

Fire Safety policy

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Description

Fairfield School of Business (FSB) is committed to protecting staff, students, visitors, contractors and all other relevant persons from the risk of fire across its premises. FSB will manage fire safety through clear governance, competent fire risk assessment, effective prevention and protection measures, maintained fire-safety systems, suitable emergency arrangements, training, drills, monitoring and prompt corrective action.

This policy establishes the fire-safety requirements to be applied across FSB premises. Each campus must maintain a current Fire Risk Assessment and fire emergency arrangements that reflect its building, occupancy, landlord arrangements, fire strategy and operating pattern. The named individual responsible for co-ordinating fire safety at each site is recorded in section 4.2.

Contents

1. Purpose and Objectives 2
2. Scope 2
3. Legal Framework 2
4. Fire Safety Governance and Responsibilities 3
5. Fire Risk Assessment 5
6. Site- Specific Fire Safety Arrangements 6
7. Fire Prevention and Control Measures 6
8. Means of Escape and Evacuation 7
9. Disabled People and Others Requiring Assistance 8
10. Fire Detection, Alarm and Communications 9
11. Emergency Lighting, Signs and Notices 9
12. Firefighting Equipment 9
13. Fire Doors, Compartmentation and Structural Fire Protection 10
14. Contractors, Hot Works and Building Projects 10
15. Dangerous Substances and Higher-Risk Activities 11
16. Fire Safety Training and Information 11
17. Fire Drills and Exercises 12
18. Inspection, Testing, Servicing and Defects 12
19. Shared and Multi-Occupied Buildings 12
20. Events, Temporary Changes and Increased occupancy 13
21. Fire Incident Response and Post-Incident Actions 13
22. Records, Assurance and Audit 13
23. Non-Compliance and Enforcement 14
24. Review of this Policy 14

1. Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this policy is to establish a consistent framework for managing fire safety across FSB premises. Its objectives are to:

- prevent fire so far as reasonably practicable and reduce the likelihood of ignition, fire growth and smoke spread;
- ensure that people can be warned promptly and evacuate safely;
- provide particular consideration for people who may need assistance to evacuate;
- maintain fire protection systems, equipment, escape routes and structural fire precautions in effective working order and good repair;
- define organisational and site responsibilities for fire safety;
- ensure competent advice, risk assessment, training, testing and maintenance are obtained where required;
- ensure fire safety information is recorded, shared and retained in accordance with legal duties; and
- provide a framework for monitoring, audit, corrective action and continuous improvement.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all FSB-controlled educational and workplace premises, including teaching spaces, offices, libraries, specialist teaching areas, common areas under FSB control. Site-specific arrangements are managed through each campus Fire Risk Assessment and emergency plan, with the named site Responsible Person recorded in section 4.2.

It applies to employees, agency workers, students, visitors, contractors and other persons who may be affected by FSB activities or premises. It also applies where FSB occupies only part of a building and relies on landlord- or building-managed fire precautions, in which case responsibilities, interfaces, information-sharing and assurance arrangements must be recorded locally.

3. Legal Framework

FSB will comply with applicable fire safety and health and safety legislation.

Requirement	How it relates to this policy
Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, as amended	Primary fire-safety legislation for non-domestic premises. Requires suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment and appropriate general fire precautions for relevant persons.
Building Safety Act 2022 - section 156 amendments	Strengthened duties under the Fire Safety Order, including recording the fire risk assessment and fire-safety arrangements in

	full, recording assessor details and improving Responsible Person information, co-operation and information sharing.
Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974	Provides the wider framework for protecting employees and others affected by work activities and for maintaining safe systems of work and premises.
Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999	Requires suitable management arrangements, risk assessment, competent assistance, co-operation and appropriate procedures for serious and imminent danger.
Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002 (DSEAR)	Requires fire and explosion risks from dangerous substances to be assessed, eliminated or reduced so far as reasonably practicable, with suitable control and mitigation measures.
Equality Act 2010	Supports inclusive arrangements and reasonable adjustments. Fire-safety planning must take account of disabled people and others who may require assistance to evacuate.
Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996	Applies to workplace safety signs and signals where risks cannot be adequately controlled by other means and supports appropriate fire-safety signage.
Building Regulations 2010 and Approved Document B, where applicable	Relevant to building work, material alterations and changes affecting fire safety. Fire-safety information produced through building work must be retained and incorporated into premises management where required.
Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015, where applicable	Relevant where construction work is undertaken and requires suitable planning, co-ordination and emergency arrangements during the works.

4. Fire Safety Governance and Responsibilities

4.1 Responsible Person

For a workplace, the employer is normally the Responsible Person under the Fire Safety Order to the extent the workplace is under its control. In multi-occupied or shared premises, other organisations or persons may also be Responsible Persons or duty holders for areas or systems they control.

FSB will record the legal entity that is the statutory Responsible Person in the document-control section of this policy. The named individual responsible for co-ordinating day-to-day fire-safety arrangements at each campus will be recorded in section 4.2. Naming an individual does not transfer or remove any statutory duty held by the employer, owner or other person with control of the premises.

4.2 Site Responsible Persons

The individuals listed below are responsible for co-ordinating fire safety at their respective sites and for ensuring that this policy, the site Fire Risk Assessment and local emergency arrangements are implemented. Statutory duties under the Fire Safety Order remain with the relevant Responsible Person or Responsible Persons identified by law.

4.3 Senior Management

- approve and support this policy and allocate proportionate resources for fire safety;
- ensure suitable governance arrangements exist for monitoring compliance and significant fire-safety risks;
- ensure serious or overdue fire-safety actions are escalated and resolved; and
- ensure fire safety remains integrated into estates, operations, procurement, change management and business continuity.

4.4 Policy Owner

- maintain this policy and monitor relevant legal and fire-safety requirements;
- provide or obtain competent fire-safety advice where required;
- establish consistent standards for records, assurance and site reporting;
- review material fire-safety findings and monitor closure of significant actions; and
- co-ordinate learning following drills, incidents, inspections and enforcement activity.

4.5 Campus Deans

- implement this policy and the campus fire risk assessment;
- maintain site-specific fire-safety records and the local fire emergency plan;
- ensure escape routes, fire doors, alarm systems, emergency lighting, signs and firefighting equipment are appropriately managed;
- ensure required inspections, tests and servicing are completed and recorded;
- ensure fire-safety defects are assessed, controlled and escalated promptly;
- arrange staff information, training, fire warden coverage and fire drills;
- ensure PEEPs or other evacuation assistance arrangements are developed where required;
- liaise with landlords, managing agents, contractors and other Responsible Persons; and
- maintain the campus fire-safety record set and make it available for audit or enforcing authority inspection.

4.6 Fire Marshals

- carry out only the duties for which they have been trained and which are specified in the local emergency plan;
- assist with evacuation, sweep arrangements where safe and appropriate, and reporting of area status;

- do not delay their own evacuation or enter smoke-affected areas;
- report fire-safety defects or unsafe practices; and
- participate in drills, refresher training and local reviews.

4.7 Employees

- follow fire-safety instructions and training;
- keep escape routes, fire doors, fire points and alarm call points unobstructed;
- not wedge open fire doors or interfere with fire-safety equipment;
- report hazards, defects, fires, near misses and unwanted fire alarm activations promptly;
- participate in drills and evacuate immediately when required; and
- inform the appropriate manager if they may need assistance to evacuate so suitable arrangements can be discussed.

4.8 Students and Visitors

Students and visitors must follow fire-safety instructions, evacuation directions and reasonable instructions from staff. Campus arrangements must provide appropriate information to people who are unfamiliar with the building.

4.9 Contractors and Service Providers

Contractors must comply with FSB and building fire-safety arrangements, provide competent persons for relevant work, maintain safe escape routes, control ignition sources and dangerous substances, and use permit systems where required. Contractors must not isolate, impair or alter fire-safety systems without prior authorisation and suitable temporary controls.

5. Fire Risk Assessment

Each campus must have a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment covering all relevant areas within FSB control and, where necessary, interfaces with shared areas. The fire risk assessment is the foundation for local fire precautions and the emergency plan.

5.1 Minimum content

- fire hazards and potential sources of ignition, fuel and oxygen;
- people at risk, including employees, students, visitors, contractors, young persons and people who may need assistance;
- measures to eliminate or reduce the likelihood and consequences of fire;
- adequacy of detection and warning, escape routes and exits, emergency lighting, signage, firefighting equipment, fire doors and compartmentation;
- emergency arrangements, management arrangements, training, drills and maintenance;
- dangerous substances and any higher-risk activities;

- risks created by shared occupation, landlords, contractors, building works or temporary changes; and
- actions required, responsible owners and suitable target dates.

5.2 Recording and Assessor Details

The fire risk assessment must be recorded in full. Where FSB appoints another person or organisation to make or review all or part of the assessment, their identity and organisation must be recorded. FSB should use assessors with competence proportionate to the building and its complexity.

5.3 Review

The assessment must be kept up to date and reviewed regularly, and in particular where there is reason to suspect it is no longer valid or there has been a significant change. FSB will normally conduct a documented review at least annually unless a more frequent interval is identified by the assessor or risk profile.

- after a fire, significant near miss or material unwanted alarm trend;
- after significant changes to layout, occupancy, use, hours, staffing or evacuation arrangements;
- before or following material building work, changes to compartmentation or fire-safety systems;
- where new dangerous substances, high-risk equipment or processes are introduced;
- where a person's evacuation needs materially change and this affects building arrangements;
- where significant defects or failures are identified; and
- when relevant legal requirements or building information changes.

6. Site- Specific Fire Safety Arrangements

Each campus must maintain a current Fire Risk Assessment and local fire emergency plan appropriate to the building, occupancy, landlord arrangements, fire strategy and evacuation arrangements. These records must contain the site-specific information required for safe operation. The named site Responsible Person is recorded in section 4.2.

7. Fire Prevention and Control Measures

7.1 Housekeeping and Combustible Materials

- escape routes, stairs, lobbies, final exits and fire points must be kept clear;
- waste and combustible storage must be controlled and removed regularly;
- combustible items must not be stored in protected escape routes, electrical intake rooms, plant rooms or against heat-producing equipment unless specifically assessed as safe;

- displays, decorations and temporary installations must not compromise detection, sprinklers, signs, fire doors or escape routes; and
- storage arrangements must not obstruct fire-resisting doors, dampers, smoke control systems, alarm devices or firefighting equipment.

7.2 Electrical Safety and Charging

- electrical installations and work equipment must be maintained under appropriate electrical-safety arrangements;
- damaged plugs, cables or overheating equipment must be removed from use and reported;
- extension leads and adaptors must not be overloaded or used as a substitute for adequate fixed sockets;
- battery charging, including lithium-ion devices, must be located and managed to reduce ignition and fire-spread risks, with damaged or suspect batteries taken out of use; and
- personal or unauthorised high-load electrical appliances may be restricted by campus rules.

7.3 Heating, Cooking and Ignition Sources

- portable heaters are prohibited unless specifically authorised and risk assessed;
- cooking appliances must be used only in designated areas and in accordance with local rules;
- heat-producing equipment must be kept away from combustible materials and switched off when not required where safe to do so; and
- naked flames, candles, incense and similar ignition sources are prohibited unless specifically authorised for a controlled activity.

7.4 Smoking and Vaping

Smoking and vaping are prohibited inside FSB premises. Any external smoking arrangements must be managed so that discarded smoking materials cannot ignite waste, vegetation, cladding or stored materials and do not obstruct escape routes or entrances.

7.5 Arson and Security

Campuses will consider deliberate ignition in the fire risk assessment. External waste, access control, perimeter security, out-of-hours arrangements and storage should be managed to reduce opportunities for arson without compromising emergency escape.

8. Means of Escape and Evacuation

Each campus must maintain a clear emergency evacuation strategy based on its fire risk assessment and building fire strategy. The plan must not rely on the Fire and Rescue Service to make the routine evacuation arrangements effective.

8.1 Escape Routes and Exists

- escape routes and exits must be available whenever premises are occupied and lead as directly as practicable to a place of safety;
- final exit doors and emergency fastening devices must be readily openable without a key or special knowledge where required by the fire strategy;
- escape routes must be adequately protected, lit and signed where necessary;
- occupancy must not exceed the safe capacity established by the fire risk assessment, design information or licence conditions where applicable; and
- changes to furniture, partitions, access control, security devices or teaching layouts must not reduce available exit capacity or travel routes.

8.2 Alarm Response

On discovering a fire, occupants should raise the alarm immediately using the nearest appropriate alarm method, leave by the nearest safe exit, proceed to the designated assembly point or other safe location specified by the local plan, and not re-enter until authorised.

8.3 Calling the Fire and Rescue Service

The campus emergency plan must state clearly who calls 999, how the call is confirmed, the campus address to be provided, the fire service access/rendezvous point and who will meet and brief arriving crews. Automatic alarm monitoring must not be treated as a substitute for local arrangements unless the fire strategy specifically provides for this and the monitoring process is understood and tested.

8.4 Assembly and Accountability

Assembly arrangements must suit the building, occupancy and local risks. The plan should define how staff, students, visitors and contractors are accounted for so far as reasonably practicable, while avoiding procedures that delay evacuation or place people at additional risk.

8.5 Re-entry

No person may re-enter a building following a fire alarm until the person in charge of the incident, building management or the Fire and Rescue Service has confirmed it is safe to do so.

9. Disabled People and Others Requiring Assistance

Evacuation arrangements must consider disabled people and any other person who may require assistance because of mobility, sensory, cognitive, neurological, medical, temporary or other needs. Arrangements should be dignified, practical and discussed with the person wherever possible.

9.1 Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)

A PEEP should be developed for employees and regular building users who need an individual plan. The plan must reflect the person's actual locations, normal movements and preferred safe method of evacuation, and it must be reviewed when circumstances change.

9.2 Visitors and Students Who Do Not Have an Individual Plan

Campuses must maintain suitable generic arrangements for visitors, students and other people who may require assistance but for whom an individual PEEP is not practicable. Booking, reception, enrolment or event processes should provide an appropriate opportunity to request evacuation assistance.

9.3 Refuges, Evacuation Chairs

Where refuges, evacuation chairs or other assisted-escape measures form part of the strategy, they must be supported by appropriate communication, trained staff, maintenance and practice. An evacuation chair is not an automatic solution for every wheelchair user and must only be used as part of a suitable plan by trained operators.

Emergency evacuation arrangements must not rely on the Fire and Rescue Service to evacuate disabled occupants. Suitable arrangements must be planned, resourced and implemented by the relevant Responsible Person.

10. Fire Detection, Alarm and Communications

Each campus must have an appropriate method of detecting fire and warning occupants, as determined by the fire risk assessment and building fire strategy. Systems must be kept in effective working order and must be suitable for the size, complexity, use and occupancy of the premises.

- alarm signals must be recognisable and sufficiently audible/visible for the intended occupants;
- additional warning arrangements must be provided where required for people with hearing or other sensory needs;
- call points, detectors, sounders, visual alarm devices and panels must not be obstructed or tampered with;
- isolations must be authorised, time-limited, recorded and supported by suitable temporary control measures; and
- faults must be reported, assessed and rectified promptly, with escalation where life-safety protection is materially reduced.

New, replacement or materially altered fire detection and alarm systems must be appropriately designed, installed, commissioned and maintained for the building and its fire strategy.

11. Emergency Lighting, Signs and Notices

Emergency lighting must be provided where necessary so that occupants can identify escape routes, changes of level, final exits, fire alarm call points and relevant firefighting equipment if normal lighting fails. The system must be inspected, tested and maintained at suitable intervals identified through the fire risk assessment and maintenance arrangements.

Fire-safety signs and notices must remain visible, legible, correctly positioned and consistent with the local emergency plan.

12. Firefighting Equipment

Suitable firefighting equipment must be provided where required by the fire risk assessment. Portable extinguishers and fire blankets are primarily for use on small fires by people who have received suitable information or training and only where it is safe to attempt this.

- no person is expected to fight a fire or put themselves at risk;
- evacuation and raising the alarm take priority;
- extinguishers must remain visible, accessible and correctly located;
- equipment must not be moved, discharged, concealed or tampered with except for legitimate use, testing or maintenance; and
- used, damaged or missing equipment must be reported and replaced or reinstated promptly.

13. Fire Doors, Compartmentation and Structural Fire Protection

Fire doors, fire-resisting walls, floors, ceilings, cavity barriers, penetration seals, dampers and other structural fire precautions are part of the building's life-safety system. They must not be altered, removed or compromised without competent assessment and authorisation.

- fire doors must not be wedged or propped open unless held by a suitable automatic release device consistent with the fire strategy;
- self-closing devices, seals, glazing, hinges, latches and frames must be kept in effective condition;
- new service penetrations through fire-resisting construction must be appropriately fire-stopped by competent persons;
- damage to compartmentation or fire doors must be reported and repaired promptly; and
- where FSB is a tenant, defects affecting landlord-controlled structural fire precautions must be formally notified and tracked to closure.

14. Contractors, Hot Works and Building Projects

14.1 Contractors Controls

- contractors must receive relevant fire-safety information before starting work;
- work must not block exits, reduce escape widths or compromise alarm, lighting, fire doors, sprinklers, smoke control or fire compartmentation without approved temporary measures;
- contractors must identify any fire-safety system isolation required and obtain authorisation before isolation;
- work areas must be left safe, with waste and combustible materials removed; and
- fire-safety information generated by completed works must be handed over and retained.

14.2 Hot Work

Hot work such as welding, cutting, grinding, brazing, bitumen work or use of open flame must be avoided where a safer method is practicable. Where hot work is necessary, a formal permit-to-work system must be used, with suitable fire precautions, segregation, extinguishing equipment and post-work fire watch as determined by the risk assessment and permit.

14.3 Changes to Buildings and Systems

Proposed alterations must be reviewed for fire-safety impact before work starts. Relevant building regulations, fire strategy information, approvals, commissioning certificates, as-built drawings and Regulation 38 fire-safety information must be obtained where applicable and incorporated into campus records and the fire risk assessment.

15. Dangerous Substances and Higher-Risk Activities

Flammable liquids, gases, aerosols, oxidisers and other dangerous substances must be eliminated or reduced where reasonably practicable and managed in accordance with the fire risk assessment and DSEAR where applicable. Storage quantities, ventilation, ignition control, segregation, spill response and emergency information must be appropriate to the substance and activity.

Any specialist teaching, demonstration, workshop, laboratory, catering or maintenance activity that introduces a material fire or explosion risk must have suitable local risk controls consistent with this policy and the campus fire risk assessment.

16. Fire Safety Training and Information

Employees must receive adequate fire-safety information, instruction and training when they start work and periodically thereafter. Training must also be refreshed when new or increased risks arise, responsibilities change, systems or work equipment change, or the emergency plan is materially amended.

16.1 General Staff Training

- how to raise the alarm and what the alarm sounds or looks like;
- what to do on discovering a fire or hearing the alarm;
- escape routes, final exits and assembly arrangements;
- prohibition on re-entry until authorised;
- importance of fire doors, clear escape routes and prompt defect reporting;
- arrangements for visitors, students and people requiring assistance;
- any role the employee has in the emergency plan; and
- local risks or controls identified by the fire risk assessment.

16.2 Fire Marshals and Specialist Roles

Fire Marshals, evacuation chair operators, incident controllers, alarm investigators (where the fire strategy uses this role) and other specialist role-holders must receive training proportionate to their duties, with refresher training and practical exercises at suitable intervals.

16.3 Students, Visitors and Contractors

Campuses must provide clear and proportionate fire-safety information to students, visitors and contractors. This may include induction information, signage, visitor briefings, event instructions, contractor rules and fire action notices.

17. Fire Drills and Exercises

Each campus must carry out and record fire drills often enough to confirm that the emergency plan is understood and effective. As a minimum, a fire drill will be completed at least annually; FSB campuses should normally conduct drills at least twice in each academic year, including different occupancy patterns where practicable, unless the fire risk assessment specifies a different approach.

Drills should test realistic aspects of the plan without creating unnecessary risk. They should consider, where relevant, evening operations, high-occupancy periods, new staff/student cohorts, disabled evacuation arrangements, shared-building interfaces and alternative exits.

A debrief must identify learning, defects, delays, behavioural issues and corrective actions. Significant findings must be tracked to completion and the fire risk assessment or emergency plan updated where required.

18. Inspection, Testing, Servicing and Defects

Fire-safety systems and equipment must be subject to a planned regime of inspection, testing and servicing by competent persons where required. Frequencies must be determined by the campus Fire Risk Assessment, system specification, manufacturer instructions, building fire strategy, contractual responsibilities and current recognised standards. All inspections, tests, defects and remedial actions must be recorded.

18.1 Defects and Impairments

- any defect affecting life safety must be assessed promptly;
- interim precautions must be introduced where protection is reduced, such as additional patrols, local restrictions, temporary alarms, relocation or closure where proportionate;
- significant impairments must be escalated to the Campus Manager and policy owner or senior management, as appropriate;
- landlord-controlled defects must be notified in writing and actively followed up; and
- normal protection must be restored as soon as practicable and the restoration recorded.

19. Shared and Multi-Occupied Buildings

Where a campus shares a building or fire-safety systems with a landlord, managing agent or other occupiers, FSB must take reasonably practicable steps to identify other Responsible Persons or duty holders, record their names and UK addresses where required, exchange relevant fire-safety information, co-operate and co-ordinate emergency arrangements, and obtain reasonable assurance over landlord-controlled life-safety systems. The relevant local records must be retained with the campus fire-safety documentation.

- whole-building and tenant fire risk assessments must align and not conflict;
- evacuation strategy, alarm arrangements, assembly points, drills and emergency communications must be coordinated;
- responsibility for testing, servicing, fire doors, common escape routes, emergency lighting, smoke control, sprinklers and fire service facilities must be clear;
- FSB must obtain reasonable assurance that landlord-controlled systems are maintained; and

- FSB must not assume that a lease or service charge transfers away its own legal duties for people under its control.

20. Events, Temporary Changes and Increased occupancy

Events, examinations, open days, room reconfigurations, temporary partitions, filming, exhibitions, contractor works or other unusual activities must be assessed before they take place where they may affect fire risk, occupancy, escape, alarm audibility, access for the Fire and Rescue Service or the availability of fire-safety systems.

Temporary arrangements must define responsibility, safe capacity, escape routes, staff briefing, disabled evacuation arrangements and any additional controls required. Fire exits and signage must remain visible and accessible throughout the activity.

21. Fire Incident Response and Post-Incident Actions

All actual fires, however small, and significant fire-related near misses must be reported through FSB incident arrangements and reviewed. The review should establish immediate and underlying causes, whether fire precautions operated as intended, whether external reporting is required, and what corrective actions are necessary.

- preserve relevant evidence where safe and lawful;
- notify insurers, landlords, regulators or other parties where required;
- review the fire risk assessment and emergency plan;
- replace or recommission used or affected fire-safety equipment;
- communicate learning to relevant campuses and staff; and
- do not reopen affected areas until competent advice confirms that fire-safety measures are adequate.

22. Records, Assurance and Audit

FSB will maintain fire-safety records sufficient to demonstrate how fire safety is managed. Records must be readily retrievable and retained for an appropriate period according to legal, contractual, insurer and organisational requirements.

- current and previous fire risk assessments and review records;
- identity of persons or organisations who carried out or reviewed the fire risk assessment;
- recorded fire-safety arrangements and Responsible Person information;
- landlord / other Responsible Person information and co-operation records;
- fire alarm, emergency lighting, firefighting equipment and other system inspection, test and service records;
- fire door and compartmentation inspection/repair records;
- fire drills, training and fire warden records;
- PEEPs and generic evacuation arrangements, stored with appropriate confidentiality;
- contractor permits, impairment records and fire-safety information from building works;
- incident, unwanted alarm, defect and corrective-action records; and
- relevant approvals, certificates, fire strategy documents, floor plans and Regulation 38 information.

22.1 Assurance

Sites may be subject to periodic internal audit, compliance inspection or management review. Significant findings must be assigned to an accountable owner, risk-rated where appropriate and tracked to closure. Repeated overdue actions or serious deficiencies must be escalated to senior management.

23. Non-Compliance and Enforcement

Failure to comply with fire-safety law can result in enforcement notices, restrictions on use, prosecution and significant penalties. FSB will co-operate with enforcing authorities and act promptly on any formal or informal fire-safety requirements.

Employees, students, contractors or visitors who deliberately interfere with fire-safety equipment, obstruct exits or disregard emergency instructions may be subject to disciplinary, conduct, contractual or access-control action as appropriate.

24. Review of this Policy

This policy will be formally reviewed at least annually and sooner where there is a significant legal, organisational or operational change, a serious fire incident, material audit finding, enforcement action or evidence that the policy is no longer effective.

This review does not remove the requirement to keep each campus Fire Risk Assessment, emergency plan and local fire-safety arrangements under continual review.

Document governance

Document owner*	**Head of Operations**
Consulted parties**	Senior Management Team and Associate Deans
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**Responsible for updates to this content.*
*** To be consulted on updates to this content.*

Versions

Version no.	Description of Changes	Approved by	Date
0.1	First draft version	n/a	n/a
0.2	Formatted draft presented for approval	n/a	n/a
1.0	New policy that outlines the processes and protocols around fire safety.	Board of Governors (C.A)	Oct 2026

