

HS25 Instructions for Fire Wardens | Standard Operating Procedure

1. Background information

1.1. Introduction/Purpose

1.1.1. The Fire Wardens at SOAS have all been selected after volunteering for the role. Sufficient Fire Wardens are appointed to ensure all areas where personnel may be present within a faculty or office can be searched in the event of a fire alarm activation. Nominated personnel will be given suitable and sufficient training, enabling them to carry out their duties competently and efficiently. Fire Wardens assist with the safe evacuation of SOAS buildings by searching their designated area in the event of a fire alarm activation (not including fire alarm tests). Fire Wardens must attend their designated Assembly Point and assist the incident controller(s) by the provision of information.

1.1.2. The purpose of this document is to provide Fire Wardens with relevant instructions and information regarding their role at SOAS.

1.2. Roles and Responsibilities

1.2.1. Essential Fire Warden duties include:

- Knowing the location of all fire escape routes and exits from their designated search area.
- Knowing the location of disabled refuge points for those unable to use the stairs.
- Knowing the location of their designated 'Assembly Point'.
- Encouraging personnel to leave the building via the nearest available fire escape routes and exits.
- Directing individuals to a disabled refuge point if applicable.
- Checking all accessible rooms and locations within their designated area (restrooms, toilets, disabled refuge points etc.).

- Closing all fire doors and doors of empty rooms once they have been checked (if it is safe/efficient to do so).
- Proceeding to the Assembly Point - when proceeding to the Assembly Point, Fire Wardens must inform the chief Fire Warden(s) that their area has been searched, and also of any area that has not been searched, any personnel that have not evacuated and the location of any individual at a refuge point. The chief warden will then report this information to the incident control team. If chief wardens are unavailable, Fire Wardens should report directly to the incident controllers. (Please see the latest Fire Wardens list for the names of the Chief Fire Wardens).
- Monitoring final exit doors to prevent unauthorised re-entry (role possibly allocated after reporting-in).
- After each evacuation, Fire Wardens should complete a [Fire Follow-Up](#) form and return this to the Health and Safety Manager at healthandsafety@soas.ac.uk.

1.2.2. The day-to-day duties of a Fire Warden include:

- Observing the general Fire Safety of the area, building or floor they have been allocated.
- Observing corridors and walkways to ensure combustible materials are not present.
- Monitoring escape routes to ensure they are kept free from obstructions.
- Ensuring fire doors are not tied, propped or wedged open where applicable.
- Checking that the final exit doors are not obstructed.
- Checking that the fire alarm is audible from all areas.
- Ensuring that all Fire Action Signs are up to date and contain the correct information.
- If possible, Fire Wardens should check their designated area monthly and log any activity in the 'Fire Warden Monthly Check'.
- If you have any queries, don't hesitate to contact healthandsafety@soas.ac.uk.

1.3. Avoidance of Dangerous Practices

1.3.1. To protect their own safety and that of others, Fire Wardens should never do the following:

- Place themselves at risk.
- Argue with individuals or groups who refuse to leave – Instead, Fire Wardens must note their name(s) and location, then report this information to the incident controller.
- Go upstairs or re-enter the building once the fire alarm has been activated. If they could not search their area, this must be reported to the Chief Fire Warden or incident controller(s).
- Attempt to enter locked or obstructed rooms or locations – any areas not searched must be reported to the Chief Fire Warden or incident controller(s).
- Use lifts to get themselves or other people out of the building. Evacuation lifts, if present, should be operated by trained personnel
- Attempt to fight a fire unless the fire is presenting an immediate danger to someone.
- Attempt to move a disabled person from a refuge point unless the individual is in immediate danger. The individual will have a personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) which is in place to ensure their safe evacuation.

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1.5. Chief Fire Warden's Duties

1.5.1. As well as the standard duties of a Fire Warden, chief Fire Wardens should also:

- Place themselves at risk.
- Report Fire Warden area clearance and findings to incident controllers.
- Where appropriate, instruct Fire Wardens who have reported their area to be clear to position themselves at a designated fire exit door so as to prevent unauthorised access.
- Encourage people to move away from the building and gather at the assembly points.
- Liaise with emergency services as required.
- Keep those gathered at assembly points updated regarding the fire control, etc.
- Instruct staff and students to re-enter the building when it has been deemed safe to do so by either the incident controllers or emergency services.

2. Main Content

2.1. Fire Warden Lists

2.1.1. A list of Fire Wardens can be found on the SOAS website. These are updated when applicable – ([Fire Safety Page](#)).

2.2. Training

2.2.1. The Safety Manager provides suitable training for Fire Wardens once they volunteer for the role.

2.2.2. The training is delivered via an online course, covering a Fire Warden's essential and critical functions.

2.2.3. When appropriate or requested, the Health and Safety Manager will provide a tour of the designated search area, fire escape routes, exits and disabled refuge points.

2.3. Disabled Refuge Points

2.3.1. These are areas where individuals who cannot use the stairs to evacuate the building can wait for assistance.

2.3.2. They are located near staircase landings on the upper floors of the buildings.

2.4. Assembly Points

2.4.1. The Assembly Point for each SOAS building is indicated on the Fire Action Notices displayed throughout the building.

2.4.2. Fire Wardens must familiarise themselves with the location of the assembly point associated with their building.

2.4.3. If requested by the incident controller(s), Fire Wardens will assist in providing information to those at the assembly point.

2.5. Evacuation of Lecture Theatres and Teaching Rooms

- 2.5.1. In the event of a fire alarm, it is the duty of the lecturer, trainer or conference organiser using the teaching facility (lecture hall, etc.) to ensure that all students, staff and visitors leave the room immediately and proceed to the building's designated Assembly Point.
- 2.5.2. At the Assembly Point, the lecturer, trainer or conference organiser should report to the Fire Wardens present and provide any necessary information regarding the evacuation.
- 2.5.3. To ensure this duty can be performed adequately, the individual should familiarise themselves with the nearest fire exits and the Assembly Point for the building in which they are working.