

MESTON BUILDING



FIRE ACTION PLAN

CONTENTS

Aims & Scope of Document.....	2
Definitions	2
Introduction	3
Fire Action Plan.....	5
1. How people are warned if there is a fire	5
2. Action on discovering a fire	5
3. Action on hearing the Fire Alarm.....	5
4. The arrangements for fire-fighting by staff	5
5. Equipment that needs to be stopped or isolated in a fire situation	5
6. Arrangements for calling the Fire and Rescue Service.....	6
8. The means by which information is provided to the fire-fighting services about the building and the hazards which could be encountered by fire-fighters	6
9. The measures to be taken to ensure that the employees of another employer are provided with adequate instructions and information on these fire procedures before commencing work	6
10. Contingency arrangement.....	7
Appendices	7
A1. Guide for Fire Marshals	7
A2. Guide for Fire Wardens/Floor Checkers	7
A3. Persons trained to take charge of evacuations	9
A4. Persons trained to operate two-way radios	9
A5. Persons trained to operate evacuation chairs	9
A4. Sector Check-off.....	10
Revision Record	11

Aims & Scope of Document

This plan sets out the procedures to be followed if the building must be evacuated in the event of a fire. The purpose of this plan is to ensure that people in the building know what to do in an emergency, and that the appropriate action is taken for the safe evacuation.

Buildings covered by this plan are:

Meston	Meston Building, Meston Walk, Aberdeen, AB24 3UE.
Assembly Point	Academic square at north end of this building
Fire Alarm Testing	The fire alarm is tested every Wednesday at 7:30 am.

Definitions

Fire Marshal	Staff member tasked to act as a coordinator of information and liaise with University Security. The Fire Marshal is deemed to be the first trained staff member to reach the north or south entrances.
Fire Warden/ Floor Checker	Staff member taking responsibility to check and clear zones reporting to Fire Marshal on exit. Any staff member who reaches a zone yellow jacket first must be responsible for taking the jacket and checking the zone. Responsibility for evacuating is the individuals and as soon as an alarm is sounded everyone must leave and not await to be told to by a Fire Warden/Floor Checker.
Staff	University appointed staff. Excludes undergraduate and postgraduate students.
Lecturer/Tutor/ Demonstrator	A member of the University in charge of a classroom of students or visitors at the time of an alarm. Required to immediately evacuate those in their charge.
Evacuation Chair	Special chairs installed in fire protected stairwells to be used by trained staff in the event of a fire emergency for the rescue of mobility impaired persons.
Security	A member of the University's security team in attendance and with responsibility for investigating an alarm and liaising with Fire and Rescue Service
SFRS	Scottish Fire & Rescue Service.
Fire Emergency	A situation requiring the evacuation of a building as a result of a fire. The fire alarm is used to alert occupants.

Introduction

From July 2023 the Fire & Rescue Services will not attend an alarm unless it is confirmed as a fire. These arrangements have been revised to cover the University's new procedures for dealing with a fire alarm.

Fire is probably the greatest single safety related threat to the building and its occupiers. The Fire Scotland Act 2005 places a responsibility on the Duty Holder (University of Aberdeen) to protect the lives of all building occupiers from fire. Individuals have a responsibility to leave the building as soon as an alarm is sounded and not await to be told to by a Fire Warden/Floor Checker. This evacuation strategy provides instructions on the procedure and responsibilities to effectively evacuate the building quickly and safely.

With all occupants safely out of the building, there is still a risk, a fire could destroy the facilities, documents and data affecting business continuity. It is important therefore that we reduce the hazard by introducing risk reduction measures to prevent a fire from starting. If, despite our best efforts, a fire should start then a fast and effective response can help save life and property.

Important precautions include:

- Avoiding large accumulations of combustible materials which might easily ignite (e.g. waste paper, cardboard, plastics).
- Avoid obstructing the ventilation of electrical equipment or place material immediately above or close to electric heaters.
- Observe the University's policy on electrical safety. For example:
 - The use of fan and convector heaters are not permitted on university property.
 - All electrical equipment should be inspected and tested for safety. Contact TRO or technician to arrange.
 - Do not overload electrical sockets by connecting too many appliances to a single socket.
 - No daisy chaining of extension leads and the use of block adaptors are prohibited.
- Comply fully with the procedures for the storage and use of highly flammable substances.
- Comply fully with the procedures for out of hours running of experiments (eg risk assessment covering out of working to include signing in/out, no lone laboratory work, notifying supervisor or other appropriate relevant person).
- Comply with The Smoking Health and Social Care (Scotland) Act 2005) banning smoking in buildings eliminates a major way fire can start.

As the occupancy of the building changes daily, it is impractical to always have a full complement of Fire Wardens/Floor Checkers. Instead, a system of floor checking and **fire sectors** is used.

The building has been divided into 36 sectors and each sector has a safety station equipped with yellow high visibility vest and plan of the sector to be checked. It is vital that the premises are completely evacuated, and the Fire Marshal informed of anyone who may still be in the building. If there is the slightest doubt, inform Security or the Fire and Rescue Service on their arrival.

All Staff

All staff have a responsibility to perform the role of Fire Warden. The first member of staff to reach the station will put on the yellow hi-vis vest and carry out the duties of Fire Wardens.

- When the alarm sounds retrieve the yellow hi-vis vest from the nearest safety station, if the vest is there, you **must** take on the role of Fire Warden.
- If safe to do so, check rooms and laboratories in this sector (as designated on the plan displayed at safety station when you collect the yellow hi-vis vest) and ensure all occupants have heard the alarm and get them to leave building, then leave yourself by the nearest exit.

- On exiting the building Fire Wardens must report to the Fire Marshal, who will be located at the designated assembly point and wearing an orange hi-vis vest. They will mark off that sector as having been checked and cleared.
- Report if there are any disabled persons that require assistance or if you think anyone may still be in the building.
- On returning to the building please put the yellow hi-vis vest back to the safety station you collected it from.

The **tutor/lecturer/person in charge** of a lecture, meeting, class, or lab must also report the status of the evacuation to the Fire Marshal at the assembly point.

Trained Fire Marshals

At the north and south entrances there is a **Fire Box** which contains:

- Orange hi-vis vest.
- Two-way radio (allows two-way communication between both entrances).
- Sector check off list.
- Folder containing the building floor plans showing location of hazardous materials.

Fire Action Plan

1. How people are warned if there is a fire

- The alarm will sound continuously throughout the building (the alarm will be actuated via automatic smoke or heat detection system and/or manually via the break glass fire alarm call points). In some areas flashing beacons may be used as a visual indicator of an alarm.

2. Action on discovering a fire

- A fire will probably be first detected by the fire detection system. However, persons discovering a fire will sound the fire alarm by operating the nearest break glass fire alarm call point. These are situated in corridors or near fire doors, final exits and at storey exits leading into protected stairwells from all floors.
- They should then warn others in the vicinity of the danger (bang loudly on any locked doors to ensure that nobody is inside).
- Leave the building by the nearest fire exit and report to the Fire Marshal (wearing orange **hi-vis** vest), at the **designated assembly point**, giving them information on the exact location of the fire and if any persons are injured or trapped before proceeding to the designated assembly point.

3. Action on hearing the Fire Alarm

- All persons must leave the building by the **nearest fire exit** and proceed to the designated assembly point, closing all doors behind them.
- Students and visitors will be told to leave by the tutor/lecturer/person in charge of the group or by a staff member.
- In centrally-timetabled areas, the tutor/lecturer are responsible for the class and must ensure that they are aware of the location of escape routes and direct persons to the nearest fire exit. Tutors/lecturers are responsible for ensuring demonstrators are made aware of their responsibilities in the event of an alarm.
- Building occupants may take personal belongings with them **provided** these items are in the same room/classroom/lecture theatre as their owners.
- If persons are away from their normal place of work (perhaps attending a meeting or in another office) when the alarm actuates they must evacuate via the nearest exit. They **must not return** to their normal location to collect belongings.

4. The arrangements for fire-fighting by staff

- Suitable portable fire extinguishers are located prominently throughout the building.
- Only persons trained in the use of extinguishers should tackle the fire using nearest extinguisher as long as there is no immediate danger to their own life. **IF IN DOUBT – GET OUT.**
- The Fire Marshal should be informed of any firefighting so that they can tell Security on their arrival.

5. Equipment that needs to be stopped or isolated in a fire situation

- If it can be done safely in a short period of time, shut down as much equipment, machinery and experimental processes.
- Extinguish naked flames and turn off any source of gas.
- Fume cupboards, if in use, should be left running.

6. Arrangements for calling the Fire and Rescue Service

- Actuation of the break glass fire alarm call points and the fire detection system will alert University Security who will send a member of staff to the building to investigate the cause of the alarm. If Security determines that the alarms has been triggered by a fire they will call the Fire and Rescue Services.
- The Fire and Rescue Service procedures include 'call challenging' for all non-domestic, nonsleeping risks. They will only attend if there has been an investigation and fire, smoke or heat has been confirmed by one of the following methods:
 - Physically witnessed.
 - Heat detection activated.
 - Multiple smoke detectors/zones activating.
 - Break glass point.
- If a fire has already been confirmed the Fire Warden, or the person discovering the fire, should also call the Fire & Rescue Services by dialling 999 from a safe location (dial 9-999 from a University landline) and report the address of the building and, if known, the exact location of the fire.

7. The procedures for meeting the Fire and Rescue Service on arrival and the provision of relevant information

The Fire & Rescue Service normally arrive at south entrance.

- In the event of a fire alarm Security will be automatically notified. A representative from Security will attend and take charge of the investigation and liaise with the Fire & Rescue Services.
- Until such time as Security arrives on site, the Fire Marshal will follow the evacuation protocol for the building. Once Security arrives, the Fire Marshal shall inform them of the state of the evacuation along with any other pertinent information e.g. accidental activation, burnt toast, any smoke or flames, persons still in building etc.
- Security will meet the Fire and Rescue Service and liaise with the officer in charge until the incident is over.
- Attending fire crews must be informed of the location of the fire, the status of the evacuation and any casualties.

The Fire Marshal is only responsible for the evacuation of the building and should not re-enter the building until given clearance either from Security or the Fire & Rescue Services.

8. The means by which information is provided to the fire-fighting services about the building and the hazards which could be encountered by fire-fighters

- Information for the Fire and Rescue Service' folders are kept in the Fire Boxes beside the north and south entrances.
- The folders must be made available to Fire and Rescue Service on arrival.
- The Fire Marshal/Security will assist in disseminating information.

9. The measures to be taken to ensure that the employees of another employer are provided with adequate instructions and information on these fire procedures before commencing work

- Contractors under the control of Estates & Facilities Section they are provided with the E&F H&S Handbook this details all control measures responsibilities and what is required of them if fire alarm is activated.

- All contractor 'Hot Works' are by Permit to Work only and these are under the direct control of E&F and in place before starting any works.
- Contractors under the direct control of the building occupiers are informed of fire safety matters before starting any work.

10. Contingency arrangement

- If for any reason the building is out of commission and people cannot return, then the relocation or welfare of evacuees are as detailed in Business Continuity Plans.

Appendices

A1. Guide for Fire Marshals

The Fire Marshal is deemed to be the first trained staff member to reach the north or south entrance.

When the fire alarm sounds:

- Collect from fire box:
 - Two-way radio.
 - Orange hi-vis jacket.
 - Clipboard with check off sheet.
- Wear ORANGE Hi-Vis jacket
- Go to the designated assembly point.
 - Take charge of the evacuation.
 - Ensure people gather at the assembly point only.
- Assembly point – It is important to leave sufficient space for emergency service vehicles to come onto the Academic Square if required (services would normally attend at South entrance) – people should be encouraged towards the ramp leading to the Sir Duncan Rice Library
- Delegate people to building exits to prevent anyone re-entering.
- Receive confirmation from Fire Wardens that the area they are responsible for has been evacuated using check off sheet.
- Meet Security and/or the Fire and Rescue Service and provide information about:
 - Location and nature of fire (if known).
 - Any injuries.
 - Anyone still in the building and inform them if any sector has not been checked off.
 - Layout of the building ('Information for the Fire and Rescue Service' folder).

Do not permit anyone to re-enter the building until either Security or the Fire and Rescue Service give permission.

A2. Guide for Fire Wardens/Floor Checkers

- After exiting the building and reporting to the Fire Marshal, Fire Wardens should support the Fire Marshal who may delegate them to other duties if required. For example ensuring exits are kept clear by moving people away.
- It is vital that the premises are completely evacuated and the Fire Marshal informed of anyone who may still be in the building.
- It is important to leave sufficient space for emergency services to approach – people should be moved to the assembly point.

Do not permit anyone to re-enter the building until either Security or the Fire and Rescue Service give permission.

A3. Persons trained to take charge of evacuations

NAME	CONTACT NUMBER
Rainer Ebel	01224 272930
Russell Gray	01224 272896
Bill Harrison	01224 272897
Peter Henderson	01224 272903
Marcel Jaspars	01224 272895
Brian Paterson	01224 273804
Julie Timms	01224 272300

A4. Persons trained to operate two-way radios

NAME	CONTACT NUMBER
Bill Harrison	01224 272897
Peter Henderson	01224 272903
Mark Law	01224 272933
Ross Macpherson	01224 272315
Brian Paterson	01224 273804
Walter Ritchie	01224 273493

A5. Persons trained to operate evacuation chairs

NAME	CONTACT NUMBER
Judith Christie	01224 273462
Russell Gray	01224 272896
Peter Henderson	01224 272903
Ross Macpherson	01224 272315
Brian Paterson	01224 273804
Ebel Rainer	01224 272930

A4. Sector Check-off

SECTOR NUMBER	CHECKED ✓	BY (NAME)	NOTES
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Revision Record

Issue	Who	Date	Reason for Review
2.0	ES	29/08/2023	Updated for changes to SFRS response to a fire alarm. Changes in terminology introduce Fire Warden as an alternative name for Floor Checker. Changes to format.
2.1	BP	05/12/2023	Updated for new TRO, addition of Sector 36 and Marshal list.