

To Safety Co-ordinators (for onward transmission to Heads of School/Directorates,
School Safety Advisors, Safety Representatives)

From Dr Melanie Taylor, University Safety Advisor

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Reference Circular 1/2006

New University Health & Safety Code & Guidance: Fire Safety

Fire Safety Code

<http://www.campus.manchester.ac.uk/healthandsafety/CoPs&Guidance/firecodeofpractice&guidance.pdf>

The University's Health & Safety Committee, acting on recommendations from its Fire Safety Advisory Group, has approved a new fire safety code. This document lists the responsibilities of key personnel, including senior managers, and provides guidance on many aspects of fire safety. Sections on fire safety in halls of residence will be added at a later date.

In the past, arrangements have varied between buildings, departments and sites. This Code and Guidance applies across the University, and describes good practice that, once fully and consistently implemented, will contribute to our compliance with the various legal requirements.

Fire safety concepts will be familiar to many of you already and many of you have in place much that is required by the Code and Guidance. However, I would like to draw your attention particularly to the need for HOSs, etc to appoint Evacuation Marshals. Section 5 of the guidance gives some details about the role these people play in the event of an emergency evacuation. This role does *not* entail detailed technical knowledge of the fire alarm system or panel, or fire fighting.

An important aspect of the Code is that those with specific responsibilities should receive sufficient training and information to enable them to fulfill their role competently. In consultation with the University Fire Safety Officer and Health and Safety Services, our Staff Training and Development Unit is developing a series of relevant short courses designed around the University's fire code roles and responsibilities. A basic introduction to fire safety awareness is included in the staff induction training provided by STDU. Obviously, this will need to be supplemented by schools / directorates at a more local and detailed level for new staff, and refreshed for all staff and students at least once a year. Most schools already do this during Freshers Week for all students, by using the induction health & safety checklist for staff (also on the HSS website) and during the annual observed evacuation practice for both staff and students.

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