



# Authorisation to access restricted locations

Guidance for Heads of School/ Service

PRSG19.3		WELLBEING, SAFETY AND HEALTH MANAGEMENT SYSTEM					
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## Introduction

This guidance is for Heads of School/ Service within whose remit there are locations where access needs to be restricted to prevent untrained or unsupervised people entering a dangerous area. For some locations it may be a legal requirement to restrict access to “danger areas” e.g. radiation laboratories, contained biological laboratories, asbestos designated work zones, etc.; for other locations it is to protect people (staff, students, visitors) from exposure to harm from substances, equipment, or processes e.g. plant rooms, workshops, chemistry laboratories. Speak to your Health and Safety Manager if you have any questions.

## Definitions

**A restricted location** is a physically defined area where access is controlled for reasons of health and safety. Access is controlled because the location contains varying degrees of risk which for untrained or unsupervised people can cause harm. In almost all cases the restricted location is fully physically defined – usually because it is a room (e.g. laboratories, plant rooms, workshops etc.), or because temporary barriers are put in place (e.g. a building site or where work is going on involving asbestos). Very occasionally there may be a location which is not fully physically defined - e.g. a strong magnetic field extending beyond the boundaries of a room. Speak to your Health and Safety Manager or specialist (e.g. Radiation Protection Service) for more information.

This protocol does **NOT** cover restricting access to a location for reasons *other* than health and safety. For example it does not cover **security** (e.g. I.T. cluster rooms to prevent theft or malicious damage) **or confidentiality** (e.g. Human Resources rooms where personnel records are kept). For further information on restrictions relating to these reasons contact FD Security or HR.

**Access authorisation** is a control mechanism which ensures that people have been given approval to enter a location which has been restricted for health and safety reasons.

**Routine access** – this is access by people to their day-to-day workplace (i.e. normal place of work).

**Visitor** is a person who does not ordinarily have routine access to the location but is authorised either through a process or through being supervised throughout their visit.

## Roles and actions

The health and safety responsibilities of staff, students or visiting personnel are set out in the University Health and Safety Policy (<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/safety/policy.htm>). For the management of authorisation to access restricted areas the role-holders listed below are proposed to carry out additional specific actions.

### Head of School/ Service

- With support from staff, identify restricted locations within their remit from the list of key locations in the Standard.
- Identify any extra locations where access needs to be restricted, with support from staff through the risk assessment process.
- Nominate the person with the necessary skills, experience, knowledge and authority to authorise access for each restricted location.
- Support and empower staff to feel able to prohibit access to people who do not have authorisation to enter a location.
- If necessary agree any variation to the Standard and Table in writing with the Head of Health and Safety.
- Check that a record is kept at school/ service level of all restricted locations within your remit.

### **Person nominated to authorise access**

- Categorise (and amend categories of) restricted locations based on the significant hazards in the location.
- Authorise, manage and record access to the restricted location in line with the Table.
- Liaise with cleaning service provider/ maintenance provider/ FD Estates/ FD Estates' approved contractors in line with the Table.
- Prohibit access to people who do not have authorisation to enter a location.
- Check that correct signage is in place.
- For shared restricted locations, produce a formal agreement.
- If requested so to do by Emergency Services, provide them with relevant information on the hazards in the location.
- For highly restricted locations, put in place and approve a written process for emergency access for FD Estates staff or their authorised contractors.

### **Staff and students**

- Follow the instruction of the person nominated to authorise access in each restricted location.
- Prohibit access to people who do not have authorisation to enter a location.

### **Health and Safety Manager and relevant specialist (e.g. Biological Safety Manager, Radiation Protection Service, Fire Safety Manager)**

- Agree category level for 'highly restricted' locations.
- Offer advice on recognised industry quality standards for new 'highly restricted' locations.
- Agree physical measures needed for old and new 'highly restricted' locations.

### **FD Estates or their authorised contractors**

- Follow processes in line with the Table.
- Contact the person nominated to authorise access in a restricted or limited access location, if emergency out-of-hours access has happened, in line with the Table.

## GUIDANCE

### 1. Access to the following locations is restricted

As Head of School/ Service, you should check if you have any of the following locations within your management remit. This list of locations has already been identified by the University either because they will contain hazards which may cause harm to anyone untrained or unsupervised, or because there is a legal requirement to do so.

- a. Radiation and laser laboratories,
- b. Biological and chemical laboratories,
- c. Wood, metal, electrical and engineering workshops,
- d. Plant rooms including electrical switch-rooms and service risers,
- e. Rooms with gaseous fire suppression system,
- f. Rooms with noise levels above 85 decibels,
- g. Asbestos enclosures (erected for notifiable works involving asbestos-containing materials – see the protocol on Management of Asbestos-containing materials at [www.leeds.ac.uk/safety](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/safety) for more information),
- h. Roofs,
- i. Ducts,
- j. Building sites,
- k. Rooms with high magnetic fields (greater than 0.5 millitesla [5 gauss]), e.g. room containing MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) scanner or NMR (nuclear magnetic resonance) machine,
- l. Rooms (e.g. cryo-stores) where cryogenic gases are stored or used in quantities likely to cause asphyxiation. Your Health and Safety Manager can explain more about this. This could include for example, Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) rooms, cryo-stores etc.

If you do have any of these locations within your remit, you should check that there is a system in place to restrict access to only authorised people. See the Table for more information. If a system to restrict access is *not* in place, you need to speak to the relevant location manager and your Health and Safety Manager/ relevant specialist role (e.g. Radiation Protection Service) and ensure that a system is implemented.

### 2. Additional restricted locations

The list of locations above identifies as a minimum the key locations into which the University expects access to be restricted. However in your remit you may have additional locations with other hazards for which access needs to be restricted and this will have been identified through the risk assessment process. These may include for example, a driving or flight simulator which is in motion within a room on hydraulic rams – to which access would need to be restricted.

### 3. Categorisation of restricted locations

You need to ensure that, depending on the level of hazard, restricted areas are categorised in accordance with the Table as either: **limited access** (orange/yellow label), **restricted location** (red label) or **highly restricted location** (red/ black striped label). If your staff wish to categorise a location as '**highly restricted location**' then they need to do this in conjunction with their Health and Safety Manager and the relevant specialist role (e.g. Radiation Protection Service), and it needs to be recorded.

### 4. Access is managed in line with the Table

The Table sets out the specific requirements for managing access authorisation to each category of restricted location. These will be auditable and are a critical part of this protocol, and therefore you need to ensure that your staff implement this. See the end of this document for additional guidance specific to the Table.

## 5. People authorising access

It is essential that you nominate the person (or people) who can authorise access to each location and check that this is recorded. You should be assured that each person has the relevant skills, experience, knowledge and authority for the activities being undertaken, and the associated risks.

The level of skills, experience and knowledge required depends on the level of hazard (and therefore the categorisation of the restricted location).

For **highly restricted locations** the formally nominated person authorising access would be expected to have undertaken documented training and/or have their competence assessed. They should have a high level of understanding of the risks associated with the hazard, e.g. for a containment level 3 biological laboratory the Laboratory Manager will have the skill/ knowledge required, whilst for an electrical substation it might be the FD Estates Authorising Engineer.

For **limited access** the level of hazard is reasonably low and for example in a low hazard containment level 1 biological laboratory, access could be authorised by a technician.

## 6. Prohibiting entry

On occasion access to restricted locations may have to be prohibited – e.g. because experiments / research area needs to be made safe before access can be permitted; the person trying to enter the location has no legitimate right to be there; there is nobody available to supervise them etc.

You should encourage your staff to challenge people who they believe do not have authorisation to enter a restricted location.

## 7. Restricted locations are identifiable

You need to ensure that there is a system in place that clearly identifies locations with restricted access.

## 8. Shared restricted locations

Where use of a restricted location is shared (e.g. between schools, services, central teaching space, external organisations, NHS or spin out companies), you need to ensure a formal agreement is produced and communicated. This needs to identify the management arrangements and responsibilities for the restricted location including the people nominated to authorise access.

## 9. Amending the authorisation category

As Head of School/ Service you need to be assured that there is a process in place to facilitate any changes to the categorisation of a restricted location – including changes to signage and records. .

## 10. Amending or revoking an individual's access

Occasionally it may be necessary to remove or reduce an individual's access to a restriction location (e.g. if they are in breach of health and safety requirements). When this happens, you should have in place a system to empower the nominated person to amend or revoke access authorisation.

## 11. Variations to this Standard and Table

On occasion you as Head of School / Service may consider that a variation to this Standard or Table is required. This can be addressed on a one-to-one basis by formally agreeing the variation in writing with the Head of Health and Safety and the relevant stakeholders (e.g. Head of FD Estates). Discuss this with your Health and Safety Manager if you think there are situations which require a variation.

## Specific guidance for the Table

The Table forms part of the Standard and as such must be put into place.

<p><b>Physical measures</b></p>	<p><b>Highly restricted locations</b></p> <p>When <b>constructing a new</b> location (or one which is being significantly refurbished) that will be categorised as a <b>highly restricted location</b>, there are a number of quality standards which may need to be met, as well as extra requirements from the relevant agency depending on the nature of the hazard. These agencies include the Police, insurance, Environment Agency, Home Office, Fire and Rescue, BRE – Building Research Establishment, Health and Safety Executive, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs etc, and often stipulate the type of construction standard that is to be met (e.g. walls, doors, windows etc.).</p> <p>For both a <b>new</b> (or significantly refurbished) location and one which is currently in use (i.e. <b>old</b> location), seek advice and gain agreement from your Health and Safety Manager, and in the case of specialist areas, the relevant specialist – e.g. Radiation Protection Service, Facilities Directorate Authorising Engineer, Biological Safety Manager, Fire Safety Manager or Head of Security Services (or their delegated nominee).</p> <p>For <b>restricted or limited access locations</b> the types of physical measures include did locks, card swipe, proximity card reader or lock and key. This is not an exhaustive list and there may be other methods. Not all of these are suitable for all locations (e.g. lock and key would be not on its own be suitable for certain types of radiation laboratories). Please consult with your Health and Safety Manager and relevant specialists as listed above.</p>
<p><b>Signage</b></p>	<p>There are <b>examples</b> attached of how the signs <i>could</i> look in PowerPoint so you can change the content and format to meet your needs.</p> <p>Health and Safety Services will shortly start working on a 'Health and safety signage' protocol to ensure that signage meets legal and University requirements.</p> <p><b>Highly restricted locations</b> in particular need to consider which contact details of the person nominated to authorise access to include in their signage (and the process to support this) for both in-work-hours and out-of-hours emergencies. A system should be in place to deal with emergencies if that person is in a meeting, on leave, out of the office etc. This is likely to be in addition to (or may be part of) your Critical Incident Management Plan and Business Continuity Plan.</p>
<p><b>Person nominated to authorise access</b></p>	<p>For <b>highly restricted</b> – examples could include Principal Investigator (or directly delegated and competent nominee) for that location, Authorising Engineer, Radiation Protection Service. Their contact details need to be on the signage on the door of the location to enable people asking for access can find them.</p> <p>For <b>restricted and limited</b> access locations - Location manager or supervisor (or delegated nominee). Radiation Protection Service in the case of radiation and laser labs.</p>
<p><b>Written process for authorising and recording routine access</b></p>	<p>This doesn't have to be a new system – many areas already have effective written systems in place including information on the system for accessing the locations, as well as spreadsheets listing people who have had signed off induction, or who are signing to indicate they have received keys, cards, fobs etc.</p> <p>For <b>highly restricted locations</b>, this should be a formal robust process taking into account the required level of supervision and training.</p>
<p><b>Signing in and out</b></p>	<p>For a <b>highly restricted location</b> there is often a need for a signing in/ out process to be in place for each visit by each individual. This could be either through a log book or electronic system.</p>
<p><b>Access for Cleaners</b></p>	<p>Training given to cleaners for restricted or limited access locations needs to be relevant to the risk – e.g. an induction or briefing session giving instructions such as what can and can't be touched (e.g. in a laboratory, floors to be cleaned but not</p>

	benches) and what to do in an emergency (e.g. if they find a spill). A risk assessment will determine if the presence of a locally trained supervisor may be required.
<b>Access for maintenance</b>	For <b>restricted locations</b> – people who need access to the location for routine maintenance (including FD Estates, their approved contractors and any other maintenance providers) can't just enter the location without following a previously agreed written process.

## Support and Guidance

For more help and support on access authorisation and restricted areas please contact your Health and Safety Manager.