



COVID-19 Fire Safety Arrangements

Schools and departments will be returning to University buildings in different ways to what is regarded as the norm in the near future. With regard to fire safety requirements it is likely that the arrangements to support fire safety may require to be reviewed in a number of areas, particularly in areas that are impacted as a result of changed working practices or reduced staff numbers.

1. Fire Safety Unit (FSU) Departmental Considerations

Fire Risk Assessment programme

The fire risk assessment programme will continue. All premises will be reviewed in line with the following table.

High risk premises	Student Accommodation	Every 2 years
Medium risk premises	Academic Buildings	Every 3 years
Low risk premises	Rural or Low occupancy Buildings	Every 4 years

Use of PPE

All FSU staff will comply with any Scottish Government guidance in regard to PPE requirements and any local arrangements at school/research level.

Fire extinguisher maintenance programme

The fire extinguisher maintenance programme will continue as per the annual inspection programme. Where there has been a delay incurred as a result of previous government imposed restrictions relevant staff are asked to liaise directly with the FSU to accommodate and support an effective 'catch up' process, student accommodation will be given priority at this time.

General Risk Assessment

A general risk assessment (RA1) has been completed for FSU staff to cover on campus activity associated with general Fire Safety Unit roles and functions. A copy of this assessment is available on request.



2. School/Departmental Considerations

Availability of fire stewards

It is anticipated that a reduced number of stewards will be available in each occupied building due to the impact of hybrid working arrangements. It is likely that any reduction will have a negative impact on current fire safety strategy arrangements within University buildings. Schools and departments are asked to consider the following matters to ensure fire safety provision is not compromised;

- Seek additional volunteers to adopt fire steward (FS) and fire coordinator (FC) roles where necessary
- Review minimum numbers of FC and FS within each building*
- Review and consider the role of stewards to incorporate wider geographical responsibility
- Ensure all staff taking on the role of FS and FC complete the online courses made available.

*It is recommended a fire steward is available for every floor of a building. Where buildings are large and complex consideration must be given to additional stewards being available for specific areas or occupancies. At least one fire coordinator and an assistant should be available for each building.

Some considerations in this respect should include the following:

- It must be recognised that the fire coordinator and fire stewards have a key role in incident support and is integral to the fire safety function for the building
- Each occupied building requires to have a nominated person who is appropriately trained as a fire coordinator and fully understands the role

Fire Safety tests and checks

Where buildings are occupied the completion of fire steward's weekly fire test routines within University buildings require to be completed irrespective of the occupancy levels. The following points may be worthy of consideration in some circumstances, further advice can be sought from the University Fire Safety Adviser;

- Arranging and agreeing temporary arrangements for alarm tests and weekly safety checks at school level as opposed to individual buildings (nominated person approach)
- Where buildings have minimal occupancy consideration can be given to a 'sign in-sign out' system to assist with evacuation



procedure.

Requirement to review/amend training content (FS & FC)

As a result of restricted access and physical distancing arrangements the FS and FC training has been reviewed and is available on line. However the following points should be considered;

- Review emergency procedures which rely on fire steward evacuation strategy
- Review numbers of fire stewards and availability
- All staff to complete Cardinus fire awareness before returning to work
- Consider sign in/out strategy for occupation accountability in lieu of fire wardens
- FC & FS training is now available on line

3. Student accommodation

The FSU understands there was a significant number of students in University accommodation during the restriction periods so fire safety management regimes were maintained during this period and this will continue as long as residents are present. The FSU will continue to assist ACE colleagues in all matters related to fire safety provision.

Where accommodation has not been used during the restriction period it would be prudent to follow the guidance detailed below in re-occupation checks before occupation.

4. Initial building re-occupation checks/tests

Following a period of closure it is advisable that any building that has been closed as a result of COVID-19 restrictions undergoes a review of its life safety systems to ensure that the building is safe from a fire safety perspective. It is the responsibility of the Head of School /College or Department for ensuring that any building they occupy is safe. This responsibility may be delegated to an appropriate person e.g. Fire Coordinator, School Health & Safety Adviser, Estates or Facilities Manager, as determined by the School, College, Department concerned.

Below is a checklist of the items that must be reviewed/tested prior to any occupation. If any items fail the review then advice should be sought from the Fire Safety Unit. An entry should be made in the Premises Fire Safety Log Book confirming that these checks have been undertaken.

Any identified issues with the building fabric or in built systems should be reported in the normal manner through Estates Helpdesk. Furthermore, the Fire Safety Unit is available to discuss and provide advice as required.



5. Summary

Post COVID-19 Fire Safety Arrangements		
1	Fire Safety Unit - considerations	Fire Risk Assessment options review FFE maintenance programme delay Safety Risk analysis/assessment
2	School/Dept/Occupiers - considerations	Weekly fire safety tests Availability of fire coordinators and stewards Review training options
3	Student Accommodation	No known issues
4	Re-occupation considerations	Means of Escape checks Fire Warning System tests Life Safety Systems (where fitted) Electrical General Fire Safety



Re Occupation and weekly checklists

Means of escape	Yes (Y) or No (N)	Comments
Are all means of escape free from any storage and clear/available?		
Are all final exit doors unlocked and available for use?		
Are all internal escape doors unlocked?		
Are all doors with magnetic locks operating correctly?		
Are all door opening devices operating satisfactorily?		
Are all external routes clear/free from storage and lead to a place of safety?		

Fire Warning System	Yes (Y) or No (N)	Comments
Is the fire alarm panel free from any fault warning lights?		
Has the system been tested to ensure functionality prior to occupation of the building?		
Does the connection from the fire alarm to the security control operate		



when the alarm is activated?		
Are all operating points unobstructed and ready for use?		
Are all operating points free from any obvious damage?		
Are all devices (detectors; sounders) free from damage?		

Fire Extinguishers	Yes (Y) or No (N)	Comments
Are all fire extinguishers in position?		
Are all security pins and seals provided?		
Are all pressure gauges (where fitted) showing green?		

Life Safety Systems (where fitted)	Yes (Y) or No (N)	Comments
Are the fire curtains operating correctly and been tested?		
Is the smoke extraction system operating and been tested?		
Are the Evacuation Lifts operating correctly?		



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Have the Temporary Waiting Space communication points been tested and operating?		
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Electrical	Yes (Y) or No (N)	Comments
Is the power supply to the building operating correctly?		
If the building has been powered down for a period are the emergency lighting units fully charged and operating?		

General Fire Safety	Yes (Y) or No (N)	Comments
Has the building fire plan or occupancy changed?		
If so, do all staff and students know the amended fire action procedure?		
Are there or will there be a satisfactory number of Fire Stewards and Fire Coordinators available to manage any fire evacuation?		



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