

**Health & Safety Directorate**

**Queen Mary Fire Emergency Evacuation**

(QMHSD\_FS\_PCY30)

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# 1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 This document outlines Queen Mary’s Fire Emergency Evacuation procedure for Building Users and provides details of the essential steps and protocols to ensure the safe and efficient evacuation of all individuals - students, faculty, staff, visitors and contractors in the event of a fire emergency. It provides clear guidelines on how to respond to fire alarms, evacuate the building, and account for all individuals to minimise risk and prevent injury or loss of life.

1.2 This document aims to provide a structured, efficient, and comprehensive response to fire alarm activation, including safeguarding employees, visitors, students and Queen Mary property. Adherence to this plan is critical in reducing risk, ensuring compliance with fire safety, and fostering a culture of preparedness.

1.3 It is important to note that this document should be read in conjunction with the Emergency Procedures for Queen Mary Security Staff responding to a fire alarm activation, EM01 and EM10.

# 2.0 Evacuation Strategy

2.1 Evacuation strategy types refer to the various approaches used to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people during an emergency, such as a fire, natural disaster, or other urgent situations. These strategies are designed to cater to different building layouts, occupancy types, and the specific nature of the threat. Common evacuation strategies include simultaneous evacuation (also referred to as an “All out policy”), where all occupants leave at once; phased evacuation, where individuals are evacuated in stages based on their location or vulnerability; and progressive horizontal evacuation, which involves a step-by-step horizontal movement throughout a building. Each strategy requires careful planning, clear communication, and regular drills to ensure an effective response during an emergency.

2.2 Queen Mary operates, in most of their buildings, a simultaneous evacuation strategy. This is where all occupants of a building are evacuated at the same time, typically in response to an immediate and serious threat, such as a fire or other emergency. This approach aims to move everyone to safety as quickly and efficiently as possible, minimising the risk of injury or death. Simultaneous evacuation prioritises speed and ensures that all individuals exit the building concurrently. It requires well-planned escape routes, clear communication, and trained personnel to manage the process effectively, especially in high-traffic or complex buildings.

2.3 Due to high-risk processes being carried out, certain areas of Queen Mary buildings, particularly some laboratories, have agreed to local procedures whereby robust management arrangements are in place and, in certain scenarios, do not immediately evacuate. This is carried out in conjunction with direct contact with responding Security Officers and must be agreed prior with the Health and Safety Directorate (HSD) Fire Safety Team. These situations are rare and will go through a robust, documented process.

# 3.0 Emergency Planning for Persons Requiring Assistance – (PEEP)

3.1 It is essential to recognise that not all persons can self-evacuate without some form of assistance for a variety of reasons. This may include but is not limited to: physical disabilities (e.g. mobility impairments, dexterity issues, other physical limitations), sensory impairments (e.g. visual or hearing impairments), cognitive impairments (e.g. learning difficulties, ASD, mental health conditions), some chronic medical conditions (e.g. epilepsy, arthritis), short term medical conditions.

3.2 A Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) is used to document how individual people will be evacuated in a fire emergency, when they may be unable to do so, without assistance from others.

3.3 Persons requiring assistance during a fire evacuation (including those staying in University residential premises and those with temporary impairments) must make Heads of Schools, Institutes and Departments, aware of their condition as far as it is relevant to the individual's emergency planning and safe egress in the case of fire. This will allow a PEEP to be developed. Individuals should be directed to the HSD (Fire Safety Team) electronic PEEP Questionnaire form, which will then enable the Fire Safety Team to assess their situation and relevant information and to recommend the necessary arrangements to be put in place.

3.4 Where necessary, the form may be completed on their behalf by another person who is assisting them and representing their interests:

[Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan Questionnaire (office.com)](https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=kfCdVhOw40CG7r2cueJYFD3S3shLtYVGvscFh-P9IiVUNkFVS1o1M1BBSDVBOUhFRlhOTk1BSjdOTiQlQCN0PWcu)

# 4.0 Roles and Responsibilities (Including Visitors and Contractors)

4.1 All building occupants have some form of responsibility to safely evacuate any building during a fire alarm activation, including visitors and contractors. The evacuation of the building must be initiated upon every continuous fire alarm activation, excluding the weekly fire alarm test, which should not last for longer than approx. 30 seconds.

4.2 Queen Mary Security, as the University’s first responders, will take control over the incident upon their arrival during any fire alarm activation. They will assess the situation and request the required level of resources needed. Any instruction of theirs must be followed. If the Fire Brigade are requested, upon arrival, they will take over as the overall Incident Commander.

4.3 It is the responsibility of the Heads of Schools, Institutes and Departments to ensure that the appropriate arrangements for implementation of any PEEP, as outlined by the Fire Safety Team, are put in place.

4.4 The following outlines the different roles and responsibilities and the response required.

4.2 All Building Users, excluding Security Staff - On Discovering a Fire

* Raise the alarm first by shouting “FIRE” and then activate the fire alarm by pressing the red Manual Call Point (MCP). These are located by the exits to the stairs and the final exits from the building. This will initiate the building evacuation and alert Security of the fire alarm activation.
* If undertaking experiments, cooking or operating equipment that could result in a risk, if left unattended, the power source being used must be isolated immediately, and any experiments must be left in a safe, contained manner. It should be noted that the carrying out of these procedures should not unduly delay your evacuation of the premises. Local arrangements must be put into place by discussion with the Head of Department/School/Institution and the HSD Fire Safety Team to ensure that areas are left as safe as possible during evacuation. Some equipment may automatically shut down on activation of the fire alarm system and these measures should be brought to the attention of persons using this equipment via their local induction.
* If trained, confident and safe to do so, for small fires (waste paper bin size), you may attempt to extinguish the fire using the appropriate fire‐fighting equipment. You should always ensure when attempting to extinguish a small fire, you have access to a safe escape route in case you need to abort fire-fighting and evacuate the room.
* Leave the room immediately, taking any visitors with you. Do not delay evacuating by taking personal belongings with you.
* From a place of safety, if you have access to a phone, ensure the Fire Brigade is called on 999, ensuring a “confirmed fire” is stated and details of your location are provided to them. Ensure Queen Mary Security are then called on the emergency phone number 0207 882 3333, and provide them with brief details on the situation and your actions (including notifying the Fire Brigade). There is a 10-minute seek-and-search policy in place for Security to investigate all fire alarm activations. This allows any false activations to be identified before the Fire Brigade is summoned. It is therefore vital that the Fire Brigade is summoned as soon as possible if there is a confirmed fire.
* Ensure that the room of origin is evacuated, closing the door behind you. This will help contain the fire. Proceed to the nearest available exit, following the advice of any Fire Marshals, leave the building and go to your designated assembly point.
* Do not re‐enter the building until told that it is safe to do so by the Fire Brigade or Queen Mary Security.

4.3 All Building Users, excluding Security Staff - On Hearing the Fire Alarm (A continuous bell or siren)

* If undertaking experiments, cooking or operating equipment that could result in a risk, if left unattended, the power source being used must be isolated immediately, and any experiments must be left in a safe, contained manner. It should be noted that the carrying out of these procedures should not unduly delay your evacuation of the premises. Local arrangements must be put into place by discussion with the Head of Department/School/Institution and the HSD Fire Safety Team to ensure that areas are left as safe as possible during evacuation. Some equipment may automatically shut down on activation of the fire alarm system and these measures should be brought to the attention of persons using this equipment via their local induction.
* Leave the room immediately, taking any visitors with you. Do not delay evacuating by taking personal belongings with you.
* Ensure you evacuate immediately, closing all doors behind you. This will help contain any potential fire. Proceed to the nearest available exit, following the advice of any Fire Marshals, leave the building and go to your designated assembly point.
* Do not re‐enter the building until told that it is safe to do so by the Fire Brigade or Queen Mary Security.

4.4. Fire Marshals – On Discovering a Fire

* Raise the alarm first by shouting “FIRE” and then by activating the fire alarm by pressing the red Manual Call Point (MCP). These are located by the exits to the stairs and the final exits from the building. This will initiate the building evacuation and alert Security of the fire alarm activation.
* If undertaking experiments, cooking or operating equipment that could result in a risk if left unattended, the power source being used must be isolated immediately, and any experiments must be left in a safe, contained manner. It should be noted that the carrying out of these procedures should not unduly delay your evacuation of the premises. Local arrangements must be put into place by discussion with the Head of Department/School/Institution and the HSD Fire Safety Team to ensure that areas are left as safe as possible during evacuation. Some equipment may automatically shut down on activation of the fire alarm system and these measures should be brought to the attention of persons using this equipment via their local induction.
* If trained, confident and safe to do so, for small fires (waste paper bin size), attempt to extinguish the fire using the appropriate fire‐fighting equipment. You should always ensure when attempting to extinguish a small fire, you have access to a safe escape route in case you need to abort fire-fighting and evacuate the room.
* From a place of safety, if you have access to a phone, ensure the Fire Brigade is called on 999, ensuring a “confirmed fire” is stated and details of your location are provided to them. Ensure Queen Mary Security are then called on the emergency phone number 0207 882 3333, and provide them with brief details on the situation and your actions (including notifying the Fire Brigade). There is a 10-minute seek-and-search policy in place for Security to investigate all fire alarm activations. This allows any false activations to be identified before the Fire Brigade is summoned. It is therefore vital that the Fire Brigade is summoned as soon as possible if there is a confirmed fire.
* Where possible and readily available, put on your designated Fire Marshal tabard and if safe for you to do so, carry out a sweep of your designated area on your way out, including toilets, offices and rest areas, ensuring that all occupants leave immediately, close doors behind you and do not stop to collect belongings. If any building users refuse to evacuate, record their location, description, and name (if known), and report this information to Queen Mary Security at your earliest opportunity.
* Proceed to the nearest available exit, leave the building and go to your designated assembly point. It may be necessary to take up the position of a door marshal to prevent persons from re-entering the building, ensuring you maintain a safe distance between you and the building involved in the fire. At your earliest convenience, please report to the Security Officer the areas you have covered and await further instruction.
* Do not re‐enter the building until told that it is safe to do so by the Fire Brigade or Queen Mary Security.

4.5. Fire Marshals – On Hearing the Fire Alarm (A continuous bell or siren)

* If undertaking experiments, cooking or operating equipment that could result in a risk if left unattended, the power source being used must be isolated immediately, and any experiments must be left in a safe, contained manner. It should be noted that the carrying out of these procedures should not unduly delay your evacuation of the premises. Local arrangements must be put into place by discussion with the Head of Department/School/Institution and the HSD Fire Safety Team to ensure that areas are left as safe as possible during evacuation. Some equipment may automatically shut down on activation of the fire alarm system and these measures should be brought to the attention of persons using this equipment via their local induction.
* Where possible and readily available, put on your designated Fire Marshal tabard and carry out a sweep of your designated area, including toilets, offices and rest areas, ensuring that all occupants leave immediately, close doors behind you and do not stop to collect belongings. If any building users refuse to evacuate, record their location, description, and name (if known), and report this information to Queen Mary Security at your earliest opportunity.
* Proceed to the nearest available exit, leave the building and go to your designated assembly point. It may be necessary to take up the position of a door marshal to prevent persons from re-entering the building. At your earliest convenience, please report to the Security Officer the areas you have covered and await further instruction.
* Do not re‐enter the building until told that it is safe to do so by the Fire Brigade or Queen Mary Security.

4.6. Security Officers

* All Security Officers, when responding to any fire alarm activation, are to follow the agreed, established procedural documents: EM01 and EM10, which are owned and managed by the Estates and Facilities Directorate.

Document Control

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