



HEALTH AND SAFETY Fire and Emergency Procedures

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[Fire Safety – Policies \(ulster.ac.uk\)](https://www.ulster.ac.uk/fire-safety-policies)

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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The aim of this manual is to provide information on established fire and related emergency provisions and the procedures to be followed in the event of fire or other related emergency in the University.
- 1.2 It is the main reference document detailing fire safety arrangements within the University.

2. SCOPE AND COMMENCEMENT

- 2.1 This manual detail those provisions and procedures the University has in place to prevent and/or to help to minimize injury or damage resulting from fire and to comply with current fire legislation.
- 2.2 It also details the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire or other related emergency.
- 2.3 It is written to assist managers to discharge their responsibilities regarding fire safety management and as a general reference document regarding fire safety in University premises.
- 2.4 This procedure applies to all areas of operation within the University, with effect from 1 March 2021.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The University regards fire as one of the most serious threats to the lives of students, staff and visitors in our premises. Damage to the physical structure of our buildings could also have a serious impact on our core activities.
- 3.2 Consequently, it is University's aim to comply fully with fire safety legislation and follow standard guidance and best practice with regards to the provision of fire safety standards and procedures in University premises.

4. DEFINITIONS

Competent Person	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Person, suitably trained and qualified by knowledge and practical experience and provided with necessary instructions, to enable the required task(s) to be carried out.
Emergency Lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lighting provided for use when the supply to the normal lighting fails.
Escape Route	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Route forming part of the means of escape from any point in a building to a final exit.

Final Exit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Termination of an escape route from a building giving direct access to a street, passageway, walkway or open space, and sited to enable the rapid dispersal of persons from the vicinity of a building so that they are longer in danger from fire and/or smoke.
Fire Door	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Door or shutter which, together with its frame and furniture as installed in a building, is intended (when closed) to resist the passage of fire and/or gaseous products of combustion, and is capable of meeting specified performance criteria to those ends.
Means of Escape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Means whereby a safe route or routes in the event of fire is or are provided for persons to travel from any point in a building to a place of ultimate safety.
Storey Exit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final exit, or doorway, giving direct access to a protected stairway or external escape route.
Travel Distance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actual distance a person needs to travel from any point within a building to the nearest storey exit, having regard to layout of walls, partitions and fittings
Fire Detection and Alarm System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A system incorporating call points, smoke/fire detectors, sounders, control equipment, protected wiring and a back-up power supply which is capable of automatically detecting smoke / fire and thereupon giving an audible alarm.

5. KEY LEGAL REQUIREMENT

Fire and Rescue Services Order (Northern Ireland) 2006

- 5.1 Part III of the Fire and Rescue Services Order (Northern Ireland) 2006 replaces the existing fire precautions legislation based on the requirement to obtain a fire certificate, with requirements to comply with fire safety duties such as the duty to carry out fire risk assessments and to take specified fire safety measures.

Fire Safety Regulation (Northern Ireland) 2010

- 5.2 These Regulations make provision in connection with the carrying out of assessments to identify risks in respect of harm caused by fire, and the review of those assessments. They also make specific provisions about fire safety in relevant premises.
- 5.3 The enforcing body for Fire Regulations in Northern Ireland is The Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service. (The Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland have no responsibility for the enforcement of Fire Regulations in University Premises).

Other Legislation and Standards

- 5.4 Building Regulations (NI) 2012.
- 5.5 BS 9999: 2017 – Fire safety in the design, management and use of buildings. Code of practice.
- 5.6 Technical Booklet E – Fire Safety 2012.
- 5.7 Dangerous Substance and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations (NI) 2003
- 5.8 The Highly Flammable Liquids and Liquefied Petroleum Gas Regulations (NI) 1975.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES

Vice-Chancellor

- 6.1 The Vice-Chancellor has ultimate executive responsibility to ensure the requirements of Fire Safety Legislation are complied with. The Vice-Chancellor will ensure that the responsibility for fire safety is properly assigned and accepted at all levels within the University.

Chief People Officer

- 6.2 The Chief People Officer (CPO) is responsible for the overall management of health, safety and wellbeing in the University. This includes the management of fire safety in relation to the requirements of legislation. The CPO will chair the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee (HSWC).

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Pro Vice-Chancellors, Chief Strategy & Finance Officer, Executive Deans

- 6.3 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Pro Vice-Chancellors, Chief Strategy & Finance Officer, and Executive Deans [delegated responsibility from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor] are responsible for the health, safety and wellbeing, including fire safety, of direct reports and for ensuring that all areas with delegated responsibility and authority, e.g. Schools, Faculty Administration, Departments, etc. are complying with the requirements of the health, safety and wellbeing, including fire safety policy and procedures.

Director of Physical Estates

- 6.4 The Chief Strategy & Finance Officer has delegated to the Director of Physical Estates responsibility for ensuring that all University plant and premises meet statutory safety requirements including structural fire safety measures under the Building Regulations.

- 6.5 Additionally, the Director of Physical Estates has responsibility for Facilities Services in the University and consequently is responsible for the provision and maintenance of fire fighting equipment and Security staff's role in emergency evacuation including the organisation of fire drills.

Heads of Schools

- 6.6 Heads of Schools are responsible to the Executive Dean for the implementation of the health, safety and wellbeing policy including Fire Safety arrangements in relation to the activities of their Schools / Departments.
- 6.7 In particular they are responsible for ensuring that sufficient staff have been nominated and appointed as Fire Marshals for the areas under their control and that staff have completed such fire safety related training including refresher training as required under the University fire safety training strategy.

Heads of Departments

- 6.8 Heads of Department are responsible to the appropriate Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Pro-Vice Chancellor, Chief Strategy & Finance Officer or Chief People Officer for the implementation of health, safety and wellbeing policy, including the fire safety policy in the activities of their Department.

Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing

- 6.9 The Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing is responsible to the Chief People Officer for the provision of professional advice and services on fire safety.

Health and Safety Officer (Fire)

- 6.10 The University Health and Safety Officer (Fire) is responsible for the provision of professional fire safety advice and services to staff with fire safety responsibilities. They will also act as the main liaison officer with the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service.

All Staff and Students

- 6.11 University staff and students have a statutory responsibility to comply with any and all policies and procedures, which have been put in place in order for the University to meet the requirements of Fire Safety Legislation. Staff and Students with disabilities, which would impact their ability to evacuate from their place of work or study, must contact Health, Safety and Wellbeing to ensure a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) is prepared for them.

7. POLICY STATEMENT

7.1 The objectives of this policy are:

- 7.2 To ensure that staff, students, contractors and visitors on University premises are safeguarded from injury or death in the event of fire.
- 7.3 To have arrangements in place for systems and procedures to minimize the risk of fire starting and fire spreading.
- 7.4 To reduce the potential for fire to disrupt University business, damage premises or harm the environment.
- 7.5 To ensure the University complies with relevant fire legislation and standards.

8. FIRE SAFETY ARRANGEMENTS

- 8.1 The University will put in place appropriate arrangements for the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of all fire safety measures, defined by fire safety standards and the Health and Safety Officer (Fire).
- 8.2 This shall include measures necessary to eliminate or reduce the fire risks associated with dangerous substances, along with arrangements for the safe handling, storage and transport of dangerous substances and waste containing dangerous substances.
- 8.3 Specific information, including fire safety related policies and standards are contained in a series of Fire Safety Technical Notes which are indexed and available on the fire safety pages of the of the Health and Safety website.
- 8.4 In fulfilling their fire safety obligations, managers and staff can get additional advice and information from the University Health and Safety Officer (Fire) in the Department of Health, Safety and Wellbeing.

9. EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

- 9.1 The Emergency Evacuation Procedure is the plan of action for all staff, students, contractors and visitors in case of fire. Its function is to specify:
 - The action to be taken when discovering or suspecting a fire;
 - The arrangements to ensure that all persons within a building or premises are safely and effectively evacuated during an emergency;
- 9.2 The procedures have considered:
 - Staff on shift work;
 - Staff and students working outside normal office hours;
 - Staff, students, visitors and members of the public who have special needs during an evacuation;
 - Weekend working;

- Staff and students working in remote parts of the building or away from their normal work station; and
 - Contractors, visitors or members of the public in the building at any time.
- 9.3 The University has a generic emergency evacuation plan, which describes the action to take in an emergency evacuation situation.
- 9.4 The general procedures to be followed in the event of a fire in the University are displayed on the general fire action notices which are located adjacent to each manual break-glass fire alarm point and on staff fire action notices in specific areas.
- 9.5 The procedures dictate:
- The action to take on discovering a fire
 - The action to take on hearing the alarm
- 9.6 All staff, students and visitors are required to follow the directions on these notices.
- 9.7 **General Fire Action:**

ON DISCOVERING FIRE (no matter how small)

- Sound the alarm by breaking the nearest fire alarm break-glass point.
- Warn people in the immediate vicinity.
- Leave the building using the nearest available route by following the Emergency Exit Signs.
- Go directly to the Assembly Point
- Do not use lifts
- Do not stop to collect personal belongings
- Do not re-enter the building until you are told by a uniformed member of Security Staff or the Emergency Services that it is safe to do so. An airhorn will be used to support the 'All Clear' message and let you know that you can begin re-entry of the buildings.

ON HEARING THE ALARM

- Leave the building using the nearest available route by following the Emergency Exit Signs.
- Do not use lifts.
- Do not stop to collect personal belongings.
- Go directly to the Assembly Point.
- Do not re-enter the building until you are told by a uniformed member of Security Staff or the Emergency Services that it is safe to do so. An airhorn will be used to support the 'All Clear' message and let you know that you can begin re-entry of the buildings.

10. FIRE RISK MANAGEMENT (FSTN 001)

- 10.1 The Fire and Rescue Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 and the Fire Safety Regulations (Northern Ireland) Order 2010 place a statutory duty on employers to carry out Fire Risk Assessment in the Workplace.
- 10.2 This risk assessment must consider all employees and other people who may be affected by a fire in the workplace.
- 10.3 Significant findings of the risk assessment must be identified and recorded. Any required actions identified must be brought to the attention of the relevant party for action.
- 10.4 The University, in conjunction with the Health and Safety Officer (Fire), Health, Safety and Wellbeing, will ensure that all risk assessments are carried out and reviewed as appropriate
- 10.5 Individual departments are required to complete the University Fire Safety Checklist twice each year **at least every March and September.**
- 10.6 The Health and Safety Officer (Fire), Health, Safety and Wellbeing will advise Faculties and Departments, on request, of their responsibilities, including the completion of Fire Safety Checklists, for the areas for which they are responsible.

11. FIRE FIGHTING EQUIPMENT (FSTN 002)

- 11.1 The University shall ensure that it is equipped with appropriate means for fighting fire.
- 11.2 An appropriate number of staff shall be nominated and suitably trained to enable them to use such equipment safely.

12. FIRE WARNING SYSTEMS (FSTN 003)

- 12.1 The University shall be equipped with an appropriate fire warning system.

13. MEANS OF ESCAPE (FSTN 004)

- 13.1 The University shall ensure that its premises are equipped with adequate means of escape in the case of fire and that arrangements are in place to ensure that they are available at all times premises are occupied.

14. EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES FOR DISABLED PEOPLE (FSTN 005)

- 14.1 Planning for emergencies should identify and take account of any special needs of occupants of the building. It should identify the need for, and provide, any special provisions such as evacuation lifts, safe refuge areas, etc. and instructions on how to manage vulnerable persons who may need assistance.
- 14.2 The University has a system in place which will ensure that known individuals with disabilities which would prevent them from evacuating unaided in an emergency, are instructed what to do and provided with any specific assistance required. A system of Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) for staff and students with disabilities shall be maintained in the University. In addition, generic Emergency Evacuation Plans are in place for visitors to the University.

15. EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES FOR SECURITY STAFF (FSTN 006)

- 15.1 The security staff that work in the University have a key role to play in the event of an emergency.

16. FIRE MARSHALS (FSTN 007)

- 16.1 The University has in place a Fire Marshal Scheme where staff members, nominated as Fire Marshals, will act in an emergency evacuation situation to assist Security staff to help ensure that the evacuation proceeds effectively and safely.

17. MAINTENANCE (FSTN 008)

- 17.1 The University maintains in good repair and efficient working order any devices or equipment provided for fire safety purposes. This includes any equipment provided for use by the Fire Service during fire fighting operations.

18. CONTRACTORS (FSTN 009)

- 18.1 The University ensures that contractors working in University premises are provided with relevant information regarding specific risks and the fire safety measures in place in the University.

19. TRAINING (*FSTN 010*)

- 19.1 All staff of the University are provided with adequate fire safety information, instruction and training at the time when they are first employed and the online Fire Safety training should be repeated every three years.
- 19.2 Students receive information on Fire safety in the Students' Handbook, they also take part in the annual campus evacuation drills.

20. REQUIREMENTS FOR NORTHERN IRELAND FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE (NIFRS) FIRE SAFETY AUDIT (*FSTN 011*)

- 20.1 The University has procedures in place for Fire Safety Audits undertaken by NIFRS. The procedures follow the NIFRS procedures and the requirements for a Fire Safety Audit under the Fire and Rescue Services Order (NI) 2006.

21. SITING OF ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT IN CORRIDORS (*FSTN 012*)

- 21.1 The University has procedures in place for siting of electrical equipment in corridors. The guidance is to assist with the siting of electrical equipment within Ulster University premises.

22. EMERGENCY EVACUATION (*FSTN 013*)

- 22.1 Information on the emergency evacuation procedures to undertake if you hear a fire alarm.