

HS07 Building Fire Management Plan | Standard Operating Procedure

1. Background information

1.1. Introduction/Purpose

1.1.1. SOAS University of London's (SOAS) local Fire Management Plan and Evacuation Procedures for the **Main Building, Philips Building** and **Library** provide general guidance regarding a fire on the site and the safe evacuation of facilities should this become necessary.

1.1.2. The assembly point for these buildings is: **Malet Street, Camden, London, WC1E 7HX.**

1.2. Scope

1.2.1. 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, visitors and contractors, have a statutory responsibility in ensuring compliance with the law and complying with the fire safety provisions defined within this policy.

1.2.2. Fire is recognised as a major threat to the activities of SOAS. An outbreak of even a small fire creates a 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; the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and any other relevant legislation that may impact upon it.

1.2.3. The aim of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is, therefore, is to provide a robust fire safety framework which will be implemented to secure the safety and well-being of everyone within the SOAS and to protect the organisation's assets.

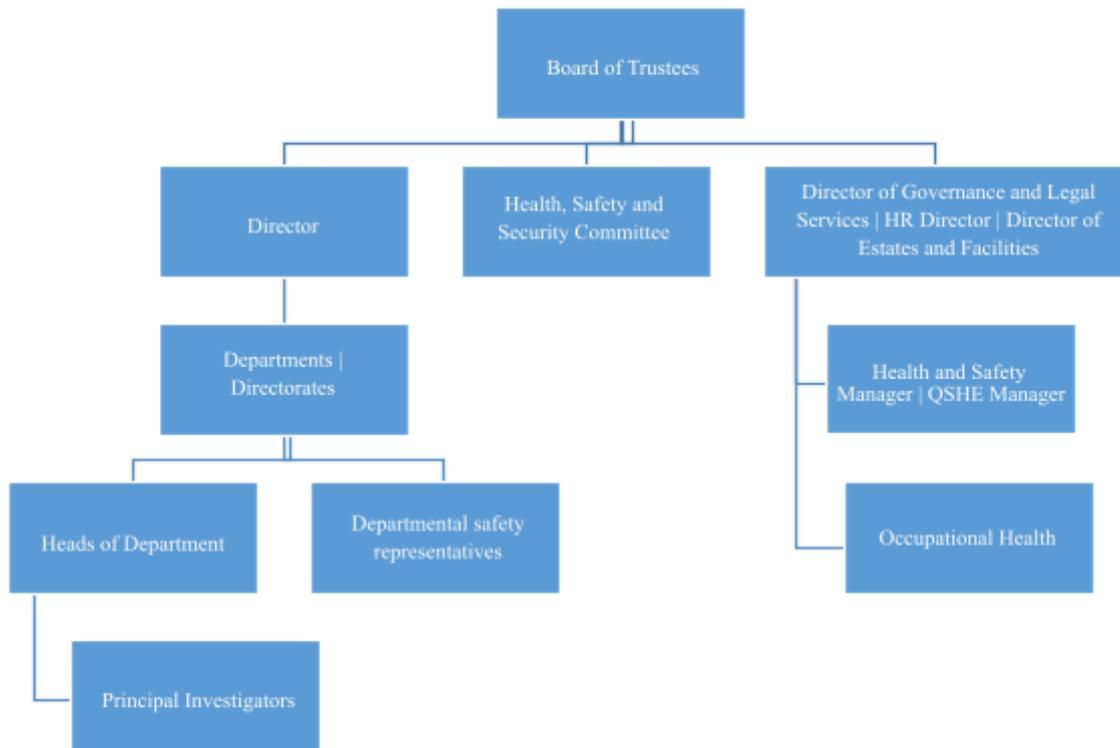
1.3. Roles and Responsibilities

1.3.1. This Fire Safety SOP applies to all activities conducted throughout SOAS premises. The document sets out the framework that SOAS members are expected to undertake alongside their relevant duties.

1.3.2. The main responsibility for statutory compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 is held by SOAS. The management and supervision of the regulations are to be transferred from the Director to the relevant Heads of Department and the Director of Estates and Facilities, who will ensure that the duty holder's responsibilities are met.

1.3.3. The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 requires each employer to ensure an assessment is carried out on their premises. This assessment should identify any risks of minor to significant harm caused by fire and implement all reasonable measures to ensure the safety of those on the premises.

1.3.4. The following Fire Safety Management diagram details the process that has been developed to ensure all fire safety provisions are maintained across SOAS premises. It also illustrates line management arrangements in place within the university community.



- 1.3.5. The Director oversees day-to-day responsibility for Health and Safety within SOAS, acting as Executive Officer with responsibility to the Board of Trustees.
- 1.3.6. Responsibility for Health and Safety forms part of managerial duties, even if not formally specified in the initial job description. The supervision of Health and Safety can be delegated, but the responsibility will lie solely with management.
- 1.3.7. All managers and supervisors throughout SOAS should ensure that all activities do not pose a threat or risk to anyone.
- 1.3.8. All staff have a duty to cooperate with SOAS to achieve a healthy, safe workplace, and to ensure the safety of themselves and others.
- 1.3.9. Estates and Facilities - The Director of Estates and Facilities is responsible for ensuring arrangements are in place to ensure the maintenance of the Fire Safety provision for SOAS. Responsibilities will be delegated to various members of the Estates and Facilities Directorate, such as the Head of Campus Services and Facilities, the Head of Compliance and the Quality, Safety, Health and Environment (QSHE) Manager.
- 1.3.10. Arrangements to ensure the safety of occupants and the compliance of SOAS buildings will include the following activities:
- Building Performance:
 - Providing and maintaining places of work, accommodation and leisure that are constructed or refurbished to ensure adequate structural protection, as well as escape routes/ doors for building occupants in the event of a fire.
 - Maintaining and regularly checking the standard and functionality of fire doors throughout the premises, including those that are self-closing and automatic releasing.
 - Ensuring that all works undertaken by contractors are supervised and the appropriate approvals are completed when activities such as 'hot works' need to be carried out.
 - Ensuring that contractors clearly define the standard of compartmentation following any work carried out that results in breaches which could affect fire and/ or smoke containment. Such breaches should be fire-stopped with appropriate materials before the area is closed. Where areas are fire-stopped, photographic

evidence must be provided. If during work, a breach of the fire compartment is identified, it should be noted and photographed. The Project Manager must also be notified immediately prior to closing.

- Maintenance of Systems and Equipment:
 - Provide, test and maintain suitable and sufficient monitoring and alarm systems to ensure that building occupants receive adequate, prompt warnings of any fire-related events.
 - Provide, test and maintain emergency communication systems and equipment (including intercom refuge systems, radios, etc.).
 - Provide, test and maintain firefighting facilities and equipment (including portable extinguishers; risers; smoke control systems such as dampers; fixed installations and specialist systems; firefighting lift installations; fire hydrants, etc.) in accordance with the manufacturers' guidelines.
 - Provide standard advisory and instructional signage within all buildings and periodically check this signage to ensure everything is in place (e.g., Fire Action Notices; exit directional signage; warning and/ or hazard signage, etc.).
 - Undertake electrical tests in line with regulatory expectations (e.g., fixed installation; portable appliance testing (PAT); lightning protection equipment, etc.).
- Compliance with Fire Legislation:
 - Maintain a Fire Safety Logbook for each building, with all relevant sections kept up to date and complete. If building certification is maintained elsewhere (i.e., electronically), this should be stated within the document and signposted.
 - Ensure that site plans, information on systems, equipment, etc. are available for the Fire Service's reference.
 - Liaise with external authorities (e.g., Building Control, Fire Service, etc.) when required.
 - Provide relevant instructional and advisory signage within all buildings, and periodically check this signage to ensure it is in place (e.g., Fire Action Notices; exit directional signage; warning and/ or hazard signage, etc.).
 - Record and report all fire incidents and fire alarm activations to the Safety Manager to ensure an appropriate assessment of the

performance of equipment and response.

- Fire Safety Management and Protocols:
 - Produce and maintain fire risk assessments for each building, ensuring all action plans remain 'live documents', which are evaluated and updated regularly.
 - Produce and maintain a current fire evacuation plan for each building, incorporating appropriate protocols for those who frequent the premises (e.g., persons with disabilities, lone workers, etc.).
 - Ensure adequate protocols are in place to promptly summon the Fire Service.
 - Ensure that procedures are in place for the investigation, recording and assessment of activations of the fire alarm to identify issues in performance and prevent false fire signals (UwFS), etc. All events must be reported to the Safety Manager.
 - Ensure adequately trained staff are designated to fulfil required roles identified within the Evacuation Plan (e.g., Incident Control Team, Security staff, Fire Wardens, etc.).
 - Ensure that adequate means of escape are provided for all persons within a building.
 - Provide and maintain evacuation equipment for disabled persons.
 - Provide an appropriate number of staff with suitable training.
 - Proactively monitor waste and waste storage, ensuring it is secured and at a safe distance from a building within designated containers to prevent the risk of fire spreading due to accidental ignition, arson, etc.
- Health and Safety
 - Liaise with the Health and Safety Manager on all matters likely to impact the fire safety provision of the SOAS premises.
 - Ensure that appropriate protocols are implemented and that documentation is provided for the storage and use of dangerous substances (Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations (DSEAR) 2002 and Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) 2002).

1.4. Staff Training Requirements

- 1.4.1. Staff fire training is mandatory and should comply with the SOAS Fire Safety Policy.
- 1.4.2. The Heads of Departments are responsible for ensuring the guidelines are followed (See Appendix A).
- 1.4.3. This training should occur immediately upon appointment, or when a new staff member joins a department. Records of training completion should be maintained.
- 1.4.4. All staff training should be recorded and stored electronically to assist with compliance assessments.

1.5. Duties of Fire Wardens

- 1.5.1. Fire Wardens must undertake the following duties and responsibilities:
 - To be thoroughly familiarised with the layout of the building, plus other occupancies in the vicinity and their location.
 - To be familiar with the other Fire Wardens on their floor or elsewhere within their building.
 - To coordinate with other Fire Wardens and occupancies on safety matters, including regular fire safety checks, which should be recorded and maintained.
 - To inform the responsible person or manager of any defective equipment or potential hazards, including matters that may impact the fire safety of SOAS premises or community members.
 - To be fully knowledgeable of the fire procedures for their building, including the method of summoning the emergency services, the operation of the fire alarm system, response to a fire alarm, resetting the fire panel, and operating the evacuation equipment provided.
 - To facilitate fire evacuation drills every six months.
 - To perform a supervisory role in the event of a fire alarm by ensuring a complete evacuation of the building. This should include a sweep search of their floor or area (including the toilets); helping individuals on the premises to leave; and reporting the status of their designated area (including whether persons have or have not been accounted for) to the Incident Controller(s) or senior manager at the assembly point.

- Fire Wardens may attempt to extinguish small fires if they feel confident using the equipment provided. (See appendix D)
- To meet with managers periodically to discuss any arising issues concerning:
 - Arranging and facilitating fire drills;
 - assessing staff performance during fire drills;
 - the content of the fire risk assessment;
 - the adequacy of fire procedures for the site; and
 - any other fire safety-related matters.
- In the absence of fire wardens, all staff must fulfil the above duties to ensure a safe and complete evacuation of the building in the event of fire or fire alarm activation.

2. Main Content

2.1. Fire Safety Measures in the Main Building, Philips Building and the Library.

2.1.1. The information below relates to the fire safety measures in place in and around the Main Building, Philips Building and the Library.

- Fire Action Notices are displayed at various locations throughout the building. These notices summarise the actions to be taken upon discovery of fire or hearing a fire alarm. (See Appendix B)
- The Incident Controller(s) or most senior security person present upon activation will take proper precautions in the event of an emergency.
- Members of the Security team and Fire Wardens will provide an active response to any activation of the fire alarm system. All other persons should immediately exit the building upon any activation.
- In the event of a fire, the spread of smoke and flames can be unpredictable but controlled. To assist with this, SOAS buildings are divided into several areas, separated by walls with fire-resistant doors.
- All staff should understand the role of fire doors in preventing fire and smoke escalation. All doors leading to corridor escape routes must remain closed unless fitted with approved hold-open devices. Doors should not be wedged open.
- Managers must ensure that their team members, including agency and contract staff, are familiar with the fire procedures for their work area. This should cover the layout of the premises, the location of fire exits, fire alarm

call points, firefighting equipment and alternative evacuation routes.

- It is essential that all staff, including managers, have adequate training and practice in evacuating the premises in an orderly manner under simulated emergency evacuation conditions. Members of the Facilities and Estates and Security teams will facilitate fire evacuation drills on a six-monthly basis
- SOAS utilises a fire alarm and detection system, featuring smoke and heat detectors, fire call points and other relevant measures. Please note that the operation of a fire call point will activate the fire alarm throughout the building and initiate an immediate response from designated staff.

2.2. Action to be taken upon discovering a fire

2.2.1. As soon as you suspect or discover a fire, take the following actions:

- Operate a fire call point. (See Appendix C) The fire alarm will sound throughout the building and site security staff will respond immediately.
- In addition to this, it is recommended that you raise the alarm verbally by shouting "**fire**".
- The premises should be evacuated immediately, with all staff, students and visitors being escorted out of the building and signposted to the designated assembly point (**Malet Street**).
- Fire Wardens or other staff members may extinguish the fire if it is safe to do so, providing they have received adequate training on using fire extinguishing equipment.
 - Do not put yourself at any unnecessary risk. (See section 5.4 for advice)
- The Incident Controller(s) or most senior security person present during an alarm activation will make an informed decision regarding the best action to take in the event of an emergency.
- The Incident Controller(s) will instruct a relevant staff member to call the Fire Service immediately by telephoning 999 and staying on the line until the operator has repeated the site address.
- All staff members must follow instructions given by the Incident Controller(s) or senior manager regarding assisting people to leave the building (e.g., persons with disabilities, injuries or mobility issues).
- A member of the Security or management team will confirm the designated assembly point (Malet Street), and all areas within the building

should be checked and cleared by personnel in attendance.

- Any individuals remaining in the building should be identified with assistance from the Incident Controller(s), if necessary.
- The Incident Controller(s) or senior manager will liaise with the Fire Service upon arrival, sharing any relevant information.

2.3. Actions to be taken upon hearing the fire alarm

2.3.1. Upon hearing a fire alarm activation, the following actions should be followed to ensure your safety and the safety of others:

- Fire Wardens and managers must immediately evacuate the building, ensuring that all persons are accounted for. Please note that if no Fire Wardens are present, it is the role of all staff members in attendance to carry out the actions outlined above (Section 5.2.1).
- Do not collect personal belongings other than those in the immediate vicinity. Close any windows or doors as you leave (only if it is safe to do so).
- Be prepared to follow instructions from a senior manager and/v or Fire Warden regarding escorting people out of the building.
- Leave the building via the most direct route and proceed to the designated assembly point (**Malet Street**).
- The Fire Warden(s) will be easily identifiable by their fluorescent tabard(s). Once outside, they should inform the Incident Controller(s) or senior manager that their area of responsibility has been evacuated, or that there are people not accounted for.
- Staff members should notify a Fire Warden immediately if any person is missing or unaccounted for.
- The Incident Controller(s) or senior manager will consult with staff members to confirm that the building has been evacuated fully. They may also attempt to verify the cause of the alarm.
- The Incident Controller(s) or senior manager should make themselves easily identifiable by wearing a fluorescent tabard and/ or armband. They **must** meet the Fire Service on arrival and inform them of the current situation, including any people not accounted for.
- Do not re-enter the building until it is declared safe to do so by the Incident Controller(s) or senior manager.

2.4. General Fire Precaution Advice

2.4.1. To ensure your personal safety and the safety of others:

- Always raise the alarm before attempting to tackle a fire.
- Staff members should only try to fight a fire if it is small, localised, and have been trained to do so. Your personal safety is the priority.
- **Do not** attempt to tackle a fire that is large, spreading, or out of control.
 - Such fires should always be left to the Fire Service.
- If the fire is behind a closed door, do not attempt to open the door. Leave it closed and exit the building.
- If in any doubt, leave the affected area as soon as possible.

2.5. Use of Fire Extinguishers

2.5.1. Below, we have included general guidance regarding the use of fire extinguishers:

- A person attempting to tackle a fire should always keep themselves between the flames and a means of escape or egress.
- Always check if the extinguisher in question is suitable for the kind of fire. For example, **do not** use a water fire extinguisher on electrical fires or near electrical equipment. (See Appendix D for guidance).
- Test the extinguisher with a short burst to check it is working before approaching the fire.
- Keep as low as possible and beware of creating smoke spread when using an extinguisher.

2.5.2. **Fire blankets** are provided in the kitchens, and are well suited to extinguishing small, fat-related fires.

- The blanket should be removed from its container and unfolded.
- Approach the fire, holding the blanket in front of your body and face, while also protecting your hands.
- Place the blanket over the burning area to smother the flames.
- Turn off the heat when it is safe to do so.
- Leave the blanket in place for half an hour.

2.5.3. **Fire suppression systems** have been installed in the kitchens and library to cover area-specific specific risks.

2.5.4. **Fire curtains** are located at the library's entrance. These devices assist in preventing the spread of smoke and fire.

2.5.5. **Dry riser outlets** can be found on various upper levels and are for use only in the event of a fire. These systems provide the Fire Service with a dedicated water supply near the location of a fire.

2.6. Assisting Persons with Disabilities

2.6.1. The following guidance relates to assisting disabled persons in the event of a fire alarm activation.

- Occupants should make their way out of the building via the exit nearest to the assembly point.
- Individuals who require assistance should adhere to the action plan drawn up as part of their personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP).
- The provision of PEEPs for relevant staff is the responsibility of [INSERT NAME/JOB TITLE]. The most appropriate routes and method of egress from an individual's regular work location should be identified within the document, if appropriate.
- Refuge points, with emergency voice communication (EVC) systems and evacuation equipment, are provided within staircase landing areas on all levels.
- EVC systems should only be used to summon assistance or confirm the need to evacuate before emergency evacuation protocols are implemented.
- Please note that library access for wheelchair users is restricted to Level E.
- A platform lift is available from the KLT lower level and should only be used by one person at a time.

3. Appendices

Appendix A: Staff Fire Training Guidelines

This training should occur immediately upon appointment or when a new staff member joins a department. Records of training completion should be maintained.

Induction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arranged by [NAME OF STAFF MEMBER] at [LOCATION]
On-site induction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to raise the alarm if a fire is detected • Evacuation procedures in an emergency • All available emergency exit routes • Expected duties in an emergency • Method of calling the Fire Service • Guidance on smoking and smoking-related materials • Identifying the alarm by its sound • Assembly point location
Six-monthly training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in a fire evacuation drill • How to raise the alarm • Action to be taken if a fire breaks out • Evacuation procedures and escape routes
Annual training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suitable fire training session as provided by SOAS
Additional training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial training course for Fire Wardens • Fire Wardens to attend a refresher course every two years

Appendix B: Example of a Fire Action Notice displayed inside the buildings



Appendix C: An Example of a Fire Call Point

As soon as you suspect or discover a fire, operate a fire call point.



Appendix D: Use of Fire Extinguishers

Below is a guide to the purpose and operation of the different fire extinguishers available.

Type of fire	Colour		Content	Operation
	Body	Band		

<p>Ordinary combustible materials (e.g., paper, wood, textiles, plastics, etc.)</p>	<p>Red</p>	<p>Red</p>	<p>Water</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Keep upright 2. Remove safety tag and pin 3. Squeeze handle grip 4. Aim at the base of the fire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DO NOT USE NEAR ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT
<p>All types of electrical equipment and small fires relating to ordinary combustible materials</p>	<p>Red</p>	<p>Black</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remove safety tag and pin 2. Squeeze handle grip 3. Aim close to the fire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DO NOT HOLD THE NOZZLE OR HORN as it is extremely cold and may freeze your hands
<p>Flammable liquids and ordinary combustible materials</p>	<p>Red</p>	<p>Cream</p>	<p>Foam</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Keep upright 2. Remove safety tag and pin 3. Squeeze handle grip 4. Aim to cover the fire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DO NOT USE NEAR ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT