

# Access Statement

## Paul Webley Wing, SOAS, University of London

### Thornough Street, Russell Square, WC1H 0XG

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The Paul Webley Wing is a recently refurbished part of the Senate House complex and is very accessible to all levels from the main entrance at street level.

#### **Entrance**

The main entrance, signed Paul Webley Wing, has two short, shallow ramps from the pavement to a sheltered lobby area. The original, heavy glass and hardwood doors are secured in the open position and normal access is now through automatically opening sliding glass doors.

#### **Reception**

The main reception desk is wide and open and has counters at different levels to accommodate those with a range of needs. The reception desk is equipped with an induction loop system. All visitors will need to sign in and then wear a visitor badge during their time in the building.

Two lifts and the entrance to the cloister open from the main reception area. The heavy hardwood doors to the cloister are held open, giving unhindered access to the cloister, atrium and social learning spaces at Ground Floor level.

#### **Vertical Access**

The building is provided with two banks of dual lifts located at the main entrance (8 + 9) and the opposite corner of the building (10 + 11). These lifts serve all five levels of the building.

Lifts 8 + 9 are 14 person lifts and are able to accommodate any manual or powered wheelchair. Lifts 10 + 11 are 8 person lifts and should be able to accommodate all but the largest of powered wheelchairs. The lift control buttons are at low level and each lift has voice floor announcers.

There is an additional lift within the atrium serving upper and lower levels. This lift has been specially designed to provide access for those unable to use the stairs within the cloister and has low level controls, a voice floor announcer and slow closing doors to make access easier.

There are two main staircases situated adjacent to the lifts serving all five floors and two staircases either side of the steps within the atrium serving upper and lower levels.

All cross-corridor doors (other than those opening onto staircases) are on hold open devices to give unhindered access. These doors will automatically close when the fire alarm is activated.

There are two additional fire escape staircases located in the South East corner of the building.

## **Emergency Refuges**

Generally, there are two emergency refuges on all floors other than the Ground Floor situated adjacent to the lifts / staircases. Each refuge point is marked with clear signage and equipped EVC system (emergency voice communication system) whereby individuals with mobility issues can contact security for assistance.

Security will advise on whether the individual should remain where they are (if for example it has been established that it is a false alarm) or be assisted to evacuate using an evacuation chair or whether they need to make their way into UOL demise via the shared space exits on the LG, 1st, 2nd and 3rd floors respectively. See Appendix for the Emergency Evacuation Procedure.

In the event that you need to be evacuated from a refuge point, you will be guided by staff along a horizontal access route to the adjacent South Block of Senate House.

Both electronic and manual evacuation chairs are available in Paul Webley Wing and are serviced annually and the security officers have been trained in their use.

## **Access to Teaching Rooms**

All teaching rooms are accessible, mostly directly from corridors. All teaching rooms have an access control system that requires a SOAS card to be swiped when the system is activated. All swipe points are located at low level.

The Alumni Lecture Theatre and Wolfson Lecture Theatre (at First Floor level) both have fixed tiered seating. Two wheelchair spaces are provided in each of these lecture theatres.

## **Induction Loops**

All teaching rooms and lecture theatres are fitted with induction loops. For occasional presentations that may take place in the conference suite on the Ground Floor, and infrared induction loop is available which can be obtained from the reception staff.

## **Toilets**

On the upper floors of the building, male and female toilets are situated adjacent to lifts 8 + 9. Each toilet area incorporates one ambulant cubicle. Wheelchair accessible toilets are situated adjacent to lifts 10 + 11.

On the Ground Floor, there is a wheelchair accessible toilet adjacent to lifts 10 + 11.

On the Lower Ground Floor, female toilets are adjacent to lifts 8 + 9 with Male toilets at the opposite end of the atrium (beyond the cafeteria). Gender neutral toilets, showers, wheelchair accessible shower and WC and ambulant WC cubicle are all located off the atrium.

### **Facilities within the building**

The student hub, Student Advice and Wellbeing and the Careers Service are all located at Lower Ground Floor level, opening directly from the atrium. Finance and Registry services are accessed through the Student Hub.

Social learning areas are located at Ground, Lower Ground and Second Floor levels. Those at Ground and Lower Ground open directly off the Atrium. The second floor facilities open from the corridor and require swipe card access.

### **Assistance Dogs**

Assistance dogs are welcome. Please ask your host to arrange drinking water for the dog and ask reception staff to direct you to outside areas.

## **Appendix**

### **The Emergency Evacuation Plan for Paul Webley Wing**

The following plan applies to visitors. Staff and students who require assisted emergency egress should have their Personal Emergency Egress Plan agreed with the Disability Advisor or Diversity Advisor.

If you are able to exit the building unassisted, for ground and lower ground please do so via the nearest available route and with appropriate speed. Do not use the lifts.

If you are able to exit without assistance, but need more time than other people to do so, please move first to a refuge point (see signage on stair landings) and wait for others to clear your floor. Once the route is clear, follow at a pace which is comfortable for you and report to the assembly point when you reach the ground.

If you are not able to use the stairs to exit the building please follow these instructions:

1. When the alarm rings, if you are on the ground floor of the building:
  - Move as quickly as you can to one of the exits.
  - Exit and move away from the building to the proper assembly point (Malet Street).
  - Security or fire marshalls will sweep the building to ensure it is evacuated and will advise the lead fire marshal on exiting.

OR

· If based on the lower ground you should either make your way to the external refuge via the final exit door next to lifts 10 and 11 or the one located in stair well 10 and use the emergency voice communication system (EVC) to summon help.

Or

if you are located on above ground level (floors 1-3) , make your way to a refuge on stair well 10 or next to lifts 10 and 11 and use the emergency communication system ( EVC) to summon assistance and please state where you are (a description of your location will be at the call point). Alternatively, dial 555 on any internal phone If the internal phones are inoperable, please use a mobile to call the SOAS emergency number which is 0207 898 4459. If you cannot reach the SOAS numbers please call the emergency services direct on 999.

Those at the refuge point will then be advised by incident controllers/security whether you need to evacuate and provide assistance in doing so whether that is via evacuation chair or by using the exits that lead into the UOL demise.

When evacuating via UOL, you should follow the signage that leads to the nearest refuge point and use the refuge point to summon help from UOL security/staff.

If a support worker is present they should accompany you and you should adhere to the plan of action as drawn up in your PEEP.

For more information on please see

<https://www.soas.ac.uk/healthandsafety/fire/file123690.pdf>