



# Fire Safety

Guidance for Heads of School/ Service

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| <i>Doc control no: PRSG16.2 V3</i> |     |              |    | WELLBEING, SAFETY AND HEALTH MANAGEMENT SYSTEM |   |             |        |
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## 1. Introduction

This Guidance is for you as the Head of School/ Service, with your particular responsibility as the Responsible Person (as cited in the Health and Safety Policy) for fire safety in your school/ service. The University aims to minimise the incidence of fire within its premises and the impact of fire on life, people's safety, delivery of services, the environment and property.

Any questions should be directed to your Fire Warden or the Fire Safety Managers on [safety@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:safety@leeds.ac.uk) or 0113 34 38004 or 0113 34 38006 (or call 0113 34 34201 for Health and Safety Services reception).

## 2. Suggested actions

The health and safety responsibilities of staff, students and visiting personnel are set out in the [University Health and Safety Policy](#). For the management of fire safety, the following actions are proposed for the role-holders listed below.

### Heads of School/ Service (HoSS – the nominated 'Responsible Person' in legal terms)

- Appoint Fire Wardens and Fire Marshals.
- Monitor that Operational fire risk assessments, annual fire drill, Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) and routine fire safety checks are carried out.
- Monitor that a generic disabled evacuation strategy is in place and understood by staff for any people with disabilities visiting the school/ service.
- Where there is more than one school or service in a building, the HoSS with the largest space occupancy takes the lead role in coordination and cooperation for fire safety matters.
- Check that where remedial action is required (by the /Building fire risk assessment) in your area is carried out.
- Take appropriate action if you are notified that one of your staff or students has ignored the fire alarm or re-entered the building while it is still going, without authorisation.

### Senior Fire Warden

This optional role exists in larger schools/ services to coordinate the activities of the Fire Wardens by :-

- Confirming periodic (normally 6 weekly) checks of the existing fire precautions are being carried out and that faults are dealt with.
- When notified that a staff member or student has a disability which may impair their mobility, carry out a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) in conjunction with the Fire Safety Manager.
- Confirm fire drills are carried out.
- Confirm that any fire or fire alarm activation is recorded on Sentinel.
- Carry out a generic disabled evacuation strategy for your school service.
- Attend training as required by the Fire safety training matrix (link) including the three year refresher course.

### Fire Warden

- Train Fire Marshals in line with the Fire safety training matrix. (link)
- Give all new staff and students a fire safety induction.
- Carry out an Operational fire risk assessment.
- Carry out periodic (6 weekly) checks of existing fire precautions and deal with any faults.
- When notified that a staff member or student has a disability which may impair their mobility, carry out a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) in conjunction with the staff member/ student and the Fire Safety Manager.
- Organise and carry out an annual fire evacuation drill.
- When notified of a fire or fire alarm activation, record it on the incident report system (Sentinel).
- Assist in the evacuation of the building.
- Report to Head of School/ Service any members of staff or students who do not comply with the evacuation of the building or instructions given by Fire Wardens or Fire Marshals.

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- Carry out a generic disabled evacuation strategy for your school/ service in conjunction with the Fire Safety Managers.
- If feeling confident to do so, extinguish a fire in its early stages using the appropriate fire extinguisher without putting yourself at risk.
- Attend training as required by the Fire safety training matrix (link) including the three year refresher course.

### **Fire Marshal**

- Assist in the safe evacuation of the building in the event of an emergency alarm or fire drill and be available at entrances or exits if the need arises to prevent unauthorised re-entry.
- Assist in fire drills by observing the evacuation of staff, and reporting back to the Fire Wardens.
- Attend training as required by the Fire safety training matrix.
- Assist the Fire Wardens.

### **Line managers/ academic tutors**

- Follow your local system to ensure that a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) is produced if a staff member or student tells you of a mobility issue (from a short-term disability like a broken leg to a permanent disability) which may impair their evacuation from a building in case of fire.

### **Staff and students**

- Evacuate the building and follow any instructions given by Fire Wardens or Fire Marshals when the fire alarm goes off.
- Notify your line manager/ academic tutor and Fire Warden of any disabilities (short term or permanent) which may impair your evacuation from a building in the case of fire.
- Deal with any fire safety problems e.g. blocked fire exits.

### **Fire Safety Managers**

- Carry out Building fire risk assessments (structural and electrical) and inform relevant staff of remedial action required
- Carry out a fire safety audit of schools and services.
- Be consulted on and approve alterations and building plans.
- Carry out training for Fire Wardens and other staff.
- Investigate fire incidents and fire alarm activations reported on Sentinel.
- Liaise with regulatory bodies.

### **Facilities Directorate: Estates**

- Consult with and gain approval from the Fire Safety Managers on all alterations/ refurbishments/ modifications to buildings and building projects.
- Maintain and test structural fire safety measures, electrical fire safety systems and firefighting equipment and keep records.
- Check that where remedial action is required (by the Building fire risk assessment) in your area is carried out.

### **Facilities Directorate: Security Service**

- Respond to, do an initial investigation and report fire incidents/ alarm activations on Sentinel.
- Call the Fire and Rescue Service where necessary.
- Liaise with Fire Wardens, Fire Marshals and the Fire and Rescue Service when required.
- Assist in the evacuation of people with disabilities.
- If feeling confident to do so, extinguish a fire in its early stages using the appropriate fire extinguisher without putting yourself at risk.

## Guidance

### 3. Building fire risk assessment (structural and electrical)

- This is a document which is completed by the Fire Safety Managers to assess the structural and electrical fire provisions for a building. It looks into the technical aspects and means of escape, fire compartmentation, fire alarm systems etc.
- The Fire Safety Managers will update the Building fire risk assessment according to their risk schedule or after any significant or material change (e.g. when they are notified of a change in occupancy or layout of the rooms). This is why it is so important that the Fire Safety Managers are consulted on refurbishments etc, to ensure that fire safety control measures are not compromised.
- As a Head of School/ Service you need to sign one Building fire risk assessment for the area in each building you occupy and keep the signed document with other fire safety documentation. If it is necessary, you will be given a Remedial Action form by the Fire Safety Managers which will list any actions that need to be taken and by whom (e.g. Head of School/ Service , FD Estates etc). In this case, you need to ensure and sign off these actions. When all actions have been completed notify the Fire Safety Managers. This action may be delegated to a senior manager so long as this is formally agreed and recorded.

### 4. Cooperation in shared buildings

- In shared buildings there may already be an agreement as to who is the largest occupier and therefore takes responsibility for coordination. If you are not sure, speak to the Fire Safety Managers.
- Each individual Head of School/ Service should share information on any significant findings of Operational fire risk assessments, changes to emergency access routes or high risk activity risk assessments which may affect evacuation routes, with others in the building.
- In addition, the coordinating Head of School/ Service should arrange the annual building fire drill, sharing fire safety information with other Heads of School/ Service in the building.

### 5. Operational fire risk assessment

- This is carried out (usually by a Fire Warden or Health and Safety Coordinator) once they have been trained by the Fire Safety Managers.
- It covers all the areas within a building for each school/ service and should be signed and kept by the Head of School/ Service with other fire safety documentation. In schools/ services with large areas it may be necessary to divide the areas into smaller parts and carry out an Operational fire risk assessment of each part. This action may be delegated to a senior manager so long as this is formally agreed and recorded.

### 6. Activity/ task health and safety risk assessments

- As Head of School/ Service it is especially important to remind your staff to consider any risk of fire or explosion when completing an activity/ task risk assessment.
- If it is determined that there is a possibility that an explosive or dangerous atmosphere may exist or be created, the control measures should be detailed in the activity risk assessment.
- Where (for example in a gas storage area) there is no activity risk assessment but there is a possibility of an explosive or dangerous atmosphere, a Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmosphere (DSEAR) risk assessment should be completed using the University-approved form, and this should be kept locally. This would be needed if, for example, substances or preparations are being stored such as petrol, paints, varnishes, solvents, gases and dusts which when mixed with air can cause an explosive atmosphere. These substances are usually identified with the following hazard signs– explosive, oxidising, flammable, extremely flammable, and highly flammable; when mixed there may be a foreseeable explosive or dangerous atmosphere

- If you have a situation that you think may incorporate these you may need to do a DSEAR risk assessment. If in doubt contact the Fire Safety Managers.

## 7. Fire Wardens and Fire Marshals

- The person carrying out the Operational fire risk assessment (usually the Fire Warden or Health and Safety Coordinator) will identify the number of Fire Wardens and Fire Marshals needed for each area occupied by the school/ service within the building.
- Where there are a large number of Fire Wardens, it may help for their activities to be coordinated by a Senior Fire Warden. Where a Health and Safety Coordinator takes on this role (as sometimes happens) they will need to have attended the Fire Warden training in line with the Fire safety training matrix (including the three year refresher course).
- As Head of School/ Service you need to appoint the relevant number of trained Fire Wardens and Fire Marshals as defined in the Operational fire risk assessment. These are voluntary roles.
- Fire Wardens are provided with detailed specialist training from the Fire Safety Managers who explain the detail of their role and what they should do.

## 8. Six weekly fire precaution checks

- These are usually carried out by a Fire Warden, every 6 weeks as a maximum.
- They check the area occupied by the school/ service to ensure that all fire precautionary measures are being maintained and that fire equipment is available for use.
- These checks need to be recorded using the approved Fire precautions checklist form and kept by the Fire Warden.
- Any defects should be reported to the [Estates Helpdesk](#) and monitored until completed. Any defects that affect the means of escape or the safety of building occupants should be reported immediately to the Fire Safety Managers.

## 9. Fire incidents and fire alarm activations

- When the fire alarm is activated the Fire Wardens will lead the evacuation of the building and where safe to do so, in line with their training, will investigate the cause of the activation.
- If a fire is suspected then Security is immediately called on the emergency number 0113 34 32222 (x32222) to enable the Fire Service to be called. This can only be superseded if prior written agreement from the Senior Fire Safety Manager is in place – in which case local arrangements and instructions should be followed.
- Whenever a fire alarm is activated Security Services will attend to confirm the cause of the activation and to reset the fire alarm panel.
- Security and Fire Wardens should both report the fire incident or activations on Sentinel, the [University's online accident reporting system](#).

## 10. Fire evacuation

- When the fire alarm is activated all occupants must evacuate the building until they are informed that it is safe to return.
- There are occasional exceptions which are agreed with the Fire Safety Managers, where occupants follow a specific approved emergency plan. For example the swimming pool (where the staff will manage the evacuation to minimise the risk of hypothermia to swimmers) or Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) for people with notified disabilities.

## 11. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)

- A PEEP is produced for every staff member or student who has notified their line manager/ academic tutor that they have a disability (from short term e.g. a broken leg to a longer term issue) which may impair their mobility, and need help to be available in case of a fire.
- You as Head of School/ Service need to check that there is a system in place locally so that if a line manager is notified by a staff member of student that they have such a disability, a PEEP can be created.

- The relevant people (usually the Fire Warden or Health and Safety Coordinator along with the Fire Safety Manager and the staff member/ student) meet to devise a PEEP which sets out their plan for evacuation for the area under the control of each Head of School/ Service.
- The PEEP is recorded on an approved form and copies are kept by the staff member/ student and with the Operational fire risk assessment as part of the Emergency Plan.

## 12. Disabled Evacuation Strategy

- Your Fire Wardens will also (in conjunction with the Fire Safety Managers) produce a disabled evacuation strategy for the areas occupied by your school/ service.
- You as Head of School/ Service need to ensure that your staff are aware of this.
- You will need to ensure it is recorded and keep it with the Operational fire risk assessment as part of the Emergency Plan. It should be reviewed at the same time as the Operational fire risk assessment or whenever the situation changes.

## 13. Training and induction

- Your Fire Wardens will give all new staff and students a fire safety induction which tells them how to evacuate the building quickly, the alternative fire exit routes (where applicable), the types of fire extinguishers and their uses within the area and specific fire safety procedures that are relevant. A record of this induction should be kept locally in line with the protocol on 'Health and safety training and competencies'.
- All staff also need to complete the fire safety module which is available either through [Complywise](#) (the University's online health and safety training package) or for staff who do not have access to computers, can be delivered in person either by their Fire Warden, line manager or Fire Safety Manager.
- Fire Wardens need to attend training run centrally by the Fire Safety Managers who will also arrange for this to be recorded this on SAP.
- Fire Marshal training is run locally by a Fire Warden. You as Head of School/ Service should speak to your HR contact to check that there is a system in place for the training to be recorded on SAP. This system might involve the local HR Coordinator (who has access to SAP) recording this information, but you need to check that this is the case in your area.
- University requirements for training and induction are set out in the Fire safety training matrix

## 14. Fire drills

- The coordinating Fire Warden (or Senior Fire Warden if there is one) in each building organises the fire drill once a year, in conjunction with the other building users if in a multi occupied building. The Fire Wardens should record this on the Operational fire risk assessment form.
- Exceptions to this are if there has already been an evacuation due to a fire alarm within the 12 month period. That evacuation should have been problem free; if issues were raised then these should be addressed and a fire drill organised to ensure the problems have been rectified. The date of the latest fire drill/ fire alarm activation should be amended on the Operational fire risk assessment.

## 15. Design projects, new builds, refurbishments etc

- The Fire Safety Managers should be consulted on all alterations/ refurbishments/ modifications to buildings and building projects carried out by FD (Estates) and by schools/ services where fire safety provisions may be affected.

## 16. Maintenance

- Facilities Directorate (Estates) should ensure that all fire safety equipment and systems are serviced, tested and maintained in an efficient working order in accordance with the relevant standards. In addition, they should be available for use, and the details of the service/ testing recorded.

## 17. List of prohibited articles (fire safety)

- A very small number of items are prohibited because they present such a high risk of fire in the work place that the University has chosen not to allow them to be used.
- As Head of School/ Service you should be sure that your staff are aware of these prohibitions and that inspections in your area check that these items are not in use.
- These include block adaptors, heaters with an open bar heating element or any access to the heating elements and naked flames (e.g. candles) in offices, teaching spaces, residences and other rooms on campus. Naked flames are acceptable in laboratories, some kitchens, some teaching spaces and where religious activities require their use – when they should be covered by a risk assessment.
- The detailed list can be found at the list of prohibited articles (fire safety).

For more support and advice speak to your local Fire Warden or contact the Fire Safety Managers on [safety@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:safety@leeds.ac.uk) or 0113 343 8004 or 8006. This guidance document is part of a broad protocol on fire safety, for more information go to [www.leeds.ac.uk/safety](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/safety)