

HS06 Asbestos | Standard Operating Procedure

1. Background information

1.1. Introduction/Purpose

1.1.1. This document sets out the SOAS policy, management plan and procedures for managing asbestos. The presence of asbestos-containing materials (ACM's) does not in itself constitute a danger. However, it is hazardous when disturbed or damaged and must be treated accordingly. Activities which give rise to airborne dust, e.g. abrasion, breaking, sawing, cutting, drilling or machining ACM's, are most likely to present risks.

- Staff and contractors are not expected to work with or be exposed to asbestos on SOAS sites.
- A limited number of staff whose normal duties may bring them into contact with existing asbestos-containing materials (e.g. electrical, mechanical or building maintenance staff) will be trained in asbestos awareness.

1.2. Scope

1.2.1. The Policy, Plan and Procedures apply to all parts of the SOAS University of London without exception. SOAS's policy is to prevent exposure to the hazards associated with asbestos-containing materials.

1.3. Roles and Responsibilities

1.3.1. The Health and Safety (H&S) Manager is responsible for:

- Ensuring compliance with the Asbestos Management plan.
- The overall strategy for the safe operation and execution of Baltic activities including consideration of asbestos issues.
- Reporting incidents under Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous

Occurrences Regulations, (RIDDOR).

- Providing advice on Asbestos Awareness Training for staff as necessary attending the SOAS Health and Safety Committee meetings.

1.3.2. Asbestos Removal Contractors are responsible for:

- Complying with current legislation and associated Approved Codes of Practice and guidance.
- Attending the site to assess and prepare quotations against asbestos remedial works specifications and to raise any issues relating to the health and safety or potential later costs of a project.
- Providing a Method Statement for the works to the H&S Manager and the Statutory Authority.
 - Methods of work for emergencies must be discussed and agreed upon with the H&S Manager.
 - The Method Statement indicates the resources and timetable allocated to the project.
- Attending the relevant Pre-Start Meeting, Progress Meetings and Handover Meeting as required.
- Providing Statutory Notice to the Notifying Authority prior to commencing asbestos works, or, by agreement and at the request of the H&S manager, applying for a waiver against the minimum notice period.
- Carrying out their obligations under their works contract, including maintaining high standards of safety and hygiene in asbestos work areas, and supplying labour, materials and equipment of a high standard with all necessary supporting documentation.
- Arranging transport and disposal of asbestos waste materials in accordance with current regulations and good practices.
- Carrying out regular inspections of the work environment, any defects found or reported by the H&S Manager.

1.3.3. Asbestos Consultants / Analysts are responsible for:

- Maintaining UKAS, or equivalent, accreditation relevant to instructed tasks and, when requested, reviewing and commenting on Asbestos Works Specifications and, prior to commencement of the works, on the Contractor's Method Statement.
- Providing quotations which reflect the anticipated project site and analytical requirements.

- When requested, attending meetings as required.
- Carrying out analytical works and inspections as agreed with the appropriate SOAS staff.

1.3.4. Contractors are responsible for:

- Ensuring that all employees and staff under their control abide by the rules and conditions set out in the SOAS Safety Rules and Conditions For Contractors, at all times.
- Ensuring that all employees and staff under their control working on SOAS sites reference the relevant section of the Asbestos Register and sign to acknowledge they have understood its contents.
 - This must be done before any surveying or work commences.

1.3.5. The Asbestos Register:

- The existing paper copy of the Asbestos Register is centrally held in the H&S and Estates Office.
- The H&S Manager will update the Register based on investigation, sampling and remedial works carried out, and on information gained during inspection regimes or supplied by SOAS users, utilizing the Asbestos Notification Form.
- A regular audit/inspection will be undertaken to check that the Asbestos Register has been kept up to date.
- The audit/inspection, organised by the Asbestos works co-ordinator or his nominated representative shall comprise a walk-through and visual inspection.

2. Main Content

2.1. Regulations

2.1.1. This policy is written in compliance with:

- In the event that any substance suspected to be, or containing asbestos is found during the course of the Business' works, all works in the area will cease immediately to avoid any exposure.
- Work will be suspended in that area until the substance has been identified and if appropriate made safe/removed by specialist contractors.
- No works will be carried out that may disturb suspect substances without a suitable Asbestos Survey having been done by a specialist contractor.

2.2. Asbestos Policy

2.2.1. The SOAS Asbestos Policy conforms to the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012.

2.2.2. To promote awareness of the hazards of asbestos-containing materials

SOAS will:

- Adhere to the Asbestos Policy, Plan and Procedures through training of staff.
- Provide and maintain an Asbestos Register.
- Freely provide information on asbestos.
- Implement an effective asbestos-containing materials management plan so that appropriate measures, such as monitoring, encapsulation, sealing, labelling, inspection or removal of the material are undertaken.
- Regularly review the SOAS Asbestos Policy, Asbestos Management Plan and Procedures.

2.3. Material and Priority Assessments

- 2.3.1. A Risk assessment score for each asbestos-containing material will be produced that combines the algorithm-generated Material Assessment (product type, damage/deterioration, surface treatment, asbestos type) and the algorithm-generated Priority Assessment (location, material extent, use of location, occupancy level, activities carried out, likelihood/frequency of maintenance activities)
- 2.3.2. This Risk assessment will form the basis of asbestos management and will be used to determine the Management and control actions necessary.

2.4. Action Plan and Identified Asbestos

- 2.4.1. Where previous surveys have identified asbestos-containing materials, that information will be incorporated into the Asbestos Register. This information will be freely available for reference.
- 2.4.2. Where no information regarding asbestos-containing materials is available, it must be presumed that asbestos-containing materials are present. This will be clearly indicated in the Asbestos Register.

2.5. Long Term Asbestos Management

- 2.5.1. The overall aim is to ensure that all asbestos-containing materials, through re-inspections and that remedial or removal works are effectively managed and risk is reduced to its lowest practical level.
- 2.5.2. Monitoring and re-inspection regime:
 - All asbestos-containing materials will be re-inspected at intervals determined by risk assessment and inspections will be carried out by competent persons.
 - This information will be used to update the asbestos register.

2.6. Training

2.6.1. Training will be provided to appropriate staff whose normal duties may bring them into contact with asbestos-containing materials.

2.7. Dissemination of Information

2.7.1. It is the university's intention to hold the Asbestos Register on a SOAS Web page in the near future.

2.7.2. Contractors who visit SOAS sites have to follow a procedure that involves referencing the relevant section of the Asbestos register.

2.8. Emergency Procedure

2.8.1. If anyone suspects that asbestos-containing material has been disturbed the following action should be taken immediately:

- Evacuate the area, without causing alarm, cordon or lock off the area until a full assessment has been completed.
- Report to the health and safety (H&S) Manager.
- Consult the Asbestos Register for that area.
- Ensure a full assessment of the situation is carried out by a competent person.
- Record, if possible, the names of all persons potentially affected.

2.9. Monitoring and Reviews

2.9.1. The Management Plan will be reviewed every three months to ensure that all information is correct and that objectives are being met.

2.10. Procedures

2.10.1. Procedure for previously unidentified or damaged asbestos:

- It is the responsibility of all staff to report any suspect or damaged asbestos-containing materials to the SOAS H&S Manager.
- Training on the recognition of suspect asbestos material is available through Asbestos Awareness training courses recommended by the Health & Safety Department.

2.10.2. Procedure for referencing the Asbestos Register for contractor's site areas:

- Where the contractor is given site control of the whole building and all existing information has been disseminated by the project manager, the Asbestos Register must be referenced at the start of the work, by the contractor's supervisor and this information disseminated to all staff and sub-contractors.
- Where the contractor has been given control over a specific area of a building and all existing information has been disseminated by the Project manager. The Project manager must ensure that the H&S Manager is provided with details of the work, the location, duration and the name of the contractor's supervisor. The H&S Manager will then issue a requested number of passes to the contractor's supervisor, which will facilitate access to the SOAS building.
- The project manager must ensure that:
 - The contractor's supervisor references the appropriate section of the Asbestos register every day and signs the Asbestos Register contractor's sign-off sheet.
 - The contractor's supervisor disseminates this information to all staff and sub-contractors staff.
 - The contractor's supervisor issues a contractor's pass only to staff who have been informed of the Asbestos Register information.
 - The contractor's supervisor ensures that this pass is signed in and out as appropriate. Regular audits of this procedure are carried out and the results are documented.
 - If the procedure is not being adhered to then appropriate action is taken.

2.10.3. Procedures for working with asbestos-containing materials

- Work with asbestos-containing materials, that does not require a licence issued by the HSE, shall only be carried out :
 - Following the issue of a Permit-to-Work, after authorisation from the H&S Manager and upon completion of a risk assessment. This work will be undertaken by competent staff, utilising appropriate tools and personal protective equipment
 - The work will be carried out strictly adhering to the HSE guidance booklets, Introduction to Asbestos Essentials (2001) and Asbestos Essentials Task Manual (2001).

2.11. Further Guidance

2.11.1. Do:

- Stop work and speak to your employer, or the building owner if you are suspicious something may be asbestos or if you think the work might need to be carried out by a licensed contractor.
- Follow the plan of work and the essentials guidance sheets; make sure you use the right sheet for the job.
- Make sure you take account of other risks such as working at height.
- Use your protective equipment, including a suitable face mask, which should be worn properly.
- Clean up as you go to stop waste building up.
- Make sure waste is double-bagged and is disposed of properly (PDF) at a licensed tip.
- Wash before breaks and before going home.
- Check whether the work should be notified.
- Make sure you have had adequate training before you start work

2.11.2. Don't

- Use methods that create a lot of dust, like the use of power tools.
- Sweep up dust and debris - use a Type H vacuum cleaner or wet rags.
- Take home overalls used for asbestos work.
- Reuse disposable clothing or masks.
- Smoke.
- Eat or drink in the work area.

2.11.3. What should those in charge of the job do?

- Find out if asbestos-containing materials are present and plan the work to avoid disturbing these materials if possible.
- Ensure that anyone who is going to work on asbestos material has had appropriate information, instruction and training and is supervised.
- Know what work can be carried out on asbestos-containing materials, ie does this work need to be carried out by a licensed contractor.
- Take account of other risks as well as asbestos, eg work at height, and take the precautions necessary to do the job safely.
- Use the equipment and method sheets and the right task sheet to make

sure that the job is carried out properly and that exposure to asbestos is kept as low as possible.

- Prepare a plan of work, explaining what the job involves, the work procedures, and what controls to use.
- Provide you with the right equipment, which is clean, in good working order, and protects you against asbestos.
- Train staff in using this equipment.
- Make sure the work area is inspected visually at the end of the job, to check it's fit for reoccupation.
- Make arrangements for the safe disposal of any asbestos waste.
- Consult the health and safety representative (if there is one).

2.11.4. What has stayed the same in the Asbestos Regulations?

- If existing asbestos-containing materials are in good condition and are not likely to be damaged, they may be left in place; their condition monitored and managed to ensure they are not disturbed.
- If you're responsible for the maintenance of non-domestic premises, you have a 'duty to manage' the asbestos in them, to protect anyone using or working in the premises from the risks to health that exposure to asbestos causes.
- If you want to do any building or maintenance work in premises, or on plant or equipment that might contain asbestos, you need to identify where it is and its type and condition; assess the risks, and manage and control these risks.
- The requirements for licensed work remain the same: in the majority of cases, work with asbestos needs to be done by a licensed contractor. This work includes most asbestos removal, all work with sprayed asbestos coatings and asbestos lagging and most work with asbestos insulation and asbestos insulating board (AIB).
- If you are carrying out non-licensed asbestos work, this still requires effective controls.
- The control limit for asbestos is 0.1 asbestos fibres per cubic centimetre of air (0.1 f/cm³). The control limit is not a 'safe' level and exposure from work activities involving asbestos must be reduced to as far below the control limit as possible.
- Training is mandatory for anyone liable to be exposed to asbestos fibres at work. This includes maintenance workers and others who may come

into contact with or disturb asbestos (eg cable installers), as well as those involved in asbestos removal work.

- From 6 April 2012, some non-licensed work needs to be notified to the relevant enforcing authority.
- From 6 April 2012, brief written records should be kept of non-licensed work, which has to be notified e.g. copy of the notification with a list of workers on the job, plus the level of likely exposure of those workers to asbestos. This does not require air monitoring on every job, if an estimate of the degree of exposure can be made based on the experience of similar past tasks or published guidance.
- By April 2015, all workers/self-employed doing notifiable non-licensed work with asbestos must be under health surveillance by a doctor.
- Workers who are already under health surveillance for licensed work need not have another medical examination for non-licensed work. BUT medicals for notifiable non-licensed work are not acceptable for those doing licensed work.
- Some modernisation of language and changes to reflect other legislation, e.g. the prohibition section has been removed, as the prohibition of supply and use of asbestos is now covered by (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals Regulations 2006) REACH.