



Facilities Management - Estate Services  
Policy  
Fire extinguishers

Author:	Stephan Scheiner, Compliance Manager
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**Contributors and reviewers**

Name	Title	Role	Date
Daren Bezants	Maintenance & Services Manager	Contributor/Reviewer	08/09/07
Stephan Scheiner	Compliance Manager	Contributor/Reviewer	07/09/07
Alan Oakes	Fire Safety Officer	Contributor	22/06/07

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# 1 Policy

## 1.1 Overview

This policy defines the College standard for the type, number and location of fire extinguishers across the campus.

The policy references the following publications and Codes of Practice:

- 1 The Fire Risk Assessments Guides, published by the Department for Communities and Local Government and listed below, define how to meet the legal requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, including the need to provide fire-fighting equipment in all College buildings.
  - [Fire Safety Risk Assessment Guide for Educational Premises](#)
  - [Fire Safety Risk Assessment Guide for Sleeping Accommodation](#)
  - [Fire Safety Risk Assessment Guide for Offices and Shops](#)
  - [Fire Safety Risk Assessment Guide for Small & Medium Places of Assembly](#)
  - [Fire Safety Risk Assessment Guide for Theatres, Cinemas & similar Premises](#)
- 2 The British Standard Codes of Practice, which provide guidance and recommendations, and include:
  - BS 5306-8:2000 Fire extinguishing installations and equipment on premises. Code of practice for selection and installation of portable fire extinguishers.
  - BS 5306-3:2003 Fire extinguishing installations and equipment on premises.  
Maintenance of portable fire extinguishers.

## **2 Fire Risk Assessment**

A Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) for a building contains many elements, all of which combine to provide a safe environment for its users in the event of fire. The provision of portable fire extinguishers is an important part of this assessment, as their existence may be extremely valuable in the early stages of a fire.

Experience has shown that most fires, discovered in their early stages, have been successfully tackled and extinguished by the use of portable appliances.

Their immediate availability and portability allows one person to make a prompt attack on the fire to prevent it from developing. However, they are essentially a first aid fire-fighting measure and cannot be expected to extinguish a large fire.

### **3 Location of extinguishers**

In the College, fire extinguishers will generally be located near to Break Glass Call Points (BGCP). The BGCP is located in accordance with British Standard BS5839-1 2002, and will be found:

- on escape routes;
- at the exits from a floor level;
- in staircase enclosures; and
- at the final exits from a building.

Any person discovering a fire must first raise the alarm by activating the BGCP. They must then only tackle the fire with a suitable extinguisher, if they have been trained to do so by the Health & Safety Office, and without putting themselves in danger.

See 4. [Types of extinguishers](#) for information on which extinguisher to use.

#### **3.1 Events**

For special events, such as the Summer Ball and Graduation Ceremonies, the Event Organiser will be responsible for undertaking a Fire Risk Assessment before the event, in conjunction with the College Fire Safety Officer, to ensure that appropriate fire extinguishers are provided at suitable locations.

The provision of extinguishers will be in accordance with the summary guidance in section 5 of this document.

## 4 Types of extinguishers

The type of extinguisher to use depends on the **Class of Fire**.

### 4.1 Class A

Class A: Fires involving solid materials such as wood, paper, textiles etc

One extinguisher, of at least 13A rating, for each 200m<sup>2</sup> of floor space, with a minimum of two extinguishers per floor, will be provided. **These will normally be Water based**, but may, in exceptional circumstances determined from a risk assessment, be any other extinguisher with a Class A rating; such as Foam; CO<sub>2</sub>; Dry Powder.

### 4.2 Class B

Class B: Fires involving flammable liquids (or liquefiable solids) such as petrol, diesel, oils, etc.

Class B extinguishers are dependant on the characteristics of the flammable liquids in question, and the form of their storage and containment.

The appropriate choice will depend on a local assessment of risk, conducted by the College Fire Safety Officer, and may result in a Foam, Dry Powder or CO<sub>2</sub> extinguisher being provided.

Where both Class A and Class B materials are present in the same area a single type of extinguisher, with both A and B ratings, such as CO<sub>2</sub>, Dry Powder or Foam, rather than two separate extinguishers, will be provided. This will avoid any confusion as to which to use when confronted by a fire.

### 4.3 Class C and D

Class C: Fires involving gases

Class D: Fires involving metals

Staff **must not** tackle fires involving gases or metals.

- The method for dealing with a gas fire is to close the supply isolation valve, or plug the leak, and wait for fire service personnel.
- Fires involving metals will require the application of special extinguishing media and the decision on which extinguisher to provide will be arrived at by a risk assessment of the specific hazard.

Following a fire risk assessment by the College Fire Safety Officer, extinguishers appropriate to the risk, having regard to available information and advice, will be provided. Further information or guidance on the correct extinguisher to provide can be gained from COSHH Safety Data Sheets.

## **4.4 Class E**

Class E: Fires involving electrical equipment

With fires involving electrical equipment, there is always a risk of electrical shock or death. The first action to take is to turn off the power supply to the equipment, if it is safe to do so.

Having isolated the electrical supply, firefighting actions can be directed at the burning materials which, in most cases, will be those which can be extinguished by a Class A extinguisher. (See 4.1 above).

However, where an electrical hazard is present, a Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) extinguisher to deal with those situations where it is not possible to isolate the electrical supply, will be provided.

Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) extinguishers are 'clean agents' that do not leave a residue after discharge. The 'clean agents' do not cause thermal or static shock and are non-conducting, which makes CO<sub>2</sub> extinguishers ideal for fires involving any electrical equipment.

CO<sub>2</sub> extinguishers have an added advantage in that they also have a Class B rating.

## **4.5 Class F**

Class F: Fires involving cooking oils and fats

The first action, if it is safe to do so, is to cut off the power supply to the cooking container.

In larger kitchens there may be fixed firefighting installations located specifically to deal with the risk, such as a foam flooding system for deep fat fryers. Where this is not the case, a minimum of two suitably rated Class F extinguishers, along with a light duty fire blanket, will be provided.

In small residential kitchens and pantries a light duty fire blanket of appropriate size, will be provided.

## 5 Location and provision.

Portable fire extinguishers will be provided at all designated fire alarm call points, and other specific locations, as identified by any Fire Risk Assessments carried out by the College Fire Safety Officer, in accordance with the following:

Location	Minimum numbers and types of extinguisher
Offices, teaching rooms, seminar and similar areas Halls of Residence – general areas General circulation areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One 13A (minimum) rated extinguisher per 200m<sup>2</sup> of floor area, with a minimum of 2 extinguishers per floor</li> <li>• One 34B rated CO<sub>2</sub> extinguisher where an electrical hazard is present</li> </ul>
Halls of Residence – small kitchens and pantries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One light duty Fire Blanket</li> </ul>
Large kitchens  Numbers will be decided by a risk assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One light duty Fire Blanket</li> <li>• One 34B CO<sub>2</sub> extinguisher where an electrical hazard is present</li> <li>• Where there is a lack of fixed fire fighting systems, two suitably rated Class F extinguishers will be provided.</li> </ul>
Laboratories and similar areas where specific hazards are identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As required, having regard to any available technical information and specialist advice provided by the College Fire Safety Officer.</li> <li>• Any extinguishers provided in this category will normally be located in close proximity to the hazard</li> </ul>
Plant rooms	Dependant upon the significant hazard, for example electrical, gas, flammable liquids.
Others not identified above	Dependant upon a fire risk assessment carried out by the College Fire Safety Officer.

## 6 Replacement of missing or defective fire extinguishers

Missing or defective extinguishers must be reported immediately and this can be done, by anyone, through CAFM by:

- using the College Portal to log a call;
- emailing the **FM Customer Services - Non-Residential** mailbox; or
- phoning extension 3062.

You will need to provide details on the:

- type,
- size, and
- exact location of the extinguisher.

Defects include:

- missing safety pins
- missing pipes, hoses or horns
- pressure gauge not in green zone (where fitted)
- wall mountings missing or broken

**Defective or missing extinguishers must be replaced within 24 hours of notification.**

Defective extinguishers shall be marked with a **grey** pin tag and returned to the Estate Services Stores for inspection and/or replacement.

The Maintenance Operations Co-ordinator shall arrange for all grey-tagged extinguishers to be tested, inspected, and replaced where necessary by the Service Contractor.

Accommodation Services will arrange for replacement items to be collected or delivered from the Estate Services central store to the area where they are needed.

## **7 Inspection**

The Compliance Monitoring team and the Housekeeping Team will carry out weekly visual checks to determine whether extinguishers have been operated and to check for damage.

Inspections include checks that:

- each extinguisher is located in the designated place;
- each extinguisher is unobstructed and visible;
- the operating instructions of each extinguisher are clean and legible and face outwards;
- each extinguisher has not been operated and is not obviously damaged;
- the reading of any pressure gauge or indicator fitted to an extinguisher is within operational and safety limits;
- the seals and tamper indicators of each extinguisher are not broken or missing.

In addition to these regular weekly checks any building user who notices a defective or missing extinguisher must report it immediately using the procedure in 6, above.

## 8 Maintenance

Extinguishers will be maintained in accordance with the requirements of British Standard BS 5306-3:2003, 'Fire extinguishing installations and equipment on premises,' Code of practice for the inspection and maintenance of portable fire extinguishers.

Records will be maintained of the Basic and Extended maintenance in accordance with the above British Standard.

The maintenance record will be indelibly marked on a durable label fixed firmly to the extinguisher without obscuring any of the manufacturer's markings and instructions.

Where there is no more space on the maintenance label and a new label is fixed, the date of the last extended service will be marked on the new label.

The maintenance label will include the following information and must be readable without any special equipment.

- Type of maintenance (basic service, extended service, recharge, overhaul).
- Name and address of the maintenance supplier.
- A mark clearly identifying the competent person.
- The date (year and month) of the maintenance.
- The measured mass of the extinguisher, if it is a stored pressure extinguisher or cartridge-operated powder extinguisher.
- The date (year and month) of any overhaul.

## **9 Implementation Checklist**

### **9.1 Review period**

The author will review this document every twelve months, with input from reviewers from all four divisions of FM.

### **9.2 Other divisions or teams within FM**

Contributors from all four divisions of FM and the College Fire Safety Officer produced this policy and it reflects their views. See Contributors in the document control section.

### **9.3 Customers**

This document is for FM use only. This policy will benefit all customers and staff who use Royal Holloway, University of London properties.

### **9.4 Other College stakeholders**

This policy has been written in conjunction with the College Fire Safety Officer.

### **9.5 Trade unions**

We consider trade unions and their members as part of every policy and procedure. There are no issues regarding the implementation of this policy and procedure.

### **9.6 Impact assessment**

A primary impact assessment was completed and attached to the appendix.

### **9.7 Risk assessment**

We have developed this policy from the College Fire Safety Officer's College-wide risk assessment.

### **9.8 Other legislation**

[Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#)

### **9.9 Finance and resources**

There are financial savings from the probable reduction in the number of fire extinguishers in certain areas.

## **9.10 Sustainability**

All documents will be stored and accessed electronically, wherever possible, to reduce paper usage.

The probable reduction in the number of fire extinguishers has a positive impact on sustainability.

## **9.11 Best practice**

This policy and procedure reflects current best industry practice.

We have written this policy and procedure using plain English guidelines.

## **9.12 Training and support**

All users of this policy and procedure will receive one-to-one or group support as required.

## **9.13 Other areas**

There are no other issues.

## **9.14 Planning ahead – areas to review**

There are no current issues to plan ahead for.

## **9.15 Document sensitivity**

This document is suitable for open distribution.