

# COVID-19 Fire Considerations

**Rev: 01**

## **Fire Evacuation Procedures**

In the event of a fire alarm activation, the University's evacuation procedures remain unchanged. Upon hearing the fire alarm, each person should react immediately and leave via the nearest exit. A quick response time will assist in maintaining social distancing. During an evacuation, occupants should try to maintain the recommended separation distance and assemble at the appropriate assembly point again maintaining the recommended separation distance at the assembly point.

## **Evacuation Drills**

During these unprecedented times, it is recommended that fire drills should be postponed for the first and possibly second semester due to the difficulties in maintaining social distancing during an evacuation.

What is important is that everyone knows what to do in a fire event and to use the nearest available fire exit while maintaining social distancing where possible.

## **Prevention of False Alarms**

During the current Covid-19 Pandemic, it is more important than ever to avoid false fire alarm activations. One of the most common causes of fire detector activation are toasters. Toaster are only permitted to be used in dedicated canteens areas. They should NOT be present in any other space. Toaster should be cleaned daily and visually monitored at all times when in use.

## **Fire Doors**

It is strongly advised against wedging open fire doors. We are aware that some building users have proposed to wedge open self-closing fire doors as COVID-19 control measure, to reduce the need to touch locks and door handles, etc.

Whilst this is understandable, it is essential that this hazard is balanced against the risk of uncontrolled spread of fire and smoke when a fire occurs. If you have decided to wedge a fire door, this risk must be fully considered and documented in a fire risk assessment which is agreed with the Fire Officer. Suitable control measures must be put in place to ensure fire doors will be closed when needed.

## **Escape Routes and Circulation Routes**

Escape routes and circulations routes must be kept free from combustible material and obstruction. They must be adequately illuminated with emergency lighting and have appropriate exit signage to clearly indicate the exit route from the building.

## **Training**

All staff should be trained in the basics of fire prevention and know what actions to take in the event of a fire alarm activation. Prior to commencing a class or lecture students should be made aware of what procedures to follow in the event of a fire alarm activation. Each department should have an evacuation plan in place.