilities Services will ensure that FRA for all buildings owned and managed by the University are carried out by the appointed University competent person with the following aims:

- To evaluate whether existing precautions in each building are satisfactory in the light of its current uses and fire hazards;



- To achieve consistent levels of safety in relation to fire risks across the University's estate;
- To allow Campus Services Facilities Management to decide on an appropriate fire protection strategy that takes into account the effect on business continuity:
- FRAs will follow the specification in British Standards Institution PAS 79:2012 fire risk assessment, guidance and a recommended 'methodology'; and fire safety risk assessment – educational premises 2006
- The Assistant Director Estates & Facilities Services will obtain FRAs for other buildings used by staff and students. These will be reviewed at regular intervals to accommodate changes in fire law, structural alterations to buildings, changes in fire precautions technologies or use by occupants;
- The Engineering and Maintenance Manager will ensure actions from FRAs are communicated to each Faculty's Senior Managers so they can act on those aspects of the FRA relating to their use of the building and particularly the fire hazards they introduce as part of their teaching, research or other activities;
- Campus Services will incorporate FRA recommendations into its planned maintenance and improvement works to buildings.

3.1 Occupiers

Pro Vice Chancellors and Service Directors should ensure that their staff contribute to reducing or removing fire risks by managing fire safety in the areas they occupy (see section 12 below for details). They will also comply with recommendations in the Fire Risk Assessments for the buildings their Faculty or Service occupies that apply to the fire risks arising from their occupancy and activities.

4. Buildings not owned or managed by the University

As part of University business, staff and students occupy a number of buildings that are not owned and in some cases, even managed by the University. To satisfy itself that the owner or manager of each building has taken the appropriate fire safety precautions and is managing fire risks in their building, Campus Services will:

- Ensure there is a suitable and sufficient FRA in place for each building and obtain a copy for scrutiny. It will be examined by the Health and Safety Team to assess the adequacy of existing precautions;
- Obtain assurances from the owner or manager of each building that they have arrangements in place to maintain fire precautions and manage fire risks in accordance with the FRA and the fire law.



The purpose of these arrangements is to ensure that where staff and students occupy buildings outside of the University's direct ownership and control, the suitability of the building in terms of its fire precautions and its management are assessed as satisfactory and then monitored to ensure that this remains the case.

Any Faculty or Service considering the use of accommodation not owned or managed by the University should advise Campus Services and implement its recommendations.

5. Building Development - Planning & Design

Campus Services will ensure all building design work that affects a building's existing fire precautions or introduces new hazards for which these precautions are not compliant, conforms to good practice and relevant industry standards, including but not limited to:

- Approved Document B 'Fire Safety' Building Regulations 2010 (revised edition 2006);
- Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) Wiring Regulations (18th Edition) BS7671;
- British and European Standards on building fire safety;
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- Fire Safety for Educational Premises 2006

Proposed changes to the design of the building's fabric or services should be integrated sympathetically with the existing fire precautions including those described in the Fire Risk Assessment, Fire Policy and the building's Emergency Evacuation Plan. It must be recognised that the planning and design of development projects can change occupancy levels, building capacities and flow-rates on escape routes therefore additional fire precautions may be necessary or occupancy numbers reduced.

Campus Services will ensure that the design of works is referred to the Statutory Authorities as appropriate, including, but not limited to, making Building Regulation Applications and consulting with the Fire Authority.

Campus Services will maintain and publish appropriate as-built information including fire plans and building fire escape routes.

Campus Services will ensure that any person undertaking design work is competent. No University Faculty or Service should engage designers or contractors for the purpose of altering a building's fabric or services without referring the matter to Campus Services.



6. Building Alterations

6.1 Maintenance, Minor Works, Alterations, Refurbishment, M&E Projects and New-Build

When any works relevant to the above are being planned, the Facilities and Project Management shall ensure that the requirements of relevant fire safety legislation, fire risk assessments, recognised standards and good practice are considered and that the proposed building/facilities meet the requirements of the University Fire Strategy. Details of the proposals shall also be sent to the University Fire Safety Manager to check compliance.

Campus Services will manage fire risks associated with construction and maintenance works in order to avoid fires. Campus Services will engage contractors who can demonstrate suitable knowledge, qualifications and experience to carry out any works to the building's fabric or services that materially affect existing fire precautions. Campus Services will:

- Supervise all such work;
- Provide the principal designer and principal contractor with relevant existing fire plans, escape information, compartmentation drawings and FRA;
- Monitor contractors control of fire risks arising from all demolition & construction work;
- Direct the principal designer to identify fire risks anticipated in the scope of the works, particularly hot-works and other high risk activities and include these in the information pack to prospective contractors and designers;
- Direct designers to consider fire risks associated with the designs they propose and mitigate those risks if necessary;
- Request that client Faculties and Services remove or reduce the level of any materials or other hazards that introduce or increase the risk of fire during any construction or maintenance works prior to commencement;
- Specify that contractors do not affect the existing fire precautions except where absolutely necessary and only in consultation with the Project and Health and Safety Team;
- Ensure during the construction phase of a project that the existing fire precautions are maintained or alternative suitable temporary arrangements are made and communicated to the Project Team, Fire Response Team, building users etc.;
- Campus Services will monitor the contractors' management of fire risks during construction and maintenance works, intervening where these risks are not being



controlled adequately to prevent fires occurring;

- At the end of each shift, the contractor will ensure that any 'bagged' automatic fire detectors (AFDs) are cleared of obstructions, are serviceable and that all fire alarm zones are returned to the fire alarm system after isolation. At the completion of works, the contractor will ensure that any breaches in the building's fire compartmentation (walls, firebreaks, risers, etc.) are reinstated to give protection against fire spread. The Campus Services Project Representative will tour the site periodically with the contractor to ensure that these actions are being carried out.
- Prior to the completion of construction works, Campus Services Project Manager must request written confirmation from the contractor/designer to ensure that:
- All passive fire protection products are third party certificated and that they are installed by contractors holding third party certification for that product type;
- All fire systems (detection, alarms, fire doors signage etc.) have been installed, tested and commissioned in accordance with the design and specification;
- All fire systems are fully operational;
- Relevant statutory consents/approvals are in place;
- Update information (Fire Risk Assessments, Emergency Procedures etc.) as necessary;
- All test certificates are received

6.2 Managing Fire Risks in Construction Work

Campus Services will ensure that contractors comply with the standards in the Health & Safety Executive's Construction Information Sheet 51 'Construction Fire Safety'.

Campus Services will ensure construction sites will mitigate fire risk in compliance to:

1. [HSG168 – Fire Safety in Construction](#)
2. Code of Practice on the Protection from Fire on construction sites and Buildings Undergoing Renovation. (9th Edition: 2015).
3. [Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015](#)

6.3 Briefing Contractors on Fire Safety

Campus Services will provide all contractors with a copy of the Contractors Induction Booklet and require the contractor to demonstrate that this is disseminated to all staff who work on campus.

Section 2.7- Contractor, also refers.



7. Continuous Improvement

Campus Services will, in line with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 or any significant incident, will introduce changes if required to enhance the protection that exists in each building.

8. Maintenance and Servicing of Building's Fire Safety Precautions

8.1 Fire Alarm Systems

CBRE/Sodexo will ensure maintenance of each building's fire alarm system, in accordance with BS 5839-1 current edition. In circumstances where the installed fire alarm system is unserviceable, temporary arrangements will be provided to occupants for the manual raising of the fire alarm until such time as the fire alarm system can be repaired. The FM provider will examine and clean automatic fire detection (AFD) where the fire panel shows a signal close to pre-alarm level. Security & Facilities Support Assistants will investigate and report faults to the Helpdesk.

8.2 Emergency Lighting

CBRE/Sodexo will ensure maintenance of the emergency light systems, in accordance with BS 5266-1 current edition.

8.3 Fire Fighting Equipment

CBRE/Sodexo will ensure that all fire-fighting equipment, extinguishers, fire hoses and blankets used in University buildings are in accordance with BS 5306 current edition. All staff should notify the Campus Services Helpdesk of extinguishers and other equipment that has been discharged or is defective.

8.4 Fire Doors

CBRE/Sodexo will maintain all fire doors so that they meet the requirements of BS 476 – current edition and offer an effective barrier to fire and smoke in order to allow evacuation and deter fire and smoke spread throughout the building.

All fire doors marked as a fire door should be kept closed at all times. The use of wedges and other improvised hold open devices is not permitted and must be positively discouraged from use.



8.5 Fire Compartmentation

CBRE/Sodexo will monitor any on-going construction and maintenance work so that breaches in fire compartment floors or walls can be repaired (that is, repaired so that they are resistant to smoke and fire). Before commencement of work, other University services (e.g. Telecoms, IT Services etc.) must agree with Campus Services on the method and scope of installation and alteration work to the telecoms and IT network infrastructure to ensure that any damage to fire compartment walls or floors is repaired.

Campus Services through CBRE/Sodexo will undertake surveys from time to time to assess the integrity of buildings fire compartments and whether they will perform satisfactorily in a fire. Where there is reason to expect that this is not the case, Campus Services will take remedial action, paying particular attention to ceiling voids above fire doors, service risers, ventilation ducting, services, cable-routes and pipework.

8.6 Fire Signage

CBRE/Sodexo will ensure that signs conform to the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996 so that occupants are properly directed to exits, extinguishers and fire assembly points.

8.7 Dry Risers

Where a building has a dry riser, CBRE/Sodexo will ensure these are maintained and in a serviceable condition at all times in accordance BS 9990 – current edition.

8.8 Acting on Recommendations in FRAs

CBRE/Sodexo will incorporate recommendations from Fire Risk Assessments into planned maintenance and refurbishment program, giving due regard to the urgency of the recommendation in each case.

8.9 Acting on Reported Defects from Drills

The Health and Safety Team will notify the Campus Services Helpdesk of all defects reported in the Building Evacuation Report after a fire drill so they can be rectified. A report will be generated and a copy sent to the relevant person in Faculties and Service Departments.

8.10 Electrical Safety

Guidance on safety of electrical appliances is available [here](#). The guidance includes reference to the condition that they shall not be detrimental to safety. Reference should be made to the [PAT ACoP](#)



8.11 Hot Works

In order to limit this type of incident a University Hot Work Permit system is in place.

Additional to producing formal risk assessment for all work activities. Where any work requires to be undertaken that is likely to involve the application of naked flame or mechanically induced heat source a "Hot Works Permit" (HWP) must be acquired and agreed prior to the commencement of such works.

A satisfactory standard of fire risk management is more likely to be followed where a formal 'Hot Work Permit' is implemented. This is under the strict control of nominated persons in Campus Services who have authority to issue a HWP and ensure reasonable precautions are in place prior to commencing the work.

The use of the designated HWP scheme will result in a safer environment with fewer fire related incidents attributed to hot working.

8.12 Isolation of Fire Safety Provision/ Crucial Plant or Equipment

Details of any arrangements implemented to isolate items of fire safety provision, plant or equipment which may contribute to the fire or result in damage or danger are included in the Campus Services/CBRE/Sodexo emergency plans. The arrangements will vary, depending on the location and equipment type.

8.13 Action/Fire Safety Notice Signs

Fire procedures are displayed throughout the University and can be found on exit routes normally adjacent to fire alarm call points and in learning/teaching spaces.

All staff must be familiar with the fire procedures as required by the RR(FS)O and the Act.

The Fire Safety Manager ensures these notices are to date and communicates any changes

9. Information

Every person who works or studies at the University should understand how fire safety is managed and have access to the Fire Policy. This will help them to contribute to controlling fire risks while they work or study and to react in a way that protects their lives and the lives of others in the event of a fire. Information is provided through:

- The Fire Policy, which explains general arrangements for managing fire safety and includes the Evacuation Procedure;
- The Emergency Evacuation Plan applicable to their particular workplace(s);



- Training and induction – see section 14 of this policy;
- Fire exit escape routes and Fire Assembly Points;
- Information on building hazards for emergency services;
- Building services isolation points (for gas, electricity and water);
- Fire instruction notices (fire plans).

10. Checking and Testing

Regular tests and checks on the effectiveness of evacuations and the various elements of fire precautions for a building are essential if we are to be confident that they will work in an emergency. This ranges from simple checks that emergency lights work and emergency exit doors open to full diagnostics on a modern alarm system. Any defects must be reported to Campus Services via the Helpdesk (ext. 4070).

10.1 Weekly Fire Alarm Tests

CBRE/Sodexo will ensure that weekly testing of fire alarm systems are completed each week as described in BS 5839 current edition. The purpose of this test is to ensure that all fire alarm sounders are working and making a noise loud enough to alert all occupants. The test requires the bells or klaxons to be run in short bursts (10-20 seconds). A different manual call point should be used at the time of every weekly test so that all manual call points are tested over a period of time. Any defects (no sound, low sound) are to be reported to CBRE/Sodexo Helpdesk. The results of this test will be recorded in the fire log book and retained on site for inspection.

10.2 Emergency Lighting

Where a building is fitted with emergency lighting systems, this will be tested in accordance with BS 5266 and any defects are to be reported to the CBRE/Sodexo Helpdesk. The results of this test will be recorded in the fire log book and retained on site for inspection.

10.3 Fire Alarm Systems

CBRE/Sodexo will run diagnostics checks on each building's fire alarm control panel at 3-6 month intervals.

10.4 Fire Drills

The Health and Safety Team - Fire Safety Manager will arrange fire drills for all teaching buildings twice yearly. Sodexo will arrange fire drills each semester for all halls of residence owned or



managed by the University. Where Northumbria University students live in halls of residence that are neither owned nor managed by the University, Accommodation Services will obtain assurance that the landlord or building manager is doing so. Campus Services will obtain similar assurances for non-resident buildings.

For each building, the Health and Safety Team will trigger the alarm to begin the evacuation of the building, whilst communicating with security control. It is the responsibility of the management in each building to have arrangements in place for conducting a swift and effective evacuation at any time when the building is open and occupied. Once the alarm has been triggered, Security and Facilities Support Assistants staff will assist (subject to available staff) in the marshalling and control of building entrances until the Lead Evacuation Coordinator or Chief Fire Officer attending gives the all clear.

The aim of a fire drill is to demonstrate that the building can be cleared of people in a reasonable time, commensurate with the size and complexity of the building and the associated risk. Staff who are supervising students should lead them to safety via the nearest escape route.

Fire drills are intended to (*though not exhaustive*) :

- Test local management arrangements to effect a swift and effective evacuation of occupants in each building, including disabled identification and evacuation, in order to avoid any loss of life in a fire;
- Test the function of the fire alarm system, in particular to test the ability of the sounders to alert occupants to the fire wherever they may find themselves in the building;
- Look for any defects in the operation of the building's fire precautions, or in the arrangements for evacuation, so that they can be rectified;
- Test that all devices which interface with the fire alarm system operate as intended. Fire door hold-back devices, relays to passenger lift controls, galaxy alarm communications, turnstiles and ventilation controls, etc. should be inspected where feasible as part of the drill to confirm that they work as intended.

During a fire drill, the alarm should be triggered at a manual call point (MCP) break-glass rather than simply operating the bell-test button on the fire panel. This is to ensure that all interfaced systems are activated (the bell-test button simply tests the function of the sounder circuits, and is sufficient for sounder tests only). Devices that are interfaced with the fire alarm system should be identified by Campus Services for each building so that their operation can be monitored during drills and other activations.

On completion of the drill, the most Lead Evacuation Coordinator attending should fill in the Building Evacuation Report. Reports should then be sent to the University's Health & Safety Team. Building management should then receive regular feedback from the Fire Safety Manager about their performance during fire drills. Defects noted in the drill reports will be passed by the Fire/ Health & Safety manager to the Campus Services Helpdesk for remedial investigation.

Reports will be discussed at the University Health and Safety Management Group on the



evacuation performance of building occupants and where this is inadequate, ask the managers in that building for proposals to rectify poor performance.

11. Emergency Evacuation Procedure

The emergency evacuation procedure is at appendix 1.

12. Building Occupants Management of Fire Risks and Housekeeping

Although the main responsibility for the installation and maintenance of building fire precautions lies with Campus Services, it is often true that day-to-day control of fire risks is in the hands of each building's occupants. As well as being responsible for managing evacuations, management occupying each building need to reduce the chance of fires occurring as far as reasonably practicable. Managers should contact the Health and Safety Department if they need advice on fire safety or are unsure how to proceed.

It is important that all managers and staff who occupy University buildings take responsibility for:

- Managing any fire risks associated with their teaching, research and other activities to avoid fires, including maintaining local fire precautions for processes and activities if necessary;
- Ensuring that the Emergency Evacuation Plan is read and understood;
- Ensuring that their own and their students actions do not interfere with or impair the effectiveness of the building's existing fire precautions;
- Conducting regular spot checks to maintain housekeeping standards to minimise fire risks and maintain escape routes;
- Enforcing the University's No Smoking Code of Practice;
- Ensuring that Portable Appliance Testing of electrical appliances is carried out regularly;
- Putting in place local arrangements to cover changes of use affecting the Fire Risk Assessment (for example, halls of residence offering hotel accommodation, large conferences etc.);
- Organizing themselves so that they can evacuate everyone in the building quickly and safely and provide reasonable information on the status of that evacuation to Security;



- Providing fire safety information at student inductions;
- Arrangements for the safe evacuation of staff supervising experiments outside building opening hours. The requirements of the Out of Hours Access Code of Practice should be followed;
- Not introducing additional hazards into the building without referring to the Health and Safety Department.

Successful management of fire risks arising from the normal range of activities in University buildings is about keeping ignition sources and fuel apart, otherwise a fire could occur.

Fire risks can and do arise as a consequence of poor housekeeping, which leads to an accumulation of combustible materials or fire accelerants (flammable liquids and gases) or the unsafe storage of these, creating an increased risk of fire or fire load in that part of the building.

Managing fire risks means regular servicing and maintenance of plant & equipment used for teaching, research or services without which there is a risk of malfunction, overheating and fire. An example of this is where wear & tear on electrical components in a machine, leads to short-circuit or overload, which results in a fire. Even in offices, appliances such as desk fans, desk lamps etc. can cause fires if they are not inspected periodically and maintained in a safe condition.

Those engaged in workshop and similar processes (for example, welding, grinding, cooking and heating substances in laboratories) need to be instructed and demonstrably competent as a result. They may also need to be supervised to achieve an acceptable level of safety.

To ensure that they have discharged their responsibilities and are managing fire risks for the building, managers in each building should:

- Use the Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) for their building, which will be provided by CBRE/Sodexo to identify the main fire risks associated with their activities and then make local arrangements to control these fire risks;
- Use the FRA to evaluate the adequacy of their arrangements during different periods when the building's mode of use changes (e.g. arts shows to public in theatres and studios and halls of residences used for hotel accommodation during summer).
- Ensure that their staff in all parts of the building:
 - Don't create fire risks by poor housekeeping and maintenance;
 - Manage hot-processes and other activities with higher risk of fire to control this, taking advice on how to do this where necessary;
 - Don't compromise building fire precautions by blocking fire escape routes with furniture or materials, disabling parts of the fire alarm system or chocking open fire doors etc.



13. Fire Evacuation

Faculties and Service Departments must ensure that there are suitable arrangements for evacuation as part of the Emergency Fire Plan for the building. This is part of their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

Fire evacuation of buildings must consider:

- a) Those persons who work in, study, or regularly visit, the building
- b) Persons who are visiting the building.

All potential needs must be considered and all options explored.

Needs may include:

- Limited or lack of mobility affecting movement.
- Width of exit routes for wheelchair egress.
- Difficulty in opening doors.
- Visual impairment.
- Hearing impairment.
- Cognitive impairment.
- Lack of understanding about what is happening.
- Reassurance to help dispel anxiety.

Options available include:

- Accommodating employees and students on the ground floor or close to final exits where possible;
- Use of evacuation or fire-fighting lifts (Note that ordinary lifts must not be used in a fire situation);
- Use of refuge areas as part of a staged approach to evacuation;
- Identifying employees or buddy's willing to accompany disabled people while a refuge is in use;
- Provision of an intercom in refuge areas;
- Provision of evacuation chairs and the training of personnel who will assist in an emergency;
- Ensuring that those with language difficulties and visual, hearing, and learning impairment are made aware when a fire alarm is activated.

The overriding aim is to be able to completely evacuate the building within a reasonable time, without having to rely on the Fire Service to rescue people from the building.



13.1 Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans

A Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) is to provide those who cannot get themselves out of a building unaided during an emergency situation, with the necessary information to be able to manage their escape. This is tailored specifically for that individual in relation to the building/s they use.

The PEEP will also provide the Faculty or Service Department concerned with the necessary information to ensure that the correct level of assistance is always available to ensure safe evacuation takes place.

Either the line manager or employee may raise concerns regarding ability to evacuate the building. The Line Manager and the employee will discuss personal needs and wishes, and agree a PEEP which is reasonably practicable. Instructions regarding the PEEP process can be found [here](#)

Similarly, in the case of students, the Course Leader should arrange for the PEEP to be carried out in conjunction with the student.

It must be remembered that employees and students who need assistance on a temporary basis will also need to be considered and a PEEP compiled for the temporary period.

All PEEPs must be taken into consideration by the planning department at the pre-construction stage of any project and consider the implications for the overall Emergency Evacuation Plan for the building.

In the case of visitors to the building, building users will be responsible for considering the potential needs of visitors, taking into consideration the use to which the building is put, and whether there is a need for members of the public to access the building, or only certain parts of it. It is important that efforts are made to ensure that those visiting the building that may need assistance to evacuate, are identified at an early stage.

It must be considered that, although visitors with disabilities may be able to access upper levels of buildings by way of lifts, or by moving slowly on stairs, there may not be a viable option to ensure that they can be evacuated promptly and safely in the event of an emergency situation. This is particularly so in the case of persons whose mobility is impaired. It may not be practical to provide cover for all types of disability or determine the particular needs of individual members of the public in an emergency.

For these reasons, the only practicable option may be to limit access to the building by members of the public, so that safe, prompt, and inclusive evacuation can be made.

If there is an overriding need for access to upper floors of a building by members of the public, a staged approach should be used. This will be achieved by using disabled refuges close to, or part of, protected stairways. The refuge will provide a place of comparative safety. Designated employees will help and accompany disabled persons to a refuge on the



same level.

These arrangements must be clearly identified in the building's fire evacuation plan.

14. Training

All staff are required to successfully complete the on-line annual Fire Safety Training and receive instruction on the evacuation procedure, including specific instructions on local arrangements for the buildings in which they work or study.

14.1 New Staff Inductions

New employees are inducted into general emergency procedures when they start work, supported by a local induction which should include arrangements for the buildings they work in. New employees are also required to successfully complete the on-line Fire Safety Training within 3 months of starting at the University.

14.2 Basic instruction for students

All Faculties should include basic emergency procedures at course induction for all University students so that they know how to respond during a fire alarm. This should be part of all introductory course information, which teaching staff then bring to the students' attention at induction.

14.3 Persons with special responsibilities

There are several groups of University staff, who should receive specific training according to their respective roles, as follows:

14.3.1 The Emergency and Evacuation Coordinator:

- The aims of this Fire Policy;
- Their roles and priorities in a fire evacuation and what is expected of them as defined in the Emergency Evacuation Plan for that particular building;
- How to respond safely;
- How the various fire alarm systems work and correct interrogation of the fire panels and identification of activations and faults;
- How to investigate activations safely;



- The Fire Response Team will receive instruction on responding to a request for assisted evacuation of a person or persons;
- How to locate a person who requires assistance evacuating;
- How to use the evacuation chair or other equipment e.g. evacuation lifts.

14.3.2 Technical or Research Staff - who work with processes that present additional dangers in a fire, should be instructed in how to stop or make safe the process before they evacuate, without endangering themselves.

14.3.3 Fire Marshals - should undergo practical fire safety training with the Health and Safety Team within 3 months of their appointment to the role.

14.4 Non University Staff

Staff who are contracted to work on behalf of the University premises, for example; appointed stakeholders, contractors, must have received relevant fire safety training commensurate with their activities, duties and location. To satisfy these requirements suitable provisions must be included in the contractual arrangements under which staff is engaged, as per expectation of this policy.

15. Dangerous Substances, Explosive Atmospheres (DSEAR)/Conditions

The impact of dangerous substances when exposed to fire can create a hostile and unpredictable environment. Where such substances are store and used within the University, particular attention should be given to the safe use and storage guidance supplied with the substances Safety Data Sheet/Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Risk Assessment. Substances must be used in an appropriate controlled environment and those responsible for managing those using them, must ensure that work is not undertaken that is liable to expose any staff or other people to any hazardous substances unless a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks created by that work has been undertaken and that suitable and sufficient control measures have been implemented to reduce that risk to the lowest level reasonably practicable.

Further guidance about compliance with the [Control of Substances Hazardous to Health \(COSHH\)](#), Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres (DSEAR) can be found [here](#).

16. Special/Specific Emergency Arrangements/Procedures

In some cases there may be need to have special/specific fire procedures in place. e.g. chemical/gas storage, ionising radiation, laser, hot works. These procedures will be produced by the relevant faculty/department/contractors in conjunction with the support from the Central Health and Safety Team if required.



The relevant faculty/department/contractor will ensure that staff/students/workers have been trained/briefed on the procedures as appropriate.

17. Incident Reporting and Investigation

Any fire incident/alarm activation and near miss shall be reported. Campus Services Security who become aware of a fire related incident shall report it as soon as possible to Campus Service Maintenance Manager and Health and Safety Team, also completing and forwarding a [Building Evacuation](#) Report to the Fire Safety Manager.

As appropriate, a member of the Central Health and Safety Team shall investigate and make recommendations to prevent reoccurrence in accordance with the University Health and Safety Policy.

18. Key Legislative Requirements

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RR(FS)O)
- Building Regulations 2000
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulation 2002
- The Dangerous Substances and Explosives Atmospheres Regulation 2002 (DSEAR)

This Fire Policy will be reviewed biannually or following a significant incident or change in legislation.

Assistant Director of Health and Safety
Northumbria University
February 2019

19. Appendix 1

Emergency Evacuation Procedure

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure a speedy and effective evacuation of a University building in the event of a fire and the roles that various people need to play to achieve this.

The objectives are:

- From the point at which a fire is detected, the building's occupants are able to get themselves and everyone else out of the building safely and as quickly as possible;



- The Emergency Services are alerted at the earliest opportunity so that they can fight the fire;
- The building's occupants are able to provide information to the Emergency Services and University Management on:
 - The state of the building's evacuation;
 - Persons in need of rescue or assistance;
 - Building hazards that present a continuing threat;
 - Building access and services that will assist the Emergency Services in their work, helping to deal with the fire and minimising injury and other losses.

Everyone benefits from working together during an evacuation.

A. Any Persons' Response on Suspecting or Discovering Fire

The following instructions should be noted for all staff:

1. Are you trained and can you SAFELY extinguish the fire? (Even if you do, you must still raise the alarm and contact Security for assistance);
2. If not, leave the room, closing the door behind you to limit fire spread;
3. Activate the first manual call point you see as you escape. If you are in a small building without an alarm system, shout FIRE! as you leave;
4. Proceed to the nearest fire escape route out of the building;
5. Call Security Control on extension 3200 to advise them of the location of the fire;
6. Go to your designated Fire Assembly Point (FAP) as displayed on the relevant buildings fire safety notice.

B. All Persons' Response on Hearing the Fire Alarm (Students, Visitors, Contractors, etc.)

All persons should:

1. Leave the room/area (closing doors behind you) and proceed via nearest escape route to building exit;



2. Go to your designated Fire Assembly Point (FAP), giving information on evacuated areas if able to do so;
3. Await instructions from the most senior Security person present or Fire Officer before re-entering the building.

C. Fire Marshals

Each Faculty and Service Department is responsible for the appointment of Fire Marshals and designated Deputies. Each building will be divided into zones – either by entire floors or by sub dividing floors, with a Fire Marshal appointed to each zone. Their duties will include:

- Checking all rooms quickly in the vicinity where they are working (including toilets) before evacuating with everyone else. Knock loudly on toilet doors and shout FIRE to inform any occupants;
- They should instruct anyone that they do find, to leave immediately;
- They should assist any disabled person to the nearest Fire Refuge and call security for evacuation assistance;
- Once they have left the building, they should go to the FAP and find the Senior Security Officer and report:
 - Any evidence of fire they witnessed;
 - The areas/rooms they checked and were empty;
 - Any persons unable or unwilling to leave the building;
 - Specific location of any disabled persons in a Fire Refuge.
- They may also assist in encouraging people toward the Fire Assembly Point.

Important Note:

Be alert for smoke or flame. Look through glass panels in closed doors before opening door and entering the room. Do not open a door if the handle feels hot to touch.

All Employees

In addition to following evacuation steps at (a) and (b) above, all employees can assist the appointed Fire Marshals to ensure that others evacuate the building in the event of an emergency, for example; to conduct building clearance of a location that has no appointed fire marshal.



Inducting Students

Course leaders should ensure that all students who arrive at the University to study must be inducted at the start of their course on the emergency evacuation procedure steps (1) and (2) above and reminded of this at the beginning of each academic year.

Staff Supervising Students/Visitors during an Alarm

Any member of staff who is supervising students or visitors in the building at the time of the alarm should lead those persons to safety.

Disabled Persons

Disabled persons should follow their Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) and evacuate the building, drawing on assistance from colleagues as arranged. Any person who does not have a PEEP should contact their Line Manager and the Health and Safety Team at the earliest opportunity.

At the sight or sound of the fire alarm, the person should leave as per (B) above, seeking assistance from colleagues if necessary. If they require assistance to descend stairs and leave the building, they should go to their nearest Fire Refuge and contact Security Control on extension 3200 or activate the intercom to inform a member of the Fire Response Team of their location and needs.

Fire Refuges

All staff should familiarize themselves with the locations of the Fire Refuges in the buildings in which they work.

D. Emergency and Evacuation Team

The Emergency and Evacuation Team will be led by Security in the early stages of a fire alarm, until relieved by Fire Officers attending the scene. Their purpose is to assess the emerging situation, investigate the cause of the activation where safe to do so and communicate with the Emergency Services.

Emergency and Evacuation Team functions are to:

1.0 Assess Emerging Situation by:

- Investigating alarm activation and location and progress of any fire; (using information gained from the fire panels, or witnesses);
- Learning the state of the evacuation and especially the location of any persons who need either rescue or assistance to evacuate the building;



- Decide whether Campus Services Facilities Support Assistants or other Campus Services staff need to attend to assist the evacuation and Emergency Services.

2.0 Ensure Security Control Communicate with the Emergency and Evacuation Coordinators by:

- Verifying the existence of a fire or false alarm, where able to do so;
- Updating Lead Emergency and Evacuation Coordinators on the situation as it emerges.

3.0 Control Flow of Evacuees from the Building by:

- Directing evacuees to keep moving to avoid bottlenecks in foyers and outside building entrances and to head towards the Fire Assembly Point (FAP).
- Directing evacuees away from public highways and to a place of safety adjacent to the FAP.

4.0 Receive status reports from Fire Marshals

The purpose of Security staff acting as Evacuation Coordinators is to ensure, as far as they are able to do safely, that all the building's occupants have evacuated successfully and to advise the Fire Service of the status of the evacuation, especially any persons who need assistance with their evacuation or rescue.

They should:

- Identify themselves to Fire Marshals and evacuees as they approach the FAP from the building and ask them for the following information:
 - Any persons (especially disabled) who remain in the building and their location;
 - Any evidence of fire and its location;
 - Areas of the building cleared (tick off on building floor plans);
 - In buildings with studios, workshops and laboratories, hazards that present a continuing risk to the Emergency Services.

5.0 Liaise with the Senior Fire Officer attending the scene by:

- Explaining the situation to the Senior Fire Officer;
- Giving the location of any persons remaining in the building who will need to be rescued;
- Coordinating/communicating with University services;
- Providing information regarding building hazards.



6.0 Communicate with University Services particularly where:

- Campus Services are needed to provide access or isolation of building services;
- Faculty or Service staff with knowledge of the building and its hazards are needed by Fire Officers for the evaluation of building hazards.

7.0 Assist Disabled Persons by:

Being able to deploy trained staff who can use an Evac Chair if needed to assist a person with mobility impairment. They will be deployed by the Security Officer when there is a person who needs assistance with evacuation.

8.0 Organise Disabled Evacuation using Evacuation Lift

In buildings with an evacuation lift, the evacuation lift should be used to bring persons to the ground floor and out to safety. Once a person or persons have been located, Security Officers, Facilities Support Assistants, or a member of the Emergency and Evacuation Team (if different) attending the building should take control of the lift as per instructions and bring these persons to the ground and out of the Building.

E. Security Control will:

- Receive an alarm activation from either (1) person calling in alarm, or (2) Galaxy activation;
- Direct a Security Officer to the building to lead the Emergency and Evacuation Team;
- Obtain information on persons in need of assistance to evacuate from either:
 1. Fire Refuge communication points in the building or
 2. Security Officers at the scene, or
 3. PEEP list.
- Direct Fire Crews to the scene;
- Contact and update University Management, if necessary.

In the event of a serious fire incident, the Director of Campus Services will be contacted via the Head of Security to initiate the Incident Management Plan

Once the Fire Brigade are on site, the Lead Evacuation Coordinator, Security, and others are to adopt a supporting role in dealing with incident (fire) itself.