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Fire Safety Policy

Document Control:

Policy Owner:	The Director of Health and Safety or equivalent position
Policy Author(s):	Gordon Loach, Fire Safety Adviser
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Amendment History:

Version Number:	Effective Date:	Summary of Amendments:	Author:
V1.1	05.03.2018	Annual Review – no changes	Director of H&S
V1.2	28.01.2021	Review No Changes	Director of H&S
V1.3	06.01.2022	Review No Changes	Director of H&S
V1.4	25.10.2022	Minor administrative changes	Director of H&S
V1.5	26.06.2026	Review – new format applied, wording changes	Gordon Loach, Fire Safety Advisor

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This Policy applies to and within all buildings across the University's campuses, including Gibbet Hill, Westwood, Stratford Innovation Campus, and any other site in which the University controls the risk. This Policy is supported by arrangements, instructions, and guidance on Fire Safety, which are available on the [University's Health and Safety web pages](#).
- 1.2. The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 provides the primary framework for general fire precautions in premises under the University's control, alongside other applicable fire safety legislation where relevant.
- 1.3. The University will implement proportionate fire precautions based on risk, taking account of the nature of its activities, the design and use of its buildings, and the needs of occupants.
- 1.4. Fire safety will be achieved through a combination of:
 - suitable and sufficient assessment of risk
 - responsible planning and management of activities which may introduce fire risk
 - consideration of fire safety in the design, modification, and use of buildings and facilities
 - appropriate provision and maintenance of fire protection measures
 - cooperation, coordination and awareness of those working in, studying in or visiting/using University premises, including leaseholders and third parties
 - operating a permit process for 'Hot Work' activities
 - consideration of fire safety as part of investment and planning decisions
 - recognition that changes to buildings or activities may influence fire risk
 - access to appropriate advice where required
- 1.5. These arrangements seek to protect life whilst supporting the continued operation of teaching, research, and University activities.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This Policy applies to premises, facilities and activities occupied, owned, managed or controlled by the University, including those used for teaching, research, commercial activity, accommodation and support services.
- 2.2. It applies to all persons who work in, study in, visit, or use University premises or facilities.
- 2.3. Contractors, consultants and others carrying out activities are expected to comply with current legislation and University procedures relating to fire safety.
- 2.4. Those who organise or carry out activities are expected to consider the potential impact on fire risk, and to manage this responsibly within the areas they control.
- 2.5. All persons are expected to cooperate with fire safety arrangements and act responsibly in relation to the potential impact of their actions on others.

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1. Fire safety responsibilities are determined by the extent to which individuals influence or control buildings, activities or resources that may affect fire risk.
- 3.2. The University, as employer and organisation in control of premises, holds the legal duty to ensure suitable and sufficient fire precautions are in place in accordance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, and subsequent amendments.
- 3.3. The Vice-Chancellor is the Responsible Person for the purposes of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, reflecting the corporate nature of the duty placed on the University. Where formal enforcement action is taken, correspondence is typically addressed to the Vice-Chancellor as the senior representative of the institution. Day to day regulatory engagement is normally coordinated through the Health and Safety function. These duties are discharged through established management arrangements across the University.
- 3.4. Effective management of fire risk relies upon individuals and functions discharging responsibilities within the areas they influence or control. Those who design, procure, construct, manage or modify buildings or activities, are expected to consider fire risk as part of their decision making and act reasonably and proportionately, recognising that decisions taken within their control may affect the safety of others and the resilience of University activities.
- 3.5. The Health and Safety function provides advice to support informed decision making, including consideration of how risks may be managed so far as reasonably practicable, taking account of both risk and the resources required to control it.
- 3.6. The table below outlines the key responsibilities associated with this Policy and should be read alongside the detailed role responsibilities set out in the [Leadership and Management of Health and Safety at the University of Warwick](#) documents.

Role	Responsible for
Director of Health and Safety (or equivalent position)	Providing advice on legal requirements and standards, maintaining relevant policy information, supporting assurance activities across the University, and ensuring that arrangements are in place for the provision of competent fire safety advice.
Fire Safety Adviser	Providing competent fire safety advice, supporting the risk-based programme of fire risk assessment, and undertaking monitoring and audit activities to support compliance.
Estates Director	Ensuring the Estates Director of Maintenance, has the necessary resources and governance structures in place to enable Estates to manage their responsibilities under this Policy.
Estates Director of Capital Programmes	Ensuring fire safety is appropriately considered in the design, specification and delivery of new buildings, refurbishments and other works.
Estates Director of Maintenance	Supported by the Mechanical, Electrical and Building Fabric Maintenance Managers (Estates) who are responsible for implementing this Policy and overseeing compliance with standards for fire safety.
Heads of Departments	Ensuring appropriate arrangements for managing fire safety within areas under their control, including acting on relevant fire risk assessment findings and ensuring that fire risks arising from their activities are appropriately assessed and managed.
Departmental Senior Administrative Staff	Supporting Heads of Department in meeting the expectations of this Policy within their areas of responsibility.
All staff	Complying with this Policy and associated arrangements, instructions and guidance.

RACI Matrix	
Responsible	Director of Health and Safety or equivalent position Heads of Department or equivalent position (e.g. Dean of School, Directors etc.) Estates Director of Maintenance
Accountable	Vice Chancellor Group Finance Director
Consult	Departmental Senior Administrator Supervisors Technical Services Manager Health and Safety Services Officers and Advisers Electrical Maintenance Manager (Estates)
Inform	Managers (including Academic staff e.g. Principal Investigators) All staff

4. Policy Statement

- 4.1. The University is committed to managing fire risk in a proportionate and responsible manner, recognising the importance of protecting people, property, and the continued operation of teaching, research and associated activities.
- 4.2. The University operates within a large and evolving environment where activities, equipment, and methods of work change over time. Those responsible for developing or undertaking activities are expected to consider fire risk appropriately within the areas they influence or control, seeking advice where appropriate.

4.3. The University will deliver this Policy commitment by:

- Maintaining a risk-based programme of suitable and sufficient fire risk assessments.
- Providing and maintaining fire detection, warning, and fire protection measures.
- Establishing emergency procedures, periodic testing of these, and undertaking regular evacuation drills where appropriate.
- Providing information, instruction and training appropriate to roles and level of risk.
- Developing Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) where required or identified.
- Appointing one or more competent persons to assist in undertaking fire safety measures.
- Considering fire safety in the design, procurement, and delivery of buildings and works.
- Considering fire risk where significant changes to buildings or activities are proposed.
- Ensuring that those responsible for activities assess and manage fire risks arising from their activities at an appropriate level.
- Maintaining records relating to fire risk assessment, testing, maintenance and training.

5. Associated Documents

5.1. Further information supporting the implementation of this Policy is available via [University Fire Safety](#) pages, and technical documentation relating to the design, construction, maintenance and operation of buildings, facilities and activities, held by Estates in Invida and Concerto systems.

5.2. Relevant sources may include:

- University Health and Safety guidance, including fire safety information
- Estates and facilities management procedures and contractor requirements
- University technical requirements relating to buildings and building services
- Fire risk assessment arrangements and associated action plans
- Emergency procedures and evacuation arrangements
- Training and competency arrangements
- Local procedures, risk assessments and operational controls relevant to specific activities or environments

5.3. These sources support the practical application of this Policy and may reference relevant legislation, guidance, and recognised good practice where appropriate. Arrangements will vary across the University, reflecting the nature of activities undertaken and the level of risk involved.