

SOAS FIRE SAFETY POLICY



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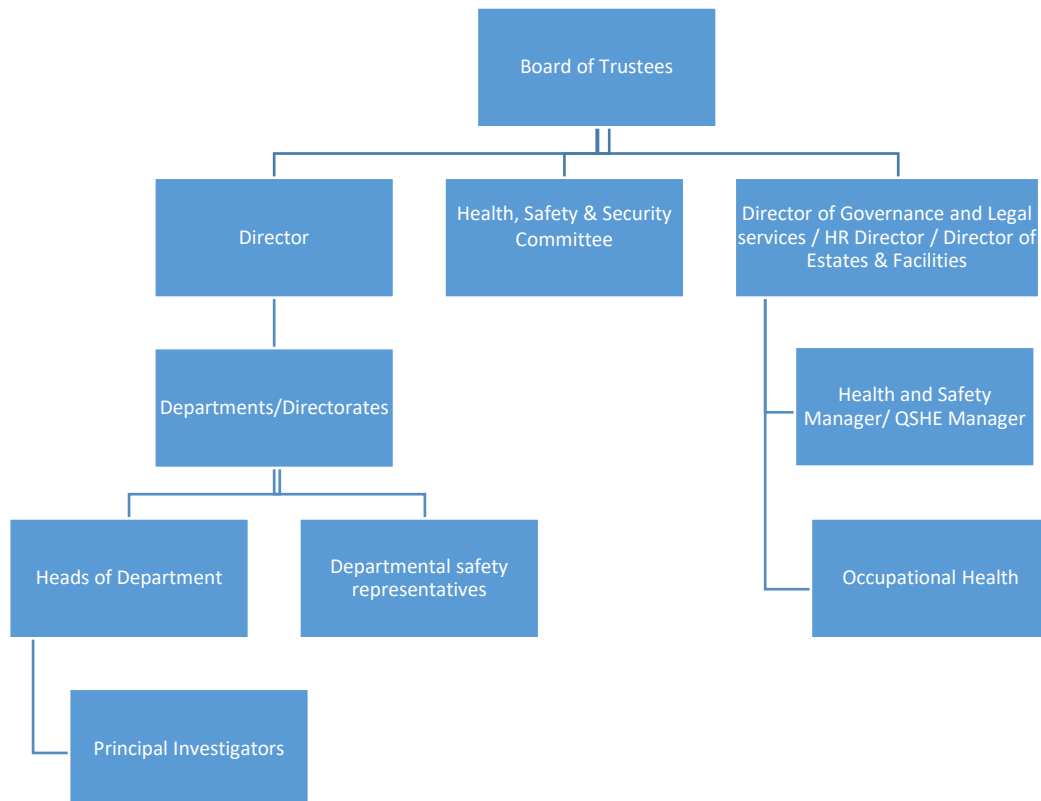
1. Introduction

SOAS is committed to providing a safe environment for its staff, students and visitors. Part of this safety responsibility is in the provision and management of fire safety systems and procedures. All SOAS staff/students, their visitors and contractors, have a statutory responsibility in ensuring compliance with the law and complying with the fire safety provisions defined within this policy. Fire is recognised as a major threat to the activities of SOAS. An outbreak of even a small fire creates risk to both life and property, damage to the environment and may compromise our normal business activities. SOAS will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the risk associated with fire will be managed in compliance with the Regulatory Reform (fire safety) Order 2005 and any other relevant legislation that may impact upon it. The aim of this policy is, therefore, to provide a robust fire safety framework which will be implemented to secure the safety and wellbeing of everyone within SOAS and to protect the SOAS's assets.

2. Responsibilities

This Fire Safety Policy applies to all premises and activities falling, to any extent, under the control of SOAS. The policy sets down the framework by which SOAS and all members of the SOAS community are expected to undertake their relevant duties. The main responsibility for statutory compliance with the Regulatory Reform (fire safety) Order 2005 is held by the school with the management and supervision of the regulations devolved via the Director to the relevant Heads department and to the Director of Estates & Facilities, who will ensure that the requirements of the duty holder's responsibilities in respect of the undertakings required.

The Regulatory Reform (fire safety order) 2005 requires each employer and person who has control of a relevant premise, to any extent, to carry out an assessment of the premises to identify any risks to the safety of relevant persons in respect of harm caused by fire and to take all reasonable fire safety measures to ensure the safety of relevant persons within the relevant premise. The following Fire Safety Management diagram details the managerial delivery process to ensure all fire safety provisions are maintained. This reflects the normal line management arrangements within SOAS.



The Director has final and overall day-to-day responsibility for Health and Safety within the School, as executive officer with responsibility to the Board of Trustees.

Responsibility for health and safety forms part of managerial responsibility, through the management chain, even if not formally specified in the job description. The supervision of health and safety can be delegated, but the responsibility cannot.

All staff who perform a managerial or supervisory role, either of other staff or of students, should ensure that activities are carried out in a manner which protects the health and safety of those involved.

All staff have a duty to cooperate with the School to achieve a healthy and safe workplace and to take reasonable care to ensure the safety of themselves and others.

The Director of Estates & Facilities is responsible for ensuring arrangements are made in respect of the maintenance of fire safety provision for each SOAS premise. The below tasks will be delegated to various members of the Estates and Facilities directorate, including but not exclusively the Head of Campus services and Facilities, the Head of Compliance and QSHE manager this will include;

- Fire warning and detection systems that are maintained in accordance with the relevant standard
- Firefighting equipment, including fixed installations and specialist systems, which are subjected to a maintenance programme in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines.
- Means of escape are maintained as required
- Electrical portable appliance tests are carried out periodically
- Fire Alarm testing (weekly)
- Maintaining a fire Log Book
- To ensure that all fire incidents and fire alarms are recorded and are reported to the Safety manager.

- Storage and use of dangerous substances (DSEAR & COSHH) are done so in accordance with datasheets
- Emergency lighting, escape lighting and signage are maintained and tested in accordance with the relevant standard
- Electrical installation tests are undertaken as required. Ensuring that any recommendations from risk assessment reviews, relevant to areas of responsibility, are responded to diligently.
- Liaising with the Health and Safety Manager on all matters likely to impact on the Fire Safety provision for the relevant premise
- Ensuring that all works undertaken by contractors, relevant to areas of responsibility, are supervised and where “hot works” are to be carried out, that the appropriate approval is completed
- Proactively monitor waste and waste storage ensuring it is stored away from buildings and within designated containers
- Liaising with local fire authority when required
- Making certain that appropriate warning signage and notices are present throughout all premises
- Testing of refuge point intercoms (weekly)
- Appointing the incident control team
- Ensuring that security staff are trained in the use of evacuation chairs
- Producing and maintaining Fire Risk Assessments
- Producing and maintaining a current Fire Strategy for each building
- Producing and maintaining a current Assignment Instructions for each building.
- Producing fire evacuation plans and procedures in conjunction with the Health and Safety manager

The Director of Governance and Legal services, supported by the **Health and Safety manager** is responsible for supporting the Director of Estates and Facilities, to meet, deliver and maintain statutory fire safety obligations, this will include;

- Supporting fire wardens in their role and provide adequate training to maintain competence
- Auditing fire arrangements and ensuring that the fire policy is reviewed at least every two years or when an incident or change in legislation, work activity or departmental structure dictates.
- Ensure a Fire Warden training programme is provided as required
- Provide fire safety training as part of staff induction
- Ensuring that fire drills are carried out bi-annually
- Work alongside Estates and Facilities personnel in the production of evacuation plans for each premises
- Arranging for SOAS staff (excluding members of the security team whose training is mandatory) to be trained to use evacuation chairs as appropriate.
- Supporting Estates and Facilities in the implementation of actions as advised by fire risk assessors

Advising DSR, managers and Student advice and Wellbeing on the production of PEEPS when required

Departmental safety representatives (DSR) are responsible for;

- Carrying out daily visual inspections of their area of responsibility, regarding escape routes, firefighting equipment, fire doors and any issue or action that has the potential to increase the risk of fire or hamper efforts to control one.
- Assist in the development of appropriate arrangements for aiding the evacuation of those with sensory or mobility impairments (PEEPS)

Student advice and Wellbeing team are responsible for;

- Producing PEEPs for students as required

Fire wardens and Estates team (incident controllers/security team) are responsible for;

- Being familiar with all exit routes from the building in which the normally work
- Advising others regarding exit routes
- Drawing attention to any deficiency or obstruction to these routes
- Instructing personnel in the area in which they find themselves to vacate the building should the need arise
- Guiding personnel along exit routes and help those whose routes are obstructed to find an alternation means of escape
- Ensuring that all fire doors in their area are closed
- Instructing personnel outside of the building to clear the approach roads thus leaving them clear for emergency services
- Ensuring that personnel congregate in recognised assembly areas and do not re-enter the premises until instructed to do so by the emergency services/incident controller
- Making a note of any person that refuses to co-operate with their instructions
- Reporting the safe evacuation of their respective area to the incident controller.
- The incident controller (designated members of the security team)) will be responsible for liaising with all fire wardens during the evacuation as well as being point of contact for any communication with emergency services.

Staff and Students have a responsibility to comply with the Fire Safety Policy. This will include, but not be limited to;

- Observing all instructions, information and training intended to secure fire safety.
- Co-operating with the School on all matters relevant to fire safety.
- Not interfering with any building fabric or equipment provided in connection with assuring fire safety.
- Reporting any obvious defects or short-comings in the schools' fire safety provision, arrangements or procedures

3. Arrangements

Contractors;

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 work schedule, contract agreement or risk assessment and where such works are likely to impact on the existing fire safety provision notification must be communicated to the Health and Safety manager for their consideration. Contractors will also require to be made aware of the fire evacuation procedures relevant to the area they are working in or are likely to attend. Where any work is being undertaken that is likely to involve the application of a naked flame or mechanically induced heat source a "Hot Work Permit" must be acquired and agreed prior to the commencement of such works.

Visitors;

Visitors and their wellbeing whilst on site fall under the responsibility of his/her host. 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" require to be displayed at prominent locations. Where possible, all buildings which the public have access to, such as galleries and libraries should be managed in such a way as to ensure that staff can account for all visitors within the premises at any given time to ensure safe evacuation.

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEPS);

Where there is a requirement for assistance by any person to evacuate any relevant premise during an emergency a PEEPS application will be required. Students or staff, who may require assistance to evacuate, should discuss their concerns and needs with their course co-ordinator, line manager, the diversity team or student advice and wellbeing, as applicable, so that any necessary individual arrangements can be put in place in advance. Managers should consider the arrangements that may be required to assist visitors with physical impairments in their area where evacuation becomes necessary.

Calling emergency services;

Alarm activations are managed by the incident controllers (the estates team/security) they will ascertain whether or not the emergency services are required based on the type of activation and will liaise with them directly prior to their attendance and if they are present on site.

Only when the incident controllers are satisfied, based on their opinion or that of the emergency services, that the premises is sufficiently secure, will SOAS staff, students, contractors and visitors be permitted to re-enter the building.

Use of lifts and refuge points;

The use of lifts during a fire or an alarm activation is strictly prohibited. Where a relevant premise has a refuge area incorporated within a protected zone it is required to have a clear means of communication between the designated refuge area and another person in a safe zone. It is the responsibility of the school to ensure evacuation of persons with physical, cognitive or sensory impairment is carried out diligently. Where refuge areas are present, the evacuation procedures required are to be incorporated within the fire evacuation plan for each SOAS premises. Evacuation chairs are provided where appropriate for individuals that require such assistance.

Evacuation chairs are located as per the table below;

Building	Floor location	Area description and chair type
Phillips building	5th	Beside staircase 4 (motorised)
Phillips building	2nd	Beside staircase 4
Research block	4th	Beside Refuge point on stair 1
Research block	1st	Beside Refuge point on stair 1
Brunei Gallery	3rd	Beside Refuge point on stair 1
Brunei Gallery	2nd	Beside Refuge point on stair 1
Brunei Gallery	LG	Beside Refuge point on stair 1 (motorised)
PWW	3rd	Beside Refuge point lift lobby
PWW	2nd	Beside Refuge point on stair 10
PWW	1st	Beside Refuge point lift lobby
PWW	LG	Staircase 9 (motorised)
all chairs are manually operated unless otherwise stated		

4. Review

A review of this policy, its procedures and associated risk assessments will be carried out at an interval no longer than 2 years in duration. However, accidents, incidents, fire, changes to legislation, structural alterations or changes to work activity could necessitate that a review be required sooner.

The effectiveness of the guidance provided in this policy will be measured and monitored via internal audits and premises specific risk assessments.

5. Training

All new staff are to be informed of fire safety provisions upon the commencement of their employment. Their line manager is responsible for ensuring that arrangements are made to ensure that all new staff are aware of the following:

- Evacuation/fire action, including the Fire Safety Policy
- Means of escape within the premises
- Location of fire exits
- Location of firefighting equipment
- Details in relation to relevant findings of the fire risk assessments and dangerous substances.

In addition, a health and safety induction training course, which includes fire safety, will be delivered by the health and safety manager in the New Staff Orientation course as arranged via Staff Development.

Students are provided with fire awareness training as part of their Welcome Week induction.

Sabbatical officers receive a safety induction delivered by the H&S manager upon commencement of the role, this includes a section on fire safety.

The training of Fire Wardens will be provided as and when deemed necessary. The maximum period for refresher training should not exceed 3 years.

All security staff will be aware of the location of evacuation chairs and will be trained in their use. Additional SOAS staff will undertake this training on a voluntary basis

6. Fire Safety Provision

- **Fire Safety Risk Assessments;** the main purpose of a fire safety risk assessment process is to ensure that a methodical and structured approach is applied to assessing the suitability and effectiveness of the fire safety provisions applicable to each SOAS premises and the fire hazards within.
- **Evacuation process tests;** the estates team will ensure that two fire evacuation drills are carried out per annum, during semesters and when the buildings are occupied. It is accepted that drills should be avoided during times, such as exams and conferences, however, consideration should be given to ensuring advantage is taken of peak occupancy times and ensure that all fire exits, and escape routes are utilised. These drills along with weekly fire alarm tests will also test whether automatic fire doors and shutters are operating correctly.
- **Dangerous substances/COSHH;** dangerous substances when exposed to fire can create a hostile and unpredictable environment. Where such substances are stored and used within the school, attention should be given to the safe use and storage guidance supplied with the substance's Safety Data Sheet. Students and employees should only be exposed to dangerous substances in an appropriately controlled and supervised environment.
- **Alarm activations;** in the event of a fire or an alarm activation within a SOAS premises, a form recording the activation will be completed by the maintenance manager. This enables those responsible to be made aware of all activations, whether the emergency services have been called or not, but more importantly allows for investigations to be carried out where necessary. Where a small fire has occurred and was subsequently extinguished without activating the fire warning system, an incident report must still be completed, recorded and distributed to all relevant parties.
- **Unwanted alarm activations;** unwanted fire alarm signals are activations of the fire warning system that are activated by any effect other than fire. These signals ultimately have a negative effect on the schools' core business and encourage complacency, as well as eroding user confidence. It is the intent of SOAS to strive towards zero tolerance of this type of activation whilst continuing to recognise the importance of fire detection systems in protecting staff, students, visitors and the build environment from the effects of fire.
- **Emergency procedures and Fire safety; Procedures** regarding the correct course of action to take in the event of a fire can be found in the main SOAS health and safety policy, which contains a section on Fire Safety. This will impart staff/students with the appropriate knowledge regarding the recommended course of action to take, should such an event take place. There is also an Emergency Procedures section which will include details of isolation procedures for processes and equipment as well as information for sharing with the fire and rescue service when in attendance. In addition, the main SOAS health and safety policy will also detail the relevant evacuation procedures that are to be adopted for persons with

impairments. Fire action notices will also be situated next to every manual fire call point in all premises. Evacuation plans for each SOAS site are also available via the Fire Safety section of the Health and Safety Policy.

- **Fixed and portable firefighting equipment;** all SOAS premises are provided with portable firefighting equipment and in some cases, fixed facilities such as dry risers. In both instances, these provisions will be maintained as per regulatory recommendations.

7. Fire Safety Management

Each SOAS premises has a number of fire safety provisions incorporated within them. These provisions are often referred to as either an active provision, examples of which can be fire detection systems, or a passive provision, examples of which can be fire doors. Irrespective of the provision it is necessary to recognise the importance of such features and ensure that their function is not compromised, as to do so will ultimately impact on the operational capability of the provision and ultimately affect the safety of occupiers and the integrity of the building itself.

At SOAS the following provisions are sign posted;

a)



Fire doors are doors that are designed to restrict the spread of fire and the products of combustion within a predicted time period and will normally feature a self-closing device. All fire doors are marked as a fire door and should be kept closed at all times. The use of wedges and other items as hold open devices is not permitted within any SOAS premises and must be positively discouraged.



Automatic fire doors are also in use throughout SOAS premises. These doors use a mechanism to allow them to remain open until the fire alarm is raised as which point they automatically release and close into their frames.

b)



All exit routes are indicated by appropriate signage. To ensure exit routes are not compromised, no equipment or materials may be accommodated or stored within any protected exit route or protected stair enclosure. All exits must be maintained clear, free from any obstruction and all final exit doors require to be easily and immediately openable from the direction of travel. Additionally, the surface finish to wall linings within stair enclosures and protected routes should be maintained free from any form of combustible wall decorations. Notice boards will be accepted in such areas as long as they are enclosed and effectively managed. Corridors and stairways that form part of escape routes should be kept clear and hazard free at all times. Items that may be a source of fuel or ignition should not be located within escape routes, such items include; portable heaters, cooking appliances, upholstered furniture, coat racks, vending machines, gas pipes and meters, photocopiers and other electrical equipment, seasonal decorations and display or exhibition material.

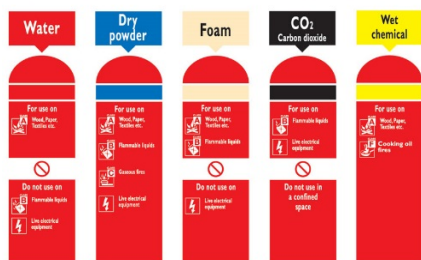
c)



A fire warning system is a system designed to provide an audible alarm and may include activation by means of detecting the elements of combustion. In all cases the alarm can be activated by means of a manual alarm call point. Manual alarm call points are normally situated in exit routes and at final exits. Where fire is known or suspected, the alarm should be raised immediately utilising a manual alarm call point (break glass point). On hearing an alarm all occupants of a premise (employees, student's, contractors and the public) must evacuate the building by the nearest available exit and assemble at the prescribed assembly point, with the exception of authorised persons for specific tasks, such as alarm investigation or PEEPs implementation. The incident controller will indicate, following consultation with the Fire & Rescue Service if in attendance, when a return to the building may be made.

d)

KNOW YOUR FIRE EXTINGUISHER COLOUR CODE



Firefighting equipment is provided within fire exit routes and may be placed adjacent to some specific risks, such as computer servers, electrical transformers etc.

The extinguishers are provided for use by trained competent persons but should only be used when it is safe to do so and the escape route from the seat of fire is not compromised. Under no circumstances should a fire be confronted without first raising the alarm. All employees are required to familiarise themselves with the extinguishers provided within the relevant premise and the fire classification that may influence their limitations of use. Where any firefighting equipment has been used or is deemed unsatisfactory, the maintenance manager should be advised to facilitate replacement or investigation as necessary.

e)



A **dry riser** is an empty pipe, which can be externally connected to a pressurised water source by firefighter. It is a vertical pipe intended to distribute water to multiple levels of a building or structure as a component of the fire suppression systems.

f)



An EVC (emergency voice communication) system, more commonly known as a Disabled Refuge System, allows emergency services and staff to communicate with one another, and persons awaiting safe evacuation in refuge areas. An EVC is a system that allows voice communication in either direction between a central control point and a number of other points throughout a building or complex. A refuge point is designed to provide a safe place for a mobility impaired individuals to await assistance for their evacuation.

g)



Certain areas within SOAS premises use fire shutters, as opposed to simpler static barriers that are permanently visible and remain fixed in one place (e.g. fire-walls, glass partitions, fire doors etc.), a fire shutter only moves into its operational position in the event of a fire.

To this end, fire roller shutters are normally wired into the building's fire detection system and close automatically on a signal from the fire alarm