

## EDC12D016

### **Title: Fire Safety for Staff, Students and Visitors with Significantly Restricted Mobility - Update**

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### **1. Background**

A paper to the Equality and Diversity Committee on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2012 outlined concerns regarding fire safety provision for those people with mobility issues or who would have difficulty navigating buildings in an emergency situation within the University. This paper is an update on activity undertaken.

It is noted that the Head of Equality and Diversity has a 'watching brief' only for this area. It has been clearly defined that responsibility for process lies with Safety Services; execution of recommendations for changes to the physical estate to ensure safety for disabled students, staff and visitors and legal compliance lies with the Estates Division. The Equality & Diversity (E&D) Team have been liaising with both Safety Services and Estates to identify what action has been taken and to work with them in resolving outstanding issues, but does not have authority to ensure resolution on this matter.

### **2. Previous Actions Agreed and Current Status**

Below is a summary of the actions outlined in the minutes for the meeting in November 2012 and an update of the current position:

- (1) Director of Estates to report what resources are needed and how Estates will carry out a fire safety audit;

**ACTION: Director of Estates**

It is estimated a part time member of staff at Grade 7 (new post) will be required to undertake a Fire Safety audit – however, there have been changes of staff at senior levels in Estates and USS with both new appointments having considerable fire safety expertise. Both Directorates are working together on aspects of this issue as a priority, as well as an installation of Evacuation Chairs taking place across the Teaching Wall as part of the improvement plan, during July 2013. Once initial reviews are completed the extent to which an audit is needed will be decided and resource requested accordingly.

(2) Estates to provide a list of all UEA buildings indicating the current position with respect to fire safety:

**ACTION: Director of Estates**

List of buildings sent to E&D Office. E&D Office have carried out visual assessment across all buildings other than student accommodation buildings and have sent the spreadsheet for comment on accuracy, omissions and/or work scheduled to Safety Services and Estates.

(3) Room Bookings Team to liaise with Estates to populate rooms across campus with Fire Evacuation Information

**ACTION: Director of Planning**

All rooms that are currently centrally bookable now have accessibility information recorded on the room booking system. When searching for a room the information is available under the "details" section returned in the search. This will be rolled out to include other rooms as soon as practical. N.B. Since the meeting it has been agreed that all rooms will become "centrally owned": accessibility information will be added during the process of transferring the information across but is one of many aspects to be considered in the transition process.

(4) Timetabling Group to be asked to add this issue to Agenda for discussion, action and monitoring of progress

**ACTION: Director of Planning**

It has been agreed that students/staff with mobility difficulties will be added to seminar groups at the point of timetabling (and requesting a room). As a result we will now only need to ensure accessible rooms for the specific activity rather than the current practice of allocating accessible rooms to all seminar groups that a specific person might subsequently be allocated to. This will reduce the burden on accessible rooms.

In addition Estates have confirmed that they are installing Evacuation Chairs and appropriate intercom communication over the summer period 2013 which should significantly increase the number of accessible rooms.

(5) Template to be produced asking for specific information about access to and evacuation from rooms for others, outside main timetabling system to use

**ACTION: Director of Planning**

This was discussed at the subsequent meeting of the Head of E&D, Director of Estates, Director of Safety Services and Director of Planning. Agreed at that meeting that signage external to rooms should be followed and this is being enhanced in line with the installation of the Evacuation Chairs. No further action required.

(6) It was proposed that money from the Campus Access Budget (previously the DDA Budget) be used to acquire a part time person to co-ordinate the various actions involved

across the campus to ensure the University becomes compliant.

**ACTION: Director of Estates**

See answers at (7) below and (1) above.

(7) Campus Access Group to meet in December to determine what funds are available to progress action above

**ACTION: Head of Equality and Diversity**

This budget is signed off by Dean of Students Offices (DoS) and Estates. Latest estimate is that c.£18,000 remains in this budget however, discussions suggested that this work can be achieved with existing resource.

(8) Each Building to have a Health and Safety Committee reporting centrally to University Safety Services (USS) with representation from Schools/Divisions but led by a Manager/Head of School within each building

**ACTION: Heads of School**

Awaiting information from the Dean of Science who is rolling out a model across the Faculty of Science. Head of Equality and Diversity met with the Dean shortly after the meeting and a further meeting is scheduled for 28 May 2013.

(9) Review to be undertaken of all information relating to PEEPs currently held on the system and comprehensive guidance to be written for this. To include range of disabilities such as: mobility, hearing, visual, cardiac and epileptic impairments or conditions.

**ACTION: E&D Team**

A list of PEEP Officers across all Schools and Services has been compiled and shared with Safety Services;

Confirmed with Dean of Students and Human Resources (HRD) that no PEEPs are held by them and any students or staff requiring PEEPs are signposted to Safety Services for action.

Instructions for staff, students and visitors are being drafted (see examples for students and staff at Appendix 1) and a fully co-ordinated process, including promotion of information to those whose attention we need to capture is currently under development in collaboration with Safety Services. It is envisaged this information can be included in Admissions and Appointment packs, at Induction for both staff and students, for visitors to Conferences or Public Lectures, as well as on line. This work will be completed by 30 September 2013 and detail of actions reported to the next Committee meeting.

(10) Audit to be undertaken of PEEPs already held by Dean of Students and Human Resources, and information held on a central log within USS. NB Check agreement obtained from students and staff on sharing of information in this way

**ACTION: E&D Team**

Overview has been obtained but audit of individual PEEPs has not taken place. This will form part of the review at (9) above and on-going review of this information will be built into annual E&D plans.

(11) Working with relevant areas (USS, Schools, HR, DoS) review how information is disseminated, action prompted and awareness raised around this aspect of Fire Evacuation across the Campus.

**ACTION: E&D Team**

Forming part of work also combining (8), (9) and (10) above, a full report will be brought to the E&D Committee's first meeting of the next session.

(12) Note was taken of some specific areas requiring particular attention: Suffolk Terrace/Counselling Service; Congregation Hall, The Street, the Students Union building, the Careers Centre, the Chaplaincy and Accommodation;

(13) Note was taken that many rooms are booked by Student Societies for use in the evenings/weekends/non-standard hours and an Audit would need to take this into account as well as incorporating a system for capturing temporary situational disabilities such as a broken leg. Students Union Welfare Officer can provide a list of Societies and contacts.

**ACTION: STUDENTS UNION**

List requested and to be forwarded from Students Union.

### **3. Next Steps**

The Equality Office continues to be concerned that individuals across the campus who have significant mobility impairments may continue to be disadvantaged until actions by all parties are complete - by which it is meant:

- a. Our initial connection with such individuals as an institution is not yet fully effective;
- b. information about what such individuals should do to become fully fire safe on campus is not yet available to them or to other staff in a succinct and easily accessible manner;
- c. The process is not yet free of gaps (including a range of generic PEEPs or simple fire instructions for each building).

We will continue to work with colleagues in Safety Services and Estates to ensure good progress is made and with a view to having closed key gaps by 30 September 2013. It is not feasible to correct every challenge presented by our campus but a clear plan of work will be available to show scheduled physical improvements to this specific range of fire safety issues and a full process agreed and disseminated by the above date. A further report will be included to the Committee at the first meeting of the next session.

*Helen Murdoch*  
*Head of Equality and Diversity*  
*May 2013*

At UEA we want to ensure that you are able to take advantage of all of the University's buildings and services - and naturally want this to be done in a safe and simple way. This guidance outlines what you need to know, what you need to do, and how to get information.

### What you need to know

All students who would have difficulty in using the stairs or navigating through a building in an emergency need to have a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan – known as a PEEP - which is written by the PEEP officer in your School or Hub, in consultation with you, and is tailored to your own needs. It should cover all the buildings/areas that you will use throughout the University.

### What you need to do

- Identify who your PEEP Officer is – this can be found
  - in the Safety Services section of the UEA website
  - By asking a member of staff in the Dean of Students offices (DOS)
  - By calling Safety Services on (01603) 59 3945
  - By e-mailing [peep@uea.ac.uk](mailto:peep@uea.ac.uk)
- Make an appointment to see your PEEP Officer
  - You will need to identify all the buildings you will attend prior to meeting with them
  - You will also need to be ready to discuss what access issues you would have in an emergency situation

The PEEP will be shared only with Safety services. The Equality and Diversity Office will have a record that you have a PEEP but won't see the documentation itself.

### Where can you get further information:

There is a variety of information about access to different buildings and services on the UEA website [www.uea.ac.uk/peep](http://www.uea.ac.uk/peep)

You can email [peep@uea.ac.uk](mailto:peep@uea.ac.uk) or phone safety services on (01603) 59 3945  
We're happy to help!

## DRAFT                      Fire Safety information for staff with significant mobility restrictions

At UEA we want to ensure that you are able to take advantage of all of the University's buildings and services and naturally want this to be done in a safe and simple way.

### What you need to know

All staff who would have difficulty in using the stairs or navigating through a building in an emergency need (even on a temporary basis) need to have a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan – known as a PEEP - which is written by the PEEP officer in the building in which you primarily work in consultation with you. The PEEP is tailored to your own needs, and should cover all the buildings/areas that you will use throughout the University.

### What you need to do

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  - On the UEA website: [www.uea.ac.uk/peep](http://www.uea.ac.uk/peep)
  - By asking your Line Manager
  - By calling Safety Services on (01603) 59 3945
  - By e-mailing [peep@uea.ac.uk](mailto:peep@uea.ac.uk)
- Make an appointment to see your PEEP Officer
  - You will need to advise them of all the buildings you are likely to use prior to meeting with them
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The PEEP will be shared only with Safety Services. The Equality and Diversity Office will have a record that you have a PEEP but won't see the documentation itself.

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