



# Fire Safety and Operational Management Strategy

This document provides guidance on the College responsibilities, with regard to fire maintenance, and operational management of the fabric and services, of all buildings and property owned, or used, by Queens' College.

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## **1      Introduction**

The College wishes to ensure that its students, staff, Fellows and visitors are protected from fire risks and it has adopted the following procedures to assist in fire prevention.

## **2      Fire Risk Assessments**

College buildings will be assessed individually, by a competent person. The assessments will be recorded and stored collectively by the Health, Safety and Environmental Officer, noting any action required in a Risk Reduction Action Plan. The following area will be assessed:-

- Building structure and design.
- Fire resistance of fixtures and fittings.
- Activities carried out in the building.
- Number and location of building occupants.
- Existing fire safety systems / control /equipment.
- Impact on others e.g. neighbours, Emergency Services.

The Health, Safety and Environmental Officer will review the Fire Risk Assessments, prioritising and implementing actions in the Risk Reduction Action Plans, where practicable, as per the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) hierarchy of control and risk level. Following this process, the Health, Safety and Environmental Officer will maintain copies of Fire Risk Assessments in a central location, with relevant information (including updates) distributed throughout the College and Departments, as necessary. The Health, Safety and Environmental Officer will also make copies available to the Fire and Rescue Service, and other interested parties, as appropriate.

## **3      Training and Information**

The Health, Safety and Environmental Officer, in coordination with the Head Porter, will develop appropriate Emergency Response / Fire Alarm Activation procedures, ensuring that suitable training, on such procedures, is provided to all staff and students.

## **4      Fire Precautions**

Fire presents the greatest single threat to life and property. It is therefore **ESSENTIAL** to familiarise yourself with the measures designed to protect you and others in the event of a fire.

### **Personal Preparation**

- Read the Fire Action signs posted by fire alarm call points, staircases and within bedrooms.
- Know the location of fire alarm call-points, situated on every staircase or corridor, and ensure you know how to operate them.
- Know your escape route and make sure it is kept clear of obstructions.
- Ensure that fire doors (marked as such and intended to impede the spread of smoke, flames and fumes) are always closed, and not propped open.

- Report immediately any missing, or damaged, fire appliances to the Maintenance Department or Health, Safety and Environmental Officer.
- **DO NOT** tamper with fire appliances or detectors, or allow others to do so (unless authorised).
- All fire alarms are tested regularly; it is important to ensure that you are familiar with and able to hear the sound of the alarm. Fire drills will also be held at regular intervals, and these must be treated as if they were actual evacuations, and the appropriate procedures followed (see below). It is important that you read the Fire Action sign displayed in your local.

## **5      Action to be taken on Discovering Fire or Smoke**

### **Upon discovering a fire**

- Call out 'FIRE' to alert those nearby.
- Press a break glass call point and leave the building.
- Call 999 to summon the Fire & Emergency Services.
- Proceed to the designated assembly point.
- Give details to the attending porter.

### **Upon continuous alarm**

- Leave the building and proceed directly to the designated assembly point.

A continuous alarm is generated by a break-glass call-point being pressed, a heat detector being activated, more than one smoke detector being activated or an authorised person pressing EVACUATE on the Building or Main Fire Panel.

### **Upon intermittent alarm**

An intermittent alarm indicates that a smoke or heat detector has been activated within your building. A porter will investigate the alert and determine whether the activation warrants an evacuation. No need to evacuate the building but be prepared to so immediately if:

- The alarm signal becomes continuous, or
- There are obvious signs of a fire or dense smoke (see above 'upon discovering a fire').

### **Porters Lodge response**

Upon a fire alarm activation the Main Fire Panel will bleep and a red LED will illuminate next to FIRE. An additional LED will appear next to the zone generating the alert.

Turn the fire panel key fully clockwise. This will illuminate the alphanumeric display panel. This gives the location of the alert.

Any responders should take the appropriate set of panel keys with them as this will allow the alarm signal to be silenced or made continuous locally. Addressable panels can be controlled from the Main Panel.

Additional keys to the standard Master bunch may be required to access certain rooms on Main Site. The Porters will be aware of this and will take the appropriate keys according to the alert location.

### **Fire**

If the fire panel is indicating fire, one porter will remain by the Main Panel at the Porters Lodge. A second Porter will proceed to the location of the alert. The alert can be generated by:

Smoke detectors and newer heat detectors – a red LED will illuminate on the detector if activated.

Older heat detectors (white with brass caps) – no indicator but should be obvious if room is hot.

Call point – obvious if push glass is broken but can be activated if glass is dislodged accidentally.

An intermittent alarm signal (single smoke detector activation) or continuous alarm will be generated in the building affected.

If a fire is detected press the EVACUATE button at the local panel (if safe to do so) or radio for this to be done at the Main Panel.

Call the Fire and Emergency Services on 999 indicating address (postcode CB3 9ET) and most convenient gate for access. Ensure a Porter, member of staff or student attends this gate to direct them to the fire. Give them a hi-vis vest from the Fire Pack.

The attending porter must don a hi-vis jacket and hard hat and then manage the evacuation, keeping constant contact with the Porters' Lodge. The attending Porter will organise a building search, if safe to do so. Priority will be given to those persons with a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP).

When evacuation is complete, the attending Porter will ask those present if they believe that anyone is remaining within the building.

If a detector has been activated but everything is under control or a call point has had its glass broken accidentally press SILENCE sounders on the local panel or relay to Porters Lodge for this to be done from the Main Panel. Once any smoke (from e.g. cooking) has cleared, press RESET on panel. If the smoke has not cleared or the call point glass has not been replaced and sited properly then the alarm system will resound.

### **Catering Department**

If a fire alert is received from the Catering Department, investigate alarm as above. Once safe to return, reset the extract system (switches off automatically if alarm is in Kitchen) if necessary.

### **Library**

If the alarm is triggered contact a full key-holder so that they may attend. The Library Fire Panels provide information for both fire detection and the inert gas extinguishing system. The panels are located as follows:

- Ground Floor Entrance Hall (for the Munro Room).
- First Floor Landing (for the Old Library and West Room).
- First Floor Office (for the Safe Room).

The automatic gas extinguishing system is not activated until two different detectors have been triggered.

### **Faults**

The panel will also bleep when there is a fault on the system. A green LED will illuminate next to FAULT.

Many things can generate a fault alert including power cuts, a detector being removed or losing contact, a wire being cut or damaged or a call point being knocked. Read the location and description from the Main or local panel and check whether a detector needs re-siting etc. Reset the panel and see if the fault is cleared. If fault alert remains call out engineer (ADT 0870 600 6005).

## **6      Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)**

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans will be developed if an employee, student or visitor requires assistance or special facilities to ensure safe evacuation. The College will make all reasonable adjustments to assist this process. The Health, Safety and Environmental Officer will support the Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan process and arrange training for staff, in the use of any specialised equipment, as required.

The Porters will keep a record of all PEEPs and these will be available within the secure fire grab bag.

Note that lifts within the College are not fire-rated and should not be relied upon for evacuation. This should be considered when booking meeting rooms and conference venues.

## **7      Emergency Service Information**

Emergency Service Information is located in the Porters' Lodge, and contains relevant information to assist staff and the emergency services, e.g. such as fire panel instructions, security system guides, hazardous storage (e.g. gas cylinders), utility services and their isolation points.

A complete asbestos location plan is available separately in the Maintenance office.

Relevant staff, will familiarise themselves with this information, and it will be reviewed yearly by the Health, Safety and Environmental Officer, Head Porter and Head of Maintenance.

## **8      Fire Drills**

The Health, Safety and Environmental Officer, will organise with the Head Porter, fire drills once a year, for each building on College grounds. In addition, the Health, Safety and Environmental Officer, will supply relevant training and equipment to the Porters, so they can undertake fire drills e.g. Fire Panel keys, Log Book, Zone Plans, etc...

## **9      Fire Alarm Checks**

The Porters and other competent staff will undertake weekly fire alarm sounder checks, of all College buildings being occupied by students, visitors and staff. In addition, weekly fire alarm checks of unoccupied College buildings will be carried out where practicable. Records will be kept in the Fire Log Book of these checks and action taken where appropriate.

## **10     Fire Alarm Statistics**

The Health, Safety and Environmental Officer will collate, and maintain, monthly and annual, fires and Fire Alarm Activation Reports, distributing the information to relevant person(s) as appropriate. The statistics will also be reviewed at Safety Committee.

## **11     Fire Detection and Notification Systems**

The Maintenance Department, in conjunction with the Head Porter and Health, Safety and Environment Officer, will provide, maintain and inspect, fire detection and notification systems, within all College buildings. In addition, the Maintenance Department will ensure a competent person tests, inspects and maintains emergency systems, in accordance with the following requirements:-

### Fire Alarm System:-

Every 3 Months a competent person will:

- i. Check entries in the Fire Log Book and any action taken.
- ii. Examine / test batteries (the back-up and secondary supplies) and their connections.
- iii. Check the fire alarm's control and indicating equipment by:
  - a. Operating a detector or call point in rotation
  - b. Testing the control panel's ancillary functions
  - c. Simulating fault conditions, to check fault indicators and their circuits
  - d. Reporting signs of damage, immediately to the Maintenance Department
- iv. Visually inspect the buildings, to assess if structural / occupancy changes, have affected the requirements for the location of manual call points, detectors and sounders.
- v. Check the operation of automatic notification links, (where fitted), to the Security Base.
- vi. Check the operation of auxiliary devices, (e.g. door releases), unless otherwise agreed with the Maintenance Department.
- vii. Carry out further checks / tests as specified by the installer, supplier, or manufacturer.
- viii. Provide a service record to the Maintenance Department, and completed Log Book.

Annually a competent fire alarm maintenance engineer will:

- i. Carry out the 3 monthly checks outlined above.
- ii. Check the operation of each detector.
- iii. Report signs of damage immediately to the Porters.
- iv. Provide a service record to the Maintenance Department and completed Log Book.

### Emergency Lighting:-

Every Month the Maintenance Department will:

- i. Complete and record short duration function tests and visual inspections of all luminaires and illuminates signs.

Annually the Maintenance Department will:

- i. Undertake full 3-hour discharge tests of luminaires and signs.
- ii. Maintain a service record on completion.

### Lift Emergency Phones and alarms:-

Lift emergency phones and alarms are linked directly to the Porters' Lodge, with signage displaying instructing on how to use them. The Porters will test each phone and alarm, in each building, monthly, and maintain records of such tests.

**NOTE:** Monitoring by the Head Porter will be carried out to confirm all testing is undertaken.

## **12      Remote Sites**

Arrangements will be made at individual properties, to ensure the residents know what to do in the event of an emergency.

All fire panels are linked to the Porters Lodge

## **13      Fire-Fighting Equipment**

The Health, Safety and Environment Officer will monitor the provision of appropriate fire-fighting equipment in all College buildings.

In addition, the Health, Safety and Environment Officer will arrange for the testing and on-going maintenance of fire-fighting equipment, in accordance with the requirements of the Fire Risk Assessment, with defects in the provision of equipment, or serviceability, rectified immediately.

The Porters will also carry out checks, of all life-critical safety equipment, with any defects or anomalies acted upon immediately. All equipment will be checked during a monthly cycle.

Maintenance and Housekeeping do regular visual checks during normal operations.

## **14      Means of Escape**

The Porters will ensure emergency exit routes and fire exits, meet the Fire Risk Assessment standards. In addition, the Porters the operability of all fire doors. All equipment will be checked during a monthly cycle.

Maintenance and Housekeeping do regular visual checks during normal operations.

## **15      Signage**

The following signs are provided:

- *Fire Action Notices:* The Maintenance Department will provide and display Fire Action Notices, in all bedrooms, and next to, or as near as possible to, any fire alarm call-point, in all College-owned buildings.
- *Fire Exit / Assembly Point Signs:* The Maintenance Department will provide suitable and sufficient signs, replacing signs as required e.g. damage, changes in legislation.

## **16      Events & Special Licenses**

The Health, Safety and Environmental Officer, and Head of Catering and Conferences, will support College/Departments arranging events, to ensure their activities are compliant with capacity numbers, and licensing requirements. As part of this process, the Health, Safety and Environmental Officer will identify if adjustments are required with the fire detection/notification system, arranging for adjustments to be made by a competent person, as necessary.



**NOTE:** The Health, Safety and Environmental Officer will liaise with the Fire & Rescue Service, regarding events, if required.

## **17      General Waste and Risk of Arson**

The risk of arson, and general building security, shall be considered when locating bins/skips, which will be positioned and secured as far away from a building as possible, with combustible materials stored in enclosed skips. At no time will bins/skips obstruct building escape routes.

In addition, the Maintenance Department, the Housekeeping and Gardens/Grounds Department, will establish procedures to ensure:

- Leaves and general rubbish are cleared away from buildings.
- Bins/skips are emptied regularly.
- Unexpected, large, waste-disposals are dealt with promptly/correctly.
- All contractors are informed of waste-handling requirements.

## **18      Smoking**

All staff, students, visitors and appointed contractors, will be informed that smoking is only allowed within designated smoking areas.

## **19      Contractors**

Department Managers will ensure contractors are provided with a copy of the Contractor Standards and Working Practices document and that they are familiar with the Fire and Emergency Procedures of the College. This document details the standards contractors must comply with, when working at the College, and the process they must follow if their work will affect the fire risk of a building, or if alterations / adjustments are required to the existing fire safety system. Any contractor not complying with this document, may have their contract terminated.

## **20      Monitoring and Review**

The Safety Committee will review management arrangements, against the requirements of this document at least annually.