

Imperial College Union Policy Fire Safety Policy

Audience: All staff
Owner(s): Leadership Group
Created Date: December 2020
Review Date: December 2022

1. Policy Statement

Imperial College Union is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of its members, staff, customers, suppliers, visitors, and all others who may be affected by its activities.

Imperial College Union recognises that good management of health, safety and welfare is essential to the success of the organisation and is a sign of a well-managed organisation. Imperial College Union is committed to ensuring that procedures are in place to identify hazards, assess risk and set objectives to improve the management of health, safety and welfare.

Imperial College Union acknowledges its duty to ensure that all relevant legislation regarding health, safety and welfare is adhered to and that resources are made available to ensure health, safety and welfare.

Imperial College Union is committed to developing a positive safety culture, based on the involvement of staff and volunteers in health and safety management. Imperial College Union will therefore use consultative forums and mechanisms to involve staff and volunteers in health and safety management and will endeavour to provide relevant training to all staff and students.

Imperial College Union commits to reviewing this policy at least every 2 years, or as and when necessary, with approval for the policy to take place at the Board of Trustees.

2. Introduction

Imperial College Union is an occupant of Imperial College London owned buildings and space. As a third-party user of the space, Imperial College Union must comply with Imperial College London's Fire Safety Policy.

Imperial College London is subject to the requirements of the Regulator Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. This is a self-regulating article of legislation and in order for the College to fulfil its obligations, a number of Codes of Practice are in place.

Good management of fire safety is essential to ensure that fires are unlikely to occur; that if they do occur, they are likely to be controlled or contained quickly, effectively and safely; or that, if a fire does occur and grow, everyone at the College is able to escape to a place of total safety easily and quickly.

In recognition of the risks and the serious consequences of a fire at the College, the College has agreed this Fire Safety Policy and associated Code of Practice.

3. Legislation

The primary legislation for fire safety is the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. The Order covers general fire precautions and other fire safety duties which are needed to protect persons in cases of fire in and around premises. The Order requires fire precautions to be put into place where necessary and to the extent that is reasonable and practicable. Responsibility for complying with the Order rests with the 'Responsible Person'. There is other legislation

relating to fire safety including the Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations. The requirements of these regulations are subject to further College policies.

4. Responsibilities

Responsible Person

The President of Imperial College London is the person designated as the 'Responsible Person' on behalf of the College. The President delegates duties to the Faculty Principals, the Chief Operating Officer and the College Chief Fire Officer but remains responsible for ensuring that:

- General fire precautions are taken to ensure the safety of staff, students, contractors, visitors and members of the public.
- Suitable and sufficient risk assessments are carried out and regularly reviewed.
- Arrangements are put into place for the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of the preventative and protective measures.

General Responsibilities

Fire safety is everyone's responsibility. All staff, students, contractors and visitors are required to follow established procedures and cooperate with appointed College staff in order to achieve the highest standards of fire safety. This includes minimising the amounts of combustible materials present in buildings, ensuring the safe use, storage and disposal of flammable substances, and avoiding misuse of fire safety equipment as well as complying with the College Smoking Policy.

The Managing Director

The Managing Director has the same responsibilities for fire safety as a Head of Department/ Division within the College's Fire Safety Policy. The MD is responsible for:

- Promoting a positive fire safety culture in their area of responsibility.
- In consultation with the College Head of Fire Safety, appointing a competent person as a Fire Safety Coordinator to advise them on fire safety matters arising within their Department/ Division.
- Appointing sufficient Fire Wardens to monitor fire safety within their Department/ Division and implement the relevant emergency plans.
- Acting on the recommendations of the College Head of Fire Safety set out in the Fire Risk Assessments for the buildings in which their Department/ Division is located.
- Ensuring that all flammable materials are correctly stored, used and disposed of, and that in all cases the quantities involved are the minimum reasonably practicable. All potential fire hazards within their Department/ Division must be clearly identified and notified to the College Chief Fire Officer.
- Liaising with the College Head of Fire Safety before introducing new activities and/ or processes which may increase the fire risk.
- Ensuring that staff and students within their Department/ Division receive sufficient and appropriate fire awareness instruction and training.

In addition, the MD is responsible for ensuring that the Union meets its legal obligations for fire safety in respect of its catering and bar outlets; clubs, societies and projects; and other entertainment and sporting activities.

Staff, Students and Visitors

All staff, students, and visitors are required to follow established procedures and cooperate with appointed ICU staff in order to achieve the highest standards of fire safety. This includes minimising the amounts of combustible materials present in buildings; ensuring the safe use,

storage and disposal of flammable substances; and avoiding misuse of fire safety equipment as well as complying with the College's Smoke Free Policy.

Contractors

Contractors must comply with the College Fire Safety Policy and obey all fire safety instructions given to them by the College Head of Fire Safety and/ or the Estates Operations Safety Advisor (Construction). Contractors must also ensure that all personnel for whom they are responsible are adequately trained and instructed in fire safety procedures and know the local arrangements for the areas where they are working. Contractors are required to cooperate fully with College procedures including the need to apply for Hot Work Permits when carrying out work that could present a fire risk or potentially result in activation of the fire alarm system. All work on Fire Alarm Systems is also subject to Permit-to-Work procedures and must be agreed, in advance, with the College Head of Fire Safety and the Building/ Campus Manager responsible for the area covered by the alarm system.

College's Director of Estates Operations

The Director of Estates Operations has delegated duties from the Chief Operating Officer and, in addition to his or her duties as a Head of Division, he or she is responsible for:

- Developing and implementing the College Fire Strategy.
- Ensuring that College premises comply with statutory requirements.
- Acting on the recommendations of the College Head of Fire Safety so far as they relate to the fire alarm systems, fire precautions (means of escape, etc) and fire signage.
- Appointing Fire Safety Coordinators (in effect assigning duties to Building Managers) to provide support in the implementation of the College Fire Safety Policy.

And for ensuring that:

- The College meets its legal obligations for fire safety in respect of all premises it leases to third parties.
- Tenancy agreements place the College's tenants under a legally enforceable obligation to comply with the College's fire safety policy and procedures.
- All building projects comply with statutory requirements and in particular that new, or upgraded, fire alarm systems, fire precautions and fire signage comply with the College Fire Strategy.

College's Head of Fire Safety

The Head of Fire Safety reports to the Director of Estates Operations and is responsible for:

- Promoting a positive fire safety culture across the College.
- Advising the College on its statutory obligations regarding fire safety and of the effect of new or amended legislation.
- Developing the College Fire Safety Strategy and the policies and procedures necessary to ensure the College's compliance with legislation and the effective control of its fire hazards, including conducting building fire risk assessments and issuing hot work permits.
- Developing appropriate guidance and codes of practice to support these policies and procedures.
- Advising College senior managers of their responsibilities for fire safety.
- Providing specialist advice, information and support to all parts of the College including the dissemination of good practice, on the management of fire safety.
- Inspecting, monitoring and auditing the implementation of fire safety policies, procedures and codes of practice across the College, including the testing and maintenance of firefighting equipment and fire alarm systems and the issuing of Hot Work permits.

- Developing, setting and reviewing performance standards and targets as necessary.
- Advising on training needs and providing in-house training and instruction, including arranging regular fire drills.
- Managing the interface between the College and the local fire authorities.
- Managing the Fire Department.
- Liaising with the Safety Champion and with the College's specialist advisory services, including the Safety Department, Campus Services and the Security Department.
- Liaising on fire safety matters with associated NHS Trusts, contractors working on College premises and external organisations with a presence on College campuses.
- Providing reports on fire safety matters to the Health and Safety Management and Consultative Committees.
- The College Head of Fire Safety has the authority, delegated from the President, to close down College Buildings, or parts of the building, and to call a halt to processes or activities if he believes there is a serious risk of injury from fire to the occupants of the building or people undertaking the activity or process.

Fire Safety Coordinators

The Managing Director will delegate to a membership of the Leadership Team, the role of Fire Safety Coordinator.

The duties of the Fire Safety Coordinator are:

- Promote a positive fire safety culture in their area.
- Ensure sufficient provision of Fire Wardens.
- Develop a Department Emergency Evacuation Plan.
- Prepare Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) as required.
- Arrange fire drills.
- Ensure that staff within the Union receive Fire Safety training.

Fire Wardens

The number of Fire Wardens required should be dictated by the appropriate risk assessment, allowing the flexibility required between typical office hours, large/ major events, and student group activity.

Fire Wardens are appointed by the Fire Safety Coordinator to assist with the implementation of the College Fire Safety Policy. Fire Wardens need to have local knowledge of the fire risks in their work area. Their main duties are to:

- Alert the Fire Safety Coordinator to any defects in fire precautions in their area.
- Participate in fire drills and report any problems to the Fire Safety Coordinator.
- Assist the Emergency Response Team during the evacuation of the building by:
 - a) Guiding people to the Assembly Points.
 - b) Helping to prevent re-entry until the building is deemed safe for re-occupation.

During an evacuation Fire Wardens are not to put themselves at any risk. They should evacuate the building along with the other occupants and then report to the Emergency Control Point to pass on any information they may have about the incident or factors that could affect the incident and to provide any other assistance as required.

5. Arrangements

Generic Emergency Evacuation Plans (GEEPs)

A GEEP is a Generic Emergency Evacuation Plan which enables visitors to our building to become familiar with the layout, evacuation procedures, available equipment and communication devices for use in an emergency.

The College has a legal responsibility to put measures in place for the safe evacuation of persons from its buildings, regardless of their usage. All College buildings are equipped with the means to detect fire/smoke, for an alarm to be raised, and for the occupants to reach a place of final safety.

Personal Emergency Egress Plans (PEEPs)

A PEEP is a Personal Emergency Egress Plan which is a 'bespoke' plan for individuals who may have difficulties evacuating the building to a place of final safety without support or assistance from others.

A PEEP may be required if any individual may have one or more of the following:

- Mobility conditions
- Sight conditions
- Hearing conditions
- Neurodiverse or mental health conditions
- Other circumstances that may affect a person's ability to evacuate, e.g., individuals who are pregnant, or individuals with a short-injury such as a broken leg.

For members of staff who need assistance evacuating a building (even if only on a temporary basis), should liaise with the Fire Safety Coordinator who will work with the staff member to put in place a PEEP.

For any students who frequently use the Union building who need assistance evacuating a building (even if only on a temporary basis), should liaise with the Student Opportunities & Development Manager, who will work with the individual and the Fire Safety Coordinator to put in place a PEEP.

Beit Quadrangle

Beit Quadrangle is comprised of 6 floors. The north wing is occupied by the Imperial College Union and the other wings are halls of residence. The two sections are distinct and have separate alarm systems. Horizontal evacuation is possible between the north wing and the east and west wings at the points marked on the plan. All floors are accessible by using the stairways. Emergency exits using stairways is possible in the accommodation wings during an evacuation. Safe refuge areas are available in all protected stairwells. There are three Fire Exits available from the building on the ground floor, one of which is Disabled Accessible. This is the main entrance (See floor plan below).

Any event within a College owned building and an attendance of more than 60 people, must have a Fire Safety Action plan in place, detailing the evacuation process of the audience and event crew or staff, as well as the process for informing everyone involved of the evacuation process if needed. The number of Fire Wardens (or Fire Safety trained individuals) required must be detailed in the risk assessment for the event.

Action required on hearing the fire alarm

If able, persons should leave the building immediately by the nearest Fire Exit, (see floor plan below) and report to the assigned assembly point for the building.

Safe refuge points are located in 3 stairwells (see floor plan in Appendix One) for persons not being able to evacuate the building unaided.

Other recommendations:

Not all fire escapes are accessible by wheelchair and visitors to Imperial College Union should familiarise themselves with the floor layout of the building that they are in.

Other Buildings

ICU will use other buildings and spaces across the College. ICU will follow the College's fire safety guidance and policies for specific buildings and spaces.

6. Review

The Policy Owner is responsible for conducting a comprehensive review of their policies at a minimum of every 3 years or as required to stay current with applicable laws and/or Imperial College Policies.

The purpose of the review is to determine:

- if the policy is still necessary and accurate;
- if the policy should be combined with another policy or if it should be rescinded;
- if the policy is up to date with current laws and regulations and Imperial College policies;
- if changes are required to improve the effectiveness or clarity of the policy.

7. Training

Essential Training For All Staff

All ICU staff and officers will undergo minimum training expectations run by Imperial College London as part of colleague induction. Training records will be kept by ICU.

Fire Warden Training

Appointed ICU Fire Wardens and Fire Safety Co-ordinators who have a defined role in assisting with the safe evacuation of halls, laboratories, workshops and buildings. This training should be undertaken based on risk assessment.

Training for Events

The Union shall provide appropriate training to all student groups who wish to run large events, for the number of individuals requiring fire training as detailed in the relevant risk assessment.