

Access statement:

**Brunei Gallery Building, SOAS, University of London
Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, WC1H 0XG**

Entrance to the building:

The Brunei Gallery building is relatively modern and overall the access inside the building is good. It is located in a pedestrian precinct and has steps to the front entrance. To the right of the steps there is a **ramp to a side entrance**, which opens onto the main foyer and is about 5 metres from the main entrance.

The ramp has a gradient which is not ideal, being a little steeper than the recommended gradient for a ramp of its length, but this is dictated by the distance between the corner of the building and the right hand side entrance. It should be manageable for those who use a powerchair, those who use a manual chair may need assistance with the ramp*.

The entrance at the top of the ramp has double width doors which are not automated and so some people may need assistance* to open the door(s).

Note: There is a doorbell to allow anyone needing assistance at the side entrance to attract the attention of the security guard who is present during all open hours.

* If you need assistance, please contact us in advance to make arrangements.

Vertical access

Vertical access within the building is by lift or stairs. The lift carriage is relatively small, but should be just sufficient to allow carriage of a powerchair user and one assistant.

The lifts are not of emergency evacuation standard (see below re. emergency egress).

Emergency refuges

Refuges have been identified and clearly marked on each building level above ground in the stairwells of the main staircase. The lower ground floor refuge space is in the foyer at the base of the stairs.

The refuges each have either communication devices (just push button to use) or internal telephones. The emergency egress plan is appended to this document. If the emergency alarms should ring and you are not on the ground floor, please evacuate to a refuge in the first instance. From there, if you are able to evacuate without further assistance please do so as soon as the route is sufficiently clear of other people to allow safe passage.

If you require assistance to evacuate, please call from the refuge point and an assistant will come to you. Please indicate what assistance you need during the call.

Emergency egress from the Brunei Gallery Lecture theatre is complicated because the lower ground floor is below ground and there are no level access exits from the Lower Ground floor. However the School has purchased a stairclimber device which can lift a wheelchair user in their chair and carry them up stairs and safely out of the building.

The stairclimber is stored at the base of the stairs into the Lower Ground floor. It requires one trained operator and a small number of SOAS security staff have been trained to use this equipment. If using the stairclimber device, there are at least two routes out of the building which can be used.

If you are likely to need the stairclimber device in an emergency, please mention this to the security officer in the main foyer on your way into the building. S/he will provide a copy of the Emergency Evacuation Plan (see Appendix).

For emergency egress from the upper floors:

We have an Evac+Chair available which can be used in emergencies with a trained operator (a small number of SOAS staff have been trained).

The Evac+chair is located on Level 3 in the stairwell at the Malet Street end of the building, outside room B300. It can be brought to other floors if needed.

If you may require use of the Evac+chair for emergencies, please mention this to the security officer on your way into the building. S/he will provide a copy of the Emergency Evacuation Plan (see appendix).

Hearing induction loops

The Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre has an induction loop associated with its public address system. If an induction loop is needed in other rooms, a portable device is available from the Disability Service – please request this in advance of your visit.

Toilets

There are men's and women's toilet facilities on each floor at the middle of the main corridor or towards the Russell Square end of the building. These facilities tend to be quite small and are unlikely to be suitable for a wheelchair user.

There are **wheelchair accessible toilets** on the lower ground floor and level 2 as follows:

Lower Ground: from the lift cut diagonally across the foyer to your left, the accessible toilet is the middle one of the three doors which are in a recess on the wall facing the lift.

Level 2: from the lift turn right and travel all the way along the main corridor and then around the corner and through the fire door, which is manually operated, the accessible toilet is then facing you (outside the fire door).

Access to teaching / meeting rooms:

Most rooms in the Brunei Gallery building are accessible from the main corridors, a few are very small meeting rooms and would therefore be more difficult for a wheelchair user to access. Please ensure that the person who books your meeting / teaching room is aware of your access needs in advance.

The **Brunei Suite** is on the ground floor and fully accessible to wheelchair users (with the caveat mentioned above that some people may need assistance accessing the side entrance to get into the building).

The **Brunei Gallery Lecture theatre** is a raked seating lecture theatre and as a result only a small section of the room close to the main entrance is accessible by a wheelchair user.

Assistance dogs

Assistance dogs are welcome, please ask your host to arrange drinking water for the dog. There is a grassy area immediately outside the building which can be used for toileting if necessary, please pick up after your animal where applicable.

Queries

If you have any queries about building access, please contact either:

The SOAS Conference Office, Level 2, Brunei Gallery building

Tel: 0207 898 4918 Email: jp30@soas.ac.uk

Or

The SOAS Diversity Office, Level 1, Room 108, SOAS College Building

Tel: 0207 898 4957 Email: diversity@soas.ac.uk

APPENDIX A

The Emergency Evacuation Plan

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, 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 Vernon Square Campus:
 - Move as quickly as you can to one of the exits.
 - Exit and move away from the building to the proper assembly point.

OR

If you are **above ground** level (floors 1-3):

1. When the alarm rings
 - Move as quickly as you can to one of the designated refuge spaces (see labels on staircases and landings).
 - If you have a support worker, they should accompany you.

Note:- Call points only on the 3rd floor refuge points . In staircase 1 opposite room V301A and staircase 2 by SCR.

For 1st and 2nd floors - fire marshals should (if the refuge point is in their check area) pass on their exit route and inform lead fire marshal on exiting the building.

Security will also check both refuge points on their final sweep of the building and advise lead fire marshal on exiting the building.

 - At the refuge, you should use the call button on the communication device to let the Main Reception know where you are. (Alternatively, dial ext 555 on any internal phone) Please state what assistance you require. The person responding will inform you whether you need to evacuate or not.
 - The description of your location should be on the sign at the call point.
 - If the internal phones are inoperable, please use a mobile to call the SOAS emergency number which is 020 7074 5159.
 - If you cannot reach the SOAS numbers please call the emergency services direct on 999.
2. You and the assistant (using the evac+chair if necessary) should make your way down the staircase as quickly as you are able to manage safely.
3. Go to the usual assembly point and make sure that the person in charge has noted that you and your assistant are both safely out of the building.