Fire and Emergency Evacuation procedure

These procedures are for the Meteorology building (WO58 and WO62) and the Harry Pitt building (WO56). Please refer to the Area Health and Safety Code for the Agriculture Building (WO59) for their relevant fire procedures.

Overview

On hearing the continuous fire alarm, abandon equipment in a safe condition and leave the building by the nearest fire stairwell, not the central stairwell, closing but not locking any door through which you pass. Ensure, where possible that windows are closed. Do not use the lift and do not return to collect personal items.

The Department has a system of named Fire Wardens who have been allocated an area of responsibility, they will assist in guiding staff, visitors and contractors to the fire escape routes and assembly point and can be identified by their florescent vests. They will appoint staff members to act as door wardens, one for each exit, please be prepared to carry this out if instructed, the duties are listed below. If you know your Fire warden and deputy are absent from their area please act as a Fire Warden and guide people to the assembly point and inform the Evacuation Officer of this.

Persons without a personal emergency evacuation plan or who are unable to leave the building without assistance should wait in the nearest fire refuge at the end of spurs 1L, 1U, 2L, 2U and 3L in the Meteorology building (WO58 and WO62), and at the entrance to the first and second floors in the Harry Pitt building (WO56). They should utilise the refuge communication system to notify the Evacuation officer or deputy who will be positioned at the master control panel at the main entrance of their location. Arrangements will be made to evacuate all persons to a safe location. Staff or students who have visitors who may need help leaving the building should consult the Area Health & Safety Co-ordinator about arrangements.

The university will provide evacuation chairs and training in there use, these will be located at points around the campus. The department will have a number of trained staff who, with the aid of these chairs, will assist persons in evacuating to a safe location.

The assembly point is on the far side of the car park in front of the Department. Please keep well away from the buildings: do not obstruct any exits or the route of incoming fire engines.

If you are aware of trapped persons, the source of the fire or cause of the evacuation, then report immediately to the Evacuation Officer or the Fire Brigade’s Incident Officer in Charge.

Practice fire (evacuation) drills are held at least twice a year. These drills are not announced in advance. The full co-operation of all building occupants is mandatory.

The fire alarm systems are periodically tested and tests can be identified by the intermittent sound of the alarms. Prior to these tests a notice is displayed in the main entrance to the building.
Fire extinguishers that require refilling or service must be reported to the Area Health & Safety Coordinator immediately. Training sessions on fire prevention and the use of extinguishers are held annually.

**Fire Procedure: During Normal Hours**

Normal working hours are defined as between 8.00am and 6.00pm Monday to Friday inclusive, except for public holidays and closure days.

**Evacuation following a fire alarm signal**

Ensure that experiments, open flames and electrical equipment are made safe, close room doors, and leave the building immediately, proceed to the assembly point using the nearest evacuation route.

**Duties of Fire Wardens**

When the fire alarm sounds Fire Wardens must check their designated area, and their evacuation route from the building for persons not responding to the alarm signal. Marshal people out of the building using the nearest escape route and report to the assembly point. Each Fire Warden must report to the Evacuation Officer at the assembly point the fact that their area has been checked, or not. Under no circumstances must Fire Wardens endanger themselves and delay their own evacuation from the building. Fire Wardens should then be ready to respond to requests for assistance from the Evacuation Officer.

**Door Wardens**

Door Wardens are nominated by Fire Wardens and should position themselves outside the entrance or fire doors as allocated to them and direct staff/students/visitors to the assembly point. Door Wardens should ensure that no staff/students or visitors re-enter the building. This applies to all persons unless by direct authority of the Evacuation Officer University Security staff, Fire brigade or members of staff sent to complete investigation work or assist with wheelchair occupants.

**Duties of the Evacuation Officer**

Evacuation Officers and nominated Deputies must report to the assembly point. The Evacuation Officer or a deputy will then take control of the situation as follows:

1. Evacuation Officers should ensure they are easily recognisable to their colleagues and the emergency services by wearing the orange high vis vest or coat during any evacuation and by positioning themselves away from the evacuees.

2. On hearing the fire alarm, Evacuation Officers should proceed immediately to the fire alarm enunciator panel. These are normally located in a conspicuous position adjacent to the main entrance to the premises.

3. Confirm the location of the incident as indicated on the panel

4. Collect the Departmental Emergency Folder which is located within the main entrance, outside the porter’s room (GU04) in Meteorology (WO58) or from the Foyer in the entrance to Psychology (WO56). This includes a building plan, details of service isolation points, etc for use by the Evacuation Officer and the emergency services. Take any building emergency pack (where provided) to the assembly point. Don the high vis jacket and proceed to the fire assembly point. The Evacuation
Officer should position themselves remote from the assembled evacuees. The emergency services will recognise the Evacuation Officer as a key individual and first point of contact.

5. Collate information from the building Fire Wardens about the evacuation i.e. which areas of the building have been checked and cleared, and which have not; whether or not all occupants have been accounted for; last known location of any missing persons; and whether there are any individuals requiring assistance with evacuation (e.g. Wheelchair users in Refuge areas). A ‘runner’ should be sent between the Evacuation Officers from the Meteorology building and the Harry Pitt building to report or to collect information regarding any fire.

6. Collate any additional information available from occupants about the possible cause of the alarm or fire, and the location

7. The Evacuation Officer should confirm whether the emergency services or University Security have been called by any of the building occupants. The Evacuation Officer should phone University Security using the phone outside the main entrance (tel. 0118 378 6300) immediately to pass on all known information about the incident.

8. If the Evacuation Officer has been able to reliably determine the cause of the alarm (i.e. confirmed fire or ‘false’ alarm) they should advise University Security Control. If it is a confirmed fire, University Security will relay this to the Fire Service. If it is a false alarm, University Security will cancel the attendance of the Fire Services. Alternatively the Evacuation Officer may phone the emergency services by dialling 999 and asking for the Fire Service.

9. The Evacuation Officer should instruct members of the building evacuation team who have been trained to use the refuge communications equipment to go to the master control panel to find out if anyone is waiting for assistance at a refuge. If it is a confirmed fire and people waiting at a refuge can self evacuate, then they should be advised to do so. If it is safe and practicable, trained members of the building evacuation team should be directed to evacuate people waiting in refuges. Arrangements must be to evacuate to a place of safety people who are unable to exit the building without assistance as it is the responsibility of the University to ensure that all people can leave a building in the event of a fire.

10. Provide the following information and assistance to the emergency services:

   Persons reported missing with last known locations;
   Location of refuge areas allocated for disabled persons;
   Access to the building (provision of relevant keys etc);
   Location of fire incident if known;
   Isolation points for main services;
   Plans of premises (if available);
   Hydrant location(s); and
   Specific hazards in the vicinity of the fire (cylinders, chemicals, etc).

   The attendance time for the Fire Brigade to University buildings is typically 5 - 8 minutes.

   Building searches are the responsibility of the emergency services – they will need reliable information to be provided by the Evacuation Officer. The Emergency Folder located outside the porter’s room will assist with many of these aspects.

11. If necessary, set up a first aid area using first aiders if available (see Safety Guide 8). In the initial stages of the evacuation it is best sited alongside the assembly point. In the longer term a location inside an adjacent building should be provided. The Evacuation Officer must ensure that ambulances know where to attend.
12. If the situation becomes prolonged, consider arrangements for evacuees to be accommodated and protected from the weather. Contingency plans to cater for this eventuality are kept in the Security Services (extension 7799). Ensure that key individuals remain available to give information and assistance to the emergency services as required.

13. The Evacuation Officer should notify the Fire Wardens and Door Wardens when to leave the Fire Assembly point or nominated position and when occupants can re-enter the premises. This decision will normally be made once the all clear has been given by the emergency services or University Security.

**Major Incident Plan**

14. A major incident is an actual or anticipated event which threatens:
   - The physical and/or psychological well-being of staff, students, visitors and third parties,
   - The University’s core operations,
   - The University’s reputation,
   - The University’s property,
   - The University’s information, data or systems

and is beyond the scope of resolution by normal decision-making mechanisms.

15. Implementing the major incident plan will provide a co-ordinated response to major incidents (including fires) that threaten University personnel, property or services.

16. The major incident plan can be implemented by advising Security that in your opinion the ongoing incident merits the plan being invoked. You can do this by either speaking to a member of Security on site or by phoning Security Control Room on 0118 378 6300.

17. Members of the Major Incident Team will then be notified and will attend the incident. They, in liaison with the most senior person present from the building/area, will decide who should take over as on-scene co-ordinator.

**Media contact**

18. In the event of public or media interest, members of staff must refer enquiries to the Major Incident Team and avoid comment of their own. All statements to the press will be issued through the Communications Office who can be contacted on 0118 378 7388

**Follow-up actions**

19. Following a major incident (serious fire or if anyone has been seriously hurt) Health and Safety Services must be informed immediately (extn 8888). They will initiate an enquiry and also decide if the Health and Safety Executive need to be informed. If so, H&SS are responsible for informing HSE.

20. All accidents and injuries should be recorded in the accident book held on the premises and a report made to Health and Safety Services, using the University Incident report form. School/Directorate management are responsible for investigating the cause of the incident and taking any necessary remedial action.
21. Items of equipment that require re-setting may need the attention of the engineers in Maintenance Department, Facilities Management Directorate. The Evacuation Officer should report this to FMD.

For example:  
- Fire Alarms
- Electronic security on Fire Exits
- Emergency lighting
- Fire extinguishers
- Securing the building together with any emergency maintenance

22. A damage assessment may need to be made by FMD, with input from the affected Schools/Directorates. Estimated costs should be passed to the University Insurance Officer, extension 8309.

23. Following a serious fire, the Fire Service will normally arrange for a re-inspection of the damaged area. This is to monitor the potential of re-ignition of the fire incident. It is advisable that the University through FMD make its own arrangements to monitor affected areas.

**Fire Procedure: Outside Normal Hours**

The evacuation arrangements for a fire occurring outside normal hours are as follows.

**Action upon discovering a fire**

(a) Close the door of the room providing it is safe to do so.

(b) Operate the nearest Fire Alarm call point.

(c) Call the Fire Brigade on 0-999 on the nearest telephone (OR department/hall variant as detailed in the Fire Routine Notices i.e. 6300 Security Services using University internal extension).

(d) Ensure that no-one remains in your immediate area or escape route without endangering yourself and proceed immediately to the assembly point.

(e) Where practical, a roll call using the Building Occupants Register from each building must be undertaken by the most senior member of staff present. This will usually be held at the assembly point. Security Services staff will normally be in attendance and will check that the emergency services have been called. Establish communications with any disabled or mobility impaired persons located in refuge areas, if any persons are found to be located in a fire refuges and are unable to exit the building without assistance, arrangements must be made to evacuate them to a place of safety as it is the responsibility of the University to ensure that all people can leave a building in the event of a fire.

(f) Specific items of information will be required when the emergency services arrive.  
Person(s) reported missing and last known location(s).  
Access to the building (provision of relevant keys etc)*.  
Location of fire incident.  
Isolation points for main services*.  
Plan of premises (if available)*.  
Hydrant location(s) (if known)*.  
Specific hazards in the vicinity of the fire (eg cylinders, chemicals, radiation sources, biohazards, etc)*.  
Refuge areas allocated for disabled persons*.
* These aspects will be covered in the Emergency Folder located outside the porters room

(g) Evacuees must remain at the assembly point until the emergency services confirm that it is safe to re-enter the building.

(h) Security Services will contact School/Directorate/Halls senior staff to arrange attendance at the incident.

**Action upon hearing a fire alarm**

Persons within a building outside normal hours should, on hearing a Fire Alarm:

(a) Close the room doors and windows providing it is safe to do so, leave the building in a calm and orderly manner, and report to the Assembly Point using the nearest evacuation route.

(b) At the assembly point confirm who is the senior member of staff present who will then undertake the responsibility to carry out the duties of evacuation officer.