

# FIRE SAFETY POLICY

## Revision 4

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<b>Approved By:</b>	Health & Safety Committee
<b>Date of Issue:</b>	May 2010
<b>Reviewed:</b>	May 2013
<b>Reviewed:</b>	May 2014
<b>Next Review:</b>	May 2015

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## **1.1 INTRODUCTION:**

Statistics produced by the Office for Communities and Local Government show that the UK Fire and Rescue Services attend over 624,000 fires and false alarm calls each year. The number of fire related deaths reported each year exceeds 388, with the number of fire related injuries exceeding 13,200. The financial loss to the UK economy is measured in billions of pounds.

Aston University has developed a fire safety policy and procedures designed to protect both life and physical assets. The effectiveness of this policy depends not only on physical precautions designed to prevent the occurrence and spread of fire, but also on the cooperation of every member of staff, student, visitor and contractor.

Compliance with the fire safety policy and procedures is a legal requirement. All staff will have duties and responsibilities in respect of fire safety. Managers will be responsible for ensuring that the fire safety policy and fire safety procedures are brought to the attention of their staff and that they are observed by them at all times.

## **1.2 DUTIES UNDER THE LAW:**

- Principal legislation covering fire safety at Aston University is:
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- The requirements of the above legislation include:
- Fire risk assessment;
- Fire precautions to minimise the risk of fire;
- Design and maintenance of buildings to prevent the spread of fire;
- Means of detection and giving warning in the event of fire;
- Provision and maintenance of means of escape;
- Emergency evacuation procedures;
- Means of fighting a fire;
- The training of staff in fire safety;
- The management of fire safety.

## **1.3 PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY:**

The principal objectives of the Fire Safety Policy are:

- To safeguard all persons who may be affected by the outbreak of fire at any of the University's premises;

- To safeguard the physical assets of the University, its staff, students, visitors and contractors;
- To reduce the incidence of fires;
- To minimise the potential for fire to disrupt the work of the University;
- To minimise the incidence of unwanted fire alarm signals and malicious false alarms;
- To protect the environment.

#### **1.4 GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT:**

Aston University recognise that fire precautions play an important part in Health and Safety for employees and persons on its premises, and is therefore committed to minimising the risk of fire within its premises to the lowest practicable level.

In the event of a fire, Aston University seeks to provide an effective response through rapid detection, containment and control. This will be achieved through staff training and awareness as it is recognised that everyone can contribute to the prevention of fire and through a responsible reaction, mitigate the spread of fire and ensure a safe evacuation.

Aston University will comply fully with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

Particular attention will be paid to:

- Fire Risk Assessment and the actions identified.
- Maintaining an adequate means of escape for all persons in case of fire, which are kept free from obstruction, are available for safe and effective use at all times, and have adequate emergency lighting.
- The provision of adequate means of giving warning of fire.
- The provision of adequate equipment for fire fighting.
- The provision of emergency lighting where required.
- The provision of appropriate instruction on evacuation procedures to all staff, students, visitors and contractors.
- Effective management procedures to respond to and deal with the aftermath of a fire.
- Appropriate fire training.

Aston University's Fire Safety Policy will be reviewed regularly. Revisions will be brought to the attention of all employees.

## **ORGANISATION & INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES:**

### **2.1 RESPONSIBLE PERSON:**

The Regulatory (Fire Safety) Reform Order 2005, states the meaning of “Responsible Person” as being:

- The employer, if the workplace is to any extent under his/her control; or
- The person who has control of the premises (as occupier or otherwise) in connection with carrying out their trade, business or undertaking.

This definition applies to persons listed under section 2.2 and 2.3 below:

### **2.2 CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, ASTON UNIVERSITY**

Ultimate responsibility for this policy rests with the University Council as the employer. Council will require the Chief Operating Officer to ensure that the policy is effectively applied.

### **2.3 EXECUTIVE DEANS/HEADS OF DEPARTMENT**

Each Executive Dean/Head of Department is responsible for ensuring the management and maintenance of fire safety arrangements within the areas that come under their control. This will include:

- Appointing an appropriate number of School/Department Fire Wardens;
- Ensuring that all appointed Fire Wardens are appropriately trained;
- Ensuring that all staff, students, visitors and contractors under their control are made aware of fire safety procedures;
- Ensuring that all means of escape within areas under their control are kept clear of obstructions, combustible materials and any potential sources of ignition;
- Ensuring that good standards of housekeeping are maintained at all times;
- Ensuring that all statutory instructions relating to fire doors are observed;
- Reporting any defects with the fire alarm system, emergency lighting, fire doors, portable fire fighting extinguishers or fire signs etc to the appropriate persons;
- Reporting any incidents of fire or dangerous occurrences.

## 2.4 DUTIES OF LECTURERS/TEACHING STAFF/TRAINERS/HOSTS:

Teaching staff must draw to the attention of their students the emergency evacuation procedures at the beginning of every term.

In all teaching rooms and pool rooms it is the above person who is responsible for the safety of building occupants in their charge which may include students, visitors or members of the public. This must include advising them of the actions to be taken in the event of a fire, including actuation of the alarm, emergency exit routes and location of assembly points.

Staff and students are requested to familiarise themselves with the procedure; if necessary teaching staff will conduct students through a simulated evacuation

- Upon hearing the fire alarm (Stage Two Main Building & Wings) all classroom activities will cease and the lecturer will direct students to the nearest safe escape route and to their designated fire assembly point.
- Ensure all power and gas supplies directly involved in activities are turned off (if safe to do so) before closing the door as they leave the room (if safe to do so)
- Once outside, lecturers should assemble the class at the assembly point. Any missing student(s) should be reported to Security Control immediately via internal phone 2222 or 0121 359 2922 from a mobile phone.
- **All Staff** have a responsibility to encourage the movement of people away from University buildings to the designated fire assembly points.
- **No person** may be allowed to leave the designated fire assembly point until directed to do so by Security or the Fire Brigade Officer in charge.

## 2.5 RESPONSIBILITY OF STAFF:

The effectiveness of the Fire Safety Policy will depend on the full cooperation of every member of staff, without exception. Cooperation should be encouraged from the highest level. Complying with fire safety procedures should be regarded as a basic duty by all staff and an essential obligation for all persons with management responsibility.

### **ALL EMPLOYEES MUST:**

- Be accountable for their actions in an emergency.
- Attend Fire Awareness Training biennially, or as requested.
- Comply with information instruction and training.
- Report fire safety hazards.

### **2.6 RESPONSIBILITY OF OTHER AUTHORISED USERS, STUDENTS, VISITORS AND CONTRACTORS**

It is a legal responsibility of every authorised user of University premises to adhere to statutory requests, in particular; adhering to information instruction and training. Working in accordance with agreed and approved methods and safe operating procedures

### **2.7 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN:**

**The Responsible Person** for each Executive Dean/Head of Department will ensure that a written emergency evacuation plan is produced detailing:

- Action to be taken by person discovering a fire
- How the Fire Brigade is called and who is responsible
- Fire warning system (description of bells/sirens/voice) and location of control panels
- Evacuation procedures (procedures to be followed)
- Key escape routes (how access can be gained, details of unusual routes)
- Assembly points
- Duties and identities of employees with specific responsibilities.
- Arrangements for safe evacuation of persons identified as being especially at risk from fire.
- Fire fighting equipment provided (fixed) location and details
- Specific arrangements for high fire risk areas
- Procedures for liaison with the Fire Brigade (who, where, what etc)
- Training required by employees and arrangements for giving such training

### **2.8 EMERGENCY EVACUATION**

The current University evacuation procedure has been reproduced in appendix 1



## **2.9 EVACUATION PROCEDURES FOR DISABLED PERSONS:**

Every individual who has a disability which may affect their ability to recognize that an emergency is taking place or to evacuate a building unaided must have a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) drawn up

### **Staff Students**

It is the responsibility of the Executive Deans/Heads of Department to alert the Safety Unit to the presence of any member of staff or student who may need a PEEP

### **Visitor/Contractor**

It is the responsibility of the person being visited or unit in control of the area is responsible to alert the Safety Unit to the presence of any visitor or contractor who may need a PEEP.

#### **PEEPs are required by:**

- Anyone who could have difficulty in evacuating in an emergency
- Persons with temporary mobility impairments, i.e. pregnancy, injuries, broken leg etc
- Persons with long term impairments, i.e. hearing, sight, ambulatory, cognitive
- Others (e.g. children, elderly)

This will be produced in conjunction with the Safety Office. The evacuation strategy will be specific to a person based on their individual needs and abilities.

## **2.10 WHEELCHAIR USERS WITH MOBILITY IMPAIRMENT:**

The wheelchair user must notify their tutor/manager of the details of their PEEP. If, due to the nature of the illness/injury, the individual cannot be removed from their wheelchair without risk of serious injury, the Health & Safety Unit and Security Control MUST be advised immediately.

It is essential that wherever possible Security and Fire Wardens are aware of staff, students, visitors or contractors to the building who have specific emergency evacuation needs.

## **2.11 DEAF/HEARING IMPAIRED PERSONS:**

There are few visual fire signals within the University. Deaf or hearing impaired students who are likely to be working in an isolated area are encouraged to advise an appropriate member of staff of this fact, so that they may be notified of any alarm. In all academic buildings and certain Halls of Residence vibrating pagers and pillows units are available for deaf/hearing impaired persons. (For further advice, please contact Security Control or the Health & Safety Unit)

Schools/Departments in which hearing impaired staff are located should consider the vibrating pager system which is available to alert the individual to the activation of the alarm system.

## **2.12 BLIND/VISUALLY IMPAIRED PERSONS:**

Blind/visually impaired persons are advised to locate evacuation and designated fire assembly points in their early days at the University and should make contact with the Safety Unit to be advised on the fire evacuation routes and to formulate a PEEP from their nominated work location. It is essential that this takes place immediately on arrival at the University rather than wait until an evacuation takes place.

## **2.13 APPOINTING FIRE WARDENS:**

The implementation of the Fire Warden Scheme across all academic buildings has now been agreed by the executive, this will be implemented during 2012/13/14.

Fire Wardens are appointed by the Executive Deans of Schools and Heads of Departments to assist in the safe evacuation of all staff, students, visitors and contractors present from pre-designated areas of the building.

In large buildings where numbers of people are significant, it is not practicable to have a roll call or keep a formal fire register. Similarly, in most University premises, a significant proportion of people are 'mobile' at any given time. All but the smallest of premises will require Fire Wardens, and sufficient numbers should be appointed to ensure that no individual has to check an area greater than it would take around Two minutes to cover.

The University has intends to implement such a system in most of its buildings and Fire Wardens will be trained to assist staff, students and visitors to evacuate buildings when the fire alarm sounds.

## 2.14 FIRE WARDENS - ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- **Fire Safety Awareness** ensure good housekeeping practices are carried out
- **Fire Fighting Equipment** under take visual checks to identify any defective or missing equipment.
- **Escape Routes** ensure all escape routes are clear of obstructions and signs are not damaged or obscured.
- **Mandatory Fire Notices** ensure all fire doors are clearly signed 'fire door keep shut' etc.
- **Fire Safety Signs** ensure all fire safety signs are legible and not damaged.
- **Fire Assembly Point** ensure you are aware of the location.

### Training:

- How to visually check your designated area.
- The procedures for calling Security Control
- The evacuation procedures for occupants to reach designated fire assembly points
- How to alert occupants of the building including directing them to exits.
- How to open all escape doors, including those with special mechanisms
- How to stop machinery and isolate power supplies (If this is within your area of responsibility)
- The standards and working practices for safe use of flammable materials or any other hazardous materials in your area.
- How to report incidents, ie leaks, spills, faulty equipment, door closers etc
- How to safely operate portable firefighting equipment, and identify the correct equipment type to use.
- The use of the emergency two way radios.

### Special responsibilities:

You may be asked to assist occupants requiring additional assistance. You will also receive training in:

- Location of refuge points
- The evacuation procedures for occupants with additional needs
- The safety procedures for manually lifting or guiding occupants

Specific instructions are provided to fire wardens however a brief summary is listed below:

### In the event of an evacuation:

- Proceed to nearest fire warden box
- Check designated area as per route card
- Report to Security
- Await further instructions/duties

It must be stressed, however, that Fire Wardens are **not** trained to be fire fighters. Their main function is to assist the progress of the evacuation and to report its progress to Security Control.

## **ARRANGEMENTS:**

### **3.1 FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT:**

The Health & Safety Unit will take the lead role in organising the implementation of fire risk assessments of all Aston University non-residential buildings.

Due to the complexity and size of the task, fire risk assessments will be carried out on a biannual basis, or after any significant change, fire or near miss.

Within sleeping risk areas the fire risk assessment will be undertaken annually, or after any significant change or near miss.

### **3.2 WHAT IS A FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT?**

It's an organised and methodical assessment in all Aston University buildings, the activities performed on there and the likelihood that a fire could start and cause harm to those in and around the premises.

What is the aim?

- To identify the hazards and reduce the risks of those hazards causing harm to as low as reasonably practicable.
- To decide what physical and management procedures are necessary to ensure the safety of people in the building if a fire does start?

#### **Definitions**

- HAZARD anything with the potential to cause harm
- RISK the likely hood of harm occurring and its severity

There are five steps to risk assessment

\* STEP 1

IDENTIFY THE FIRE HAZARDS

\* STEP 2

IDENTIFY PEOPLE AT RISK

\* STEP 3

EVALUATE, REMOVE, REDUCE AND PROTECT FROM RISKS

Preventative measures

- Evaluate the risk of a fire occurring
- Evaluate the risk to people from fire
- Remove or reduce fire hazards
- Remove or reduce the risk to people

Protective measures

- Detection and warning
- Escape routes
- Emergency Lighting
- Signs and notices
- Maintenance
- Fire fighting

\* STEP 4

RECORD, PLAN INSTRUCT, INFORM AND TRAIN

- Record significant findings and action taken
- Prepare an emergency plan
- Inform relevant people, provide instruction, and cooperate and coordinate with others
- Provide training

\* STEP 5

REVIEW

- Keep assessment under review
- Revise where necessary

*Frequency of review will depend on building usage, size, complexity, any changes.*

### 3.3 FIRE SAFETY INSPECTIONS:

The general aim of fire safety inspections is to highlight areas of risk before they cause harm to anyone.

It is the responsibility of the Responsible Person (See *Section 2.1*) to ensure that fire safety inspections are carried out at regular intervals.

Inspections should be carried out by appointed competent University employees as part of their weekly duties. Specific concerns must be brought to the attention of the Responsible)

### 3.4 BUILDING DESIGN:

Capital Development & Estates will be responsible for ensuring that the design of buildings complies with all relevant fire safety legislation. The Health & Safety Unit will advise on building design matters relevant to fire safety where necessary, and should be invited to attend Estates & Capital Development Team meetings where appropriate.

### 3.5 DESIGN OF FIRE ALARM SYSTEMS:

Capital Development & Estates with the assistance of the Health & Safety Unit will be responsible for ensuring that the design of fire alarm systems complies with all relevant fire safety legislation.

### 3.6 TESTING OF FIRE ALARM SYSTEMS:

Capital Development & Estates with the assistance of Security Control will be responsible for the weekly testing of all fire alarm systems in Aston University campus buildings.

The Aston Student Village Facilities management Provider with the assistance of Security Control will be responsible for the weekly testing of all fire alarm systems in Aston University residences buildings.

The senior staff at any non campus buildings *ie* (Shustoke Recreation Centre Great Barr) will be responsible for the weekly testing of fire alarm systems under their control, and the recording of all tests in a suitable log book.

### **3.7 MAINTENANCE OF FIRE ALARM SYSTEMS:**

Capital Development & Estates with the assistance of the Health & Safety Unit will be responsible for ensuring the ongoing maintenance of all Aston University fire alarm systems by an approved contractor, in both campus and off campus buildings.

The Aston Student Village Facilities management Provider will be responsible for ensuring the ongoing maintenance of all fire alarm systems by an approved contractor, in all residence buildings.

### **3.8 PORTABLE FIRE FIGHTING EQUIPMENT:**

Capital Development & Estates with the assistance of the will be responsible for ensuring the ongoing maintenance of all Aston University portable fire fighting equipment by an approved contractor, in all non Residences buildings.

The Aston Student Village Facilities management Provider will be responsible for ensuring the ongoing maintenance of all portable fire fighting equipment by an approved contractor, in all residence buildings.

The Health & Safety Unit will also advise on the type, numbers and location of portable fire fighting equipment where necessary.

### **3.9 MAINTENANCE OF FIRE EXTINGUISHERS:**

Health & Safety Unit (Fire Safety Adviser) will be responsible for ensuring the annual testing and ongoing maintenance of all fire extinguishers in non-Residential buildings.

The Aston Student Village Facilities management Provider will be responsible for ensuring the annual testing and ongoing maintenance of all fire extinguishers in Residences buildings.

### **3.10 EMERGENCY LIGHTING:**

Capital Development & Estates will be responsible for ensuring that suitable and sufficient emergency lighting is installed and maintained in all Aston University non Residences buildings.

The Aston Student Village Facilities management Provider will be responsible for ensuring that suitable and sufficient emergency lighting is installed and maintained in all Aston University Residences buildings.

### **3.11 FIXED FIRE FIGHTING INSTALLATIONS:**

Capital Development & Estates with the assistance of the Health & Safety Unit will be responsible for ensuring that, where required, dry risers, fire hydrants and sprinkler systems are located and maintained to a suitable and sufficient standard in all Aston University non Residential buildings.

The Aston Student Village Facilities management Provider will be responsible for ensuring the annual testing and ongoing maintenance of Dry Risers, Fire Hydrants and sprinkler systems in residences buildings.

### **3.12 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES:**

Each School/Department with the assistance of the Health & Safety Unit will be responsible for ensuring that they have in place a suitable and sufficient Emergency Evacuation Plan for the areas they occupy. The Emergency Evacuation Plan will include the evacuation of disabled persons. Notices detailing the action to be taken in the event of a fire situation are displayed throughout buildings, and are normally located adjacent to each manual fire alarm call-point.

### **3.13 FIRE REFUGES:**

Capital Development & Estates in conjunction with the Health & Safety Unit will be responsible for identifying; required, suitable fire refuge points are located in all non-residential buildings.

Capital Development & Estates will be responsible for the installation and maintenance of an Emergency communicator in all Fire Refuges.

Security with the assistance of the Capital Development & Estates will be responsible for the routine testing of the emergency communicator located in each Fire Refuge, and the recording of the results of the in a suitable log book.

The Aston Student Village Facilities management Provider will be responsible for ensuring the testing and ongoing maintenance of an Emergency communicator in all Fire Refuges.

### **3.14 MEANS OF ESCAPE:**

All Aston University buildings have adequate means of escape in the event of fire or other emergency.



### **3.15 IDENTIFYING MEANS OF ESCAPE ROUTES:**

Capital Development & Estates in conjunction with the Health & Safety Unit will be responsible for ensuring that all means of escape routes are clearly signed.

### **3.16 MAINTENANCE OF MEANS OF ESCAPE ROUTES:**

Individual Schools / Departments will be responsible for ensuring that all means of escape routes are kept free of any obstructions, combustible material and any sources of ignition. Capital Development & Estates will be responsible for the maintenance of all fire doors, fire exits and escape routes in all non Residences buildings.

The Estates & Capital Development will be responsible for the maintenance of all fire doors, fire exits and escape routes in all Residences Buildings.

### **3.17 FIRE DRILLS:**

The Health & Safety Unit will be responsible for ensuring that a minimum of two fire evacuation drills per year are undertaken in every Aston University building.

### **3.18 FIRE SAFETY TRAINING:**

Schools/Departments with the assistance of the Health & Safety Unit will be responsible for facilitating appropriate fire safety training courses, including training courses for School/Departmental Fire Wardens.

### **3.19 FIRE REPORTS:**

Each School/Department will be responsible for ensuring that any incidents of fire are reported to Security Control and to the Health & Safety Unit.

### **3.20 SMOKING:**

All premises observe a 'No Smoking' Policy and a 5mtr exclusion zone from any entrance/exit

### **3.21 WASTE:**

All combustible waste must be disposed of in waste bins provided, and bins must be emptied regularly. Wheelie bins and skips are to be positioned at least 8 metres away from any building and in a suitable position, so that should a bin be involved in a fire, the fire would not spread to an adjacent building. Where possible lockable wheelie bins/skips should be used.

Please see appendix 2

### **3.22 ARSON CONTROL:**

Any type of combustible material left unattended or in an insecure container is a prime target for arsonists. Every effort must be made to limit the availability of combustible items which can be easily set fire to, particularly around university buildings.

### **3.23 PORTABLE HEATERS:**

Any type of portable heater must be used with extreme caution. Heaters should be positioned to allow free flow of air, and not in close proximity of curtains or furniture. They must not be covered and must be kept at least one meter clear of any combustible items. Portable heaters ideally should be the electric oil filled radiator type. All heaters must be switched off and unplugged before leaving them unattended. Portable fan heaters are not permitted for use on campus.

### **3.24 FURNISHINGS:**

All furnishings supplied must conform to current fire retardant legislation. Please contact the Health & Safety Unit for further advice.

### **3.25 FLAMMABLE LIQUIDS AND FLAMMABLE GASES:**

Flammable liquids and flammable gases must only be stored in small quantities. Information on the suitability of storage should be obtained from the Health & Safety Unit.

### **3.26 PORTABLE APPLIANCE TESTING:**

Any appliance that plugs directly into a wall socket should be PAT tested on a regular basis. The type of appliance and the task for which the appliance is used will determine the testing regime. For any further advice please contact the Health & Safety Unit or the University Electrical Engineer.

## APPENDIX 1

The following is the emergency evacuation procedure for most University buildings (excluding Main Building & Wings Shustoke Farm Recreation Centre at Great Barr which has a separate procedure).

### IF YOU DISCOVER A FIRE

1. Immediately operate the nearest fire alarm call point
2. From a place of safety, contact security by dialling:
  - **222** from any internal phone, or **2222** if phoning from residences
  - **0121 359 2922** if calling from a mobile phone or 'outside' line
  - **DO NOT DIAL 999**
3. Speak clearly, giving the location of the fire, your name and any other details as requested by security - do not 'hang up' until told to do so!
4. Only fight the fire if you have been trained to do so
5. Evacuate **IMMEDIATELY** using the nearest available fire exit (see evacuation procedure below)
6. Report to the designated fire assembly point (see list below)

### IF YOU HEAR A FIRE ALARM

1. Evacuate **IMMEDIATELY** using the nearest available fire exit (see evacuation procedure below)
2. Report to the designated fire assembly point (see list below)

### EVACUATION PROCEDURE

1. Evacuate **IMMEDIATELY** using the nearest available fire exit, observing the following advice:
  - **DO NOT STOP TO COLLECT BELONGINGS**
  - **DO NOT USE LIFTS**
  - **DO NOT RE-ENTER THE BUILDING UNTIL AUTHORISED TO DO SO**
2. Report to the designated fire assembly point (see list below)

## Fire Safety Instructions – Main Building and Wings

### 1. IF YOU DISCOVER A FIRE

- Immediately break the glass on the nearest fire alarm call point
- From a place of safety contact Security by dialling:
  - 222 from any internal phone
  - 0121 359 2922 from a mobile or outside line
  - DO NOT DIAL 999
- Only fight the fire if you have been trained to do so
- Evacuate the building immediately using the nearest available fire exit (see evacuation procedure in paragraph 3 below)

### 2. IF YOU HEAR AN INTERMITTENT SINGLE TONE FIRE ALARM (accompanied by a female voice in most areas)

- Anticipate a full evacuation by ceasing normal work activities, storing any hazardous materials safely and switching off all power tools.
- Do not enter a zone where a continuous two-tone fire alarm is sounding
- Do not attempt to use the lifts while an alarm is sounding
- If you are in a lift when the alarm sounds, you will be taken to the Ground Floor where the lift will terminate

### 3. IF YOU HEAR A CONTINUOUS TWO TONE FIRE ALARM (accompanied by a male voice in most areas)

- If you have a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP), you should follow the instructions in it. Otherwise:
- **Leave the building using the nearest available fire exit and make your way to Lakeside Parade to await further instructions**
- If you are on the upper floors, if possible use one of the protected escape routes to exit the Building. **The protected escape routes are the stairways at each corner (A, C, E, G corners) of the Main Building and the stairways at either end of the North and South Wings.**
- Take responsibility for any visitors and take them with you
- Be vigilant and consider the needs of anyone you see in difficulties
- Do not stop to collect belongings
- Do not attempt to use the lifts while an alarm is sounding
- If you are in a lift when the alarm sounds, you will be taken to the Ground Floor where the lift will terminate
- Do not re-enter the building until authorised to do so

#### 4. IF THE ALARM STOPS

- **If you heard a continuous alarm which was then silenced, continue your evacuation. Leave the building using the nearest available fire exit and make your way to the fire assembly point (Car Park 12) and await for further instructions.**
- If you heard an intermittent alarm which was then silenced, you may carry on as normal.

#### 5. IF YOU GET INTO DIFFICULTIES DURING THE EVACUATION

- Within the protected stairways, there is a red emergency telephone or a flashing green communication box (South Wing only) located on each floor. Red phones automatically dial security when hand set is lifted and the communication boxes dial Security when the green flashing button is pressed.
- **Contact Security (ext: 222 from an internal phone or 0121 359 2922 from your mobile telephone)** and tell them your location.
- Security will advise you what to do next.
- If you are unable to contact Security directly, ask someone to relay your exact location to a Security Officer once they are outside the building.

**DESIGNATED FIRE/EMERGENCY ASSEMBLY POINTS**

**FIRE ASSEMBLY POINTS**

**CAR PARK No. 3**

*(Car park between Students Guild Glass Bridge and North Wing)*

**ASTON BUSINESS SCHOOL**

**CAR PARK 12**

*(Covered car park underneath sports pitch)*

**MAIN BUILDING (Inc North and South Wings  
Aston Brain Centre)**

**MAIN BUILDING FOUNTAIN AREA**

*(Block paved area by Main Entrance to Main Building & Wings)*

**LIBRARY  
VISION SCIENCES  
STUDENTS GUILD  
ASTON BRAIN CENTRE  
WOODCOCK SPORTS CENTRE  
ALL STUDENT RESIDENCE BUILDINGS  
OPTEGRA BIRMINGHAM DAY HOSPITAL**

## **FIRE ALARM SYSTEMS**

All campus buildings are fitted with a 'two-tone' electronic alarm.

Note that the Main Building has a 'two stage' fire alarm system as follows:

- Stage 1: an intermittent single tone alarm (*in certain areas accompanied by voice instructions*) indicating that a fire alarm device has been activated or a potential emergency has been reported to security.  
Anticipate a full evacuation by ceasing normal work activities and, for example, storing any hazardous materials safely and switching off all power tools.
- Stage 2: a continuous two-tone alarm (*in certain areas accompanied by voice instructions*) Evacuate **IMMEDIATELY** (see procedure above)

## **OTHER EMERGENCIES WHICH MAY REQUIRE EVACUATION**

In the event of other emergencies, for example, a serious chemical spillage, gas leak, or the discovery of a suspicious package, contact security for further advice on the telephone numbers listed above.

APPENDIX 2

# **ECD SKIP PLACEMENT POLICY**

**Revised February 2014**

**ECD-HS-PO-406-11-13**

## **Introduction**

This document provides guidance to the University's Management, Contractors and Sub-Contractor's regarding the safe management\* of waste in skips awaiting disposal in order to:



- Minimise the likelihood of fire;
- Minimise the risk of vehicle / Pedestrian collisions;
- Limit any associated health and environmental issues;
- Ensure that safe means of access to and egress from the campus site is maintained at all times.

(\*The University and its contractors have responsibilities under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, the Environmental Protection Act 1990, and the Road Traffic Regulations Act, 1984.)

### **Skip Design/Dimensions**

- Each skip must be no larger than 5 metres in length by 2 metres in width.
- Where possible, skips should have lockable lids to prevent arson attacks; if this is not possible then a HERAS Fence must be erected to minimise unauthorised access to the skip and its contents.
- If the skip does not comply with the above, the Responsible ECD Manager is to agree with the skip placement to ensure that it does not pose a hazard.

### **Skip Markings**

- Where possible; each skip must be clearly marked with the skip owner's or supplier's name and telephone number and all markings must also be kept clean and visible at all times.
- If the skip does not comply with the above, the Responsible ECD Manager is to agree with the skip placement to ensure that it does not pose a hazard and the skip is to be Coned / Barrired and Warning Signs sited on the road approach to the skip.

### **Skip Location**

#### **Placement On-campus**

- When planning the positioning of skips the default position is to be use of parking spaces in the nearest car park
- Where the required position of the skip may present a danger to drivers or pedestrians, the skip is to be re-positioned into a safer position.
- When positioned on a campus roadway, the skip is to have barriers and-or cones sited to mark the skip.
- During hours of darkness or in bad weather conditions, skips must be marked by amber flashing lights which are placed against the skip or attached to each corner of the skip or Heras Fence. If there are 2 or more skips with less than 2 metres between them, lights can be put on the end corners of the row of skips / fencing. -

It is the responsibility of the Contractor to ensure these are turned on/off each day.

- Permission must be sought from Estates & Capital Developments Department and the University Fire Officer if a skip containing combustibles cannot be placed at least 8 meters away from any building. Skips containing rubble only may be placed next to a building where there is a safe hard standing area and the conditions below can be met;
- If the skip does not comply with the above, the Responsible ECD Manager is to agree with the skip placement to ensure that it does not pose a hazard and the skip is to be Coned / Barrired and Warning Signs sited on the road approach to the skip.
- When planning the placement of skips the requirements of the; **POLICY ON THE CONTROL OF VEHICLES ACCESSING PEDESTRIAN AREAS AND PARKING AREAS - ECD-HS-PO-371-03-13**. Found at <http://www1.aston.ac.uk/staff/estates/policiesandprocedures/> are to be followed.

If permission is granted to place skips on a footway or grass verge, care must be taken not to cause any damage to the infrastructure and plants. Any damage will be expected to be made good by the contractor. The area is to be cordoned off and alternative routes signed.

It must also be ensured\* that ALL skips:

- **Do not obstruct access to premises;**
- **Do not obstruct escape routes;**
- **Do not obstruct access to fire hydrants;**
- **Are not sited in fire brigade access routes;**
- **Do not obstruct drivers and pedestrians in any way;**
- **Do not prevent water drainage of the road or obstruct manholes or stop any functions that are need to be carried out by the University.**

## **Provision of Warnings, lights etc**

During hours of darkness or in bad weather conditions, skips must be marked by amber flashing lights which are placed against the skip or attached to each corner of the skip. If there are 2 or more skips with less than 2 metres between them, lights can be put on the end corners of the row of skips. If the skip or skips are positioned on the road, lights should be placed between each of the road cones.

## **Skip Filling/Skip Contents**

- All rubbish must be placed in the skip not left on the ground nearby.
- A skip must not be overloaded.
- Contents of the skip must be kept covered, where possible, to prevent dust

- or other spillage onto the roadway.
- Skips must not contain any highly inflammable, explosive, toxic or other dangerous materials or anything which is likely to cause a nuisance to campus users.
- Skips used for hazardous materials such as Asbestos are to be locked and the responsible contractors name and contact details are to be clearly visible on the skip.

### **Emptying Skips**

- All materials placed in skips must be properly disposed of (this is the legal responsibility of the disposer, not the skip removal contractor).
- Full skips must be removed for emptying as soon as possible and in all cases not more than two working days after they have been filled.

### **Complaints/Reporting Procedures**

Complaints about the locations or safety of skips should be reported using the below contact details.

### **Further information/Contact Details**

**Mr Colin Tuck.**  
**ECD, Health & Safety Advisor.**  
Tel; 0121 204 4340 / 07736007738  
Email; [c.j.tuck@aston.ac.uk](mailto:c.j.tuck@aston.ac.uk)

## APPENDIX 3

### **Fire Safety of Notice Boards in Fire Escape Routes**

Wall mounted notice boards, display boards and bulletin boards are used in many areas as simple and convenient ways of communicating information to staff, students and visitors. What is often overlooked is the potential of some types of board, together with the appended paperwork, to present a significant fire risk which can contribute to undermining the fire integrity and fire safety of a building. The most dangerous types are those constructed of a wooden frame with a fibre-board base, often covered with baize or similar material, that are fully open with no glazing or similar material to cover and protect the displayed notices and paperwork.

Legislation such as the Building Regulations and, particularly, the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, set out a number of requirements regarding the type and quality of surface paint systems, fixtures and fittings, etc., within a building to inhibit the spread of fire over the internal surfaces and to ensure adequate compartmentalisation of an area and to maintain safe means of escape.

The Fire Risk Assessments carried out at the University by external consultants drew the University's attention to the risks associated with notice boards, and recent discussions with the local fire brigade have confirmed that action to replace unsuitable boards should be taken.

The University therefore wishes to ensure, with immediate effect that only boards meeting the relevant fire safety standards (which are dependent upon the proposed location and other factors) are purchased and fitted.

In the future, a rolling programme of identifying and replacing unsuitable notice boards will be introduced commencing with those in public circulation areas, fire escape routes and other higher risk locations.

In the first instance this will be the responsibility of the School or Department, and in the second instance third party inspections will raise awareness of notice boards that will require replacement.

Schools and Departments which are considering purchasing notice boards for their areas are requested to contact the University Fire Safety Adviser who has produced the following guidance to assist you with the legal requirements before proceeding with any purchase or installation.

## **Guidance on the Placement & Use of Notice Boards in Fire Escape Routes**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Wall mounted notice boards, display boards and bulletin boards are used as a simple and convenient way of communicating information to staff and students. As these boards are usually fixed to the walls of corridors or rooms within buildings, it is important to consider their fire safety aspects.

### **WHAT REGULATIONS APPLY TO NOTICE BOARDS?**

#### **Building Regulations**

Building regulations prescribe that internal wall linings inhibit the spread of fire within a building by adequately resisting the spread of flame over their surfaces and by limiting heat release, in case of ignition, to levels reasonable in the circumstances.

#### **The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005**

The University's buildings fall under the requirements of the Buildings and Fire Precautions Legislation and therefore must meet specific standards relating to means of escape in the event of fire.

The use of fire doors, fire compartmentalisation and appropriate fire resistant building materials within a building are essential components of a fire prevention management strategy.

In the event of fire, open style notice boards which have substantial amounts of paper attached can significantly reduce the protection provided by fire resistant building materials and compartmentalisation.

Open style notice boards with loose sheets of paper present an easy target for an arson attack, thus increasing the potential to smoke log the means of escape and prevent evacuation, or even cause death by smoke inhalation or fire spread.

Our fire risk assessment identifies this as a High risk however; the level of risk can be reduced by removing or replacing open style notice boards.

This provides a further compelling argument to include notice boards under prevailing fire precaution legislation, notably The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

## **RULES AND GUIDELINES FOR THE SPECIFICATION AND USE OF NOTICE BOARDS**

It is a general principle of fire safety that escape corridors should not contain significant levels of fuel. Therefore it is important to ensure that there are appropriate rules in respect of notice boards in any building.

The Health & Safety Unit strongly recommends that the following guidance is observed in the selection and use of notice boards.

The classification of fire spread is measured using specific test conditions as laid out in British Standards 476.

BS 476 Part 7 test measures the lateral spread of flame along the surface of the specimen in the vertical position. The classification system is based on the rate and extent of flame spread. The levels of irradiance are specified in the standard, e.g.  $32.5 \text{ kW/m}^2$  at 75 mm measured along the sample which is placed at right angles to the radiant heat source.

To achieve a Class 1 classification the flame spread after 1.5 and 10 minutes must be less than 165 mm.

Where even higher standards of fire performance may be required, i.e. hospitals, schools, universities, old peoples' homes, etc., the fire performance requirement should meet the Class 0 classification of the Building Regulations.

To satisfy the Class '0' classification the material, in addition to meeting the Class 1 of BS 476

Part 7, must meet certain performance criteria of the BS 476 Part 6 test.

The BS 467 part 6 test indicates the performance of a material in the early stages of a fire and the test result is a Fire Propagation Index which is dependent on the ignition characteristics, the amount and rate of heat release and the ability of a material to accelerate fire growth.

The lower the Index then the better the resistance of a material to fire growth

To achieve the class 0 classification requires:-

1. BS 476 Part 7 (Surface spread of flame) Class 1 AND
2. BS 476 Part 6 (Fire propagation)

Further guidance on the classification system is available from the University Fire Safety Adviser.

## **SUITABLE NOTICE BOARDS FOR DIFFERENT AREAS OF A BUILDING**

### **Dead End Corridors, Protected Stairways & Lobbies to Protected Stairways**

- No open style notice boards are allowed.
- ✓ Suitable notice boards for these areas are glazed notice boards with aluminium frames and lockable fire resistant doors.
- Where there is no alternative means of escape from a corridor then only notice boards which meet Class 0 requirements will be permitted.
- ✓ Suitable notice boards for these areas are glazed notice boards with aluminium frames, lockable fire resistant doors and Class 0 core materials with Class 0 fire resistant covering.

### **Corridors with an Alternative Means of Escape**

- Suitable notice boards for these areas are glazed notice boards with aluminium frames and lockable fire resistant doors.
- In corridors of less than 1.5m wide notice boards should only be fixed on one side of the corridor.
- In corridors of 1.5m to 3m wide notice boards can be fixed on both sides of the corridor if required.
- In corridors over 3m wide no such limitations apply; the level of a potential fuel in case of fire should be kept to a minimum in all circumstances. Notices on the boards should not overhang the edges of the boards or be stacked. Notice boards meeting National Class 1 requirements (European Class C - open type with fire resistant material covering) may be used in a corridor with an alternative means of escape provided that the surface area of the Class 1 materials does not exceed 20% of the total ceiling and wall surface area of the corridor.
- ✓ Suitable notice boards for these areas are open notice boards without frames or with aluminium frames covered with National Class 1 or European Class C fire rated material.

In applying the 20% surface area factor, any posters, display boards or similar items fixed to the wall or ceiling surfaces shall be included in the calculation as Class 1 items.

### **Atrium Areas**

- In Atrium areas only glazed notice boards to Class 0 requirements should be installed as fixed items.
- ✓ Suitable notice boards for these areas are glazed notice boards with aluminium frames, lockable fire resistant doors and Class 0 core materials with Class 0 fire resistant covering.

### **Notice Boards within Rooms**

- Notice boards should never be of a lower fire rating than National Class 3 or European Class D.
- Where notice boards are to be fixed in rooms the following rules will apply:
  - a) Where the risk of fire is high then all notice boards must be Class 0 and glazed.
    - ✓ Suitable notice boards for these areas are glazed notice boards with aluminium frames, fire resistant doors and Class 0 core materials with Class 0 fire resistant covering (if covered).
  - b) In small rooms (of a size less than 30 m<sup>2</sup>), notice boards can be Class 3 (European Class D).
    - ✓ Suitable notice boards for these areas are open notice boards without frames (wrapped) or with aluminium, plastic or wooden frames.
  - c) The 20% rule described above applies to large rooms (of a size greater than 30m<sup>2</sup>). Notices on the board should not exceed the edges of the board or be stacked. Notice boards meeting National Class 1 requirements (European Class C - open type with fire resistant material covering) may be used in a corridor with an alternative means of escape provided that the surface area of the Class 1 materials does not exceed 20% of the total ceiling and wall surface area of the corridor.



- ✓ Suitable notice boards for these areas are open notice boards without frames or with aluminium frames covered with National Class 1 or European Class C fire rated material.

The remaining area must be covered or glazed and comply with Class 0.

- ✓ Suitable notice boards for these areas are glazed notice boards with aluminium frames, fire resistant doors and Class 0 core materials with Class 0 fire resistant covering.

In applying the 20% surface area factor, any posters, display boards or similar items fixed to the wall or ceiling surfaces shall be included in the calculation as Class 1 items.

For added fire safety, open boards meeting Class 0 requirements may be used in corridors where Class 1 is required. Please note that the Class 0 rating applies to the notice board only and that uncovered notices on the board represent fuel in case of fire. Glazed Class 0 notice boards are recommended where the risk of fire or arson is high.

Please also note that wood framed notice boards can never meet the requirements of National Class 0 or 1.

### **Notice Board Management**

**The following instructions are the responsibility of the school or department.**

- Notices should not overhang the edges of the notice board.
- Overlaying of secondary notices should not be allowed.
- Furniture should not be placed underneath notice boards in order to prevent continuity of fuel supply.
- Fly posting on walls should not be permitted.

### **Glossary of terms**

*[Note: further assistance and advice on the specification of notice boards and other technical issues can be obtained from the University Fire Safety Adviser]*

Class 0, 1, 3, C, D, etc. refer to fire rating standards; the appropriate standard must be specified when ordering a notice board.

#### **Dead End Corridors**

A corridor from which escape is only possible from one direction.

#### **Protected Stairways**

A stairway which is adequately protected from the rest of the building by fire resisting construction ie with fire doors protecting against the spread of smoke and flames, from any room or corridor; it must be a 'sterile area' ie with no combustible material within it, and with wall coverings which will not support the spread of fire.

#### **Lobbies to Protected Stairways**

A fire resisting enclosure providing access to an escape stairway via two sets of fire doors and into which no room opens other than toilets or lifts.