Re: Fire Safety Information - Residential Premises

Dear Resident

This letter contains important information about fire safety provisions, rules and requirements within your halls of residence. Please make sure you familiarise yourselves with them, as a reminder on how to keep yourself and others safe.

EVACUATION PROCEDURE PENROSE HOUSES

On discovering fire:
- **Raise alarm** - shout FIRE to alert other members of your household, knock on the doors on your way out
- **Dial 999** to call the fire brigade- even if you decide you can tackle the fire it’s important that help is on its way.
- **Call the Emergency Security Number 01784443888** to confirm emergency- they will escort and assist Fire and Rescue Services
- If possible and safe to do so, **tackle the fire** using appliances provided such as fire blanket in your kitchen; do not endanger yourself or others in doing so; always make sure you have a way out, if in any doubt- leave immediately, following steps below:

In the event of a fire alarm sounding:
- **You must leave the building immediately** without delay by the nearest available exit
- **Close all doors** behind you
- **Report to Assembly Point** and call **Emergency Security Number 01784443888**
  Your building is provided with domestic fire detectors. They are not directly connected to the Security receiving centre in Founders. It is important that Security are alerted, so that they can investigate and confirm if it’s safe to return to the building

- **Do not take any risks**
- **Do not stop or return to collect personal belongings**
- **Do not re-enter the building for any reason unless authorised to do so**

Never assume there is no fire. Any time you hear fire alarm evacuate immediately. The only exception is your weekly fire alarm test that will last 15-30 seconds on the same day each week. Fire alarm testing notices are displayed at building’s entrances. Any other day, any other time, any longer than 30 seconds on test day- please get out!

During an emergency you may not be able to re-enter the building for many hours so remember to have some essentials ready to quickly grab & go without delay:
- shoes
- warm clothing
- keys
- phones
- medication
WHAT TO DO IF YOU’RE UNABLE TO EVACUATE THE BUILDING DUE TO SMOKE OR FIRE BLOCKING YOUR ESCAPE ROUTE?

- Move back to your room or another safe room and shut the door.
- Call 999 and explain where you are and what is happening. This will assist the Fire Service to identify there are people requiring rescue within the building. Give them information on your exact location and allow them to provide you with instructions and reassurance.
- Try to stay calm. You may have to wait before trapped persons are rescued, even once the Fire Service arrives.
- Keep call centre operator updated on any changes occurring so they can provide you with instructions.
- When persons are rescued, they may be told to wear specific equipment, e.g. a smoke hood.
- Stay calm and cooperate with the Fire Service by following their instructions.

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENTS

Fire Risk Assessments of your accommodation blocks are conducted by a Competent Person regularly in line with fire safety regulations. A Fire Risk Assessor can request access to any of the flats/dorms/bedrooms adjoining common areas to assess the safety and suitability of fire safety provisions. They will issue you with suitable notice period.

Entry to rooms in accommodation

We also reserve the right to enter your allocated room and/or shared facilities with reasonable notice, or in an emergency situation without notice, to conduct relevant investigations or inspections for property maintenance, or if there is concern about suspected illegal activities being conducted or concern for student safety.

FIRE DOORS

Your accommodation building is provided with multiple fire doors, such as:
- Your bedroom/flat door that opens into common area such as accommodation corridor
- Kitchen/pantry door
- Doors to stairways and stairway lobbies

The list is not exhaustive.

Fire doors within your accommodation play a vital role in protecting your escape route and protecting others in the building by stopping/delaying spread of smoke and fire. They can save lives. Fire doors that are left open or are prevented from fully closing cannot serve their important function. You must never prop/wedge them open. You must never tamper with locks or self-closing devices, or seals installed within the doorset. Remember, you’re responsible not only for your own safety, but also the safety of those who could be affected by your actions.

If you notice a fault/issue/damage to a fire door- please report it to reception as soon as possible, so that the issue can be rectified.

FIRE ESCAPE ROUTES

Fire escape routes- accommodation stairways, corridors, lobbies must never be obstructed by any items. No slip/trip hazards, combustible or flammable materials, or potential sources of ignition are permitted in these areas. If found, they will be removed immediately.
FIRE ALARM AND DETECTION SYSTEM
The Fire Alarm and Detection System installed within your accommodation is tested weekly, and
detectors are interconnected with each other. Take care not to activate the smoke detectors by
mistake e.g., with irons, sprays, or shower steam, cooking.
Please remember: Activating the fire alarm to cause danger or a false alarm is a serious
criminal offence. Offenders can face imprisonment and fines up to £5,000.
Fire safety equipment is provided for the safety of all building users. It is a criminal offence
to prevent equipment being effective— to misuse, cover or damage it.

SMOKING
Smoking/ vaping within all University buildings, including residential buildings, is strictly prohibited.
When smoking outside ensure you are a clear distance (at least 5 metres) from the building to avoid
disturbing other residents or risking activating an alarm. Be respectful and ensure you dispose of
smoking litter appropriately outside. Do not take it back to your room as we may assume you have
been smoking in there and smouldering materials can start fires. If you have a guest in your Halls
remember you are responsible for their behaviour, so please ensure they also follow the rules.

COOKING
When cooking you must always remain in the kitchen or pantry and stay alert. Ensure items are not
left unattended to burn, the fire door is shut, and the window is open or the extractor is on for
ventilation. Ensure all appliances (cookers/toasters/kettles etc.) are turned off after use. Cooking
appliances are not permitted to be used or stored in student bedrooms.

NAKED FLAMES
Burning candles, incense or otherwise exposing naked flame anywhere within Halls is prohibited.

HOUSEKEEPING
You are required to ensure that you keep your room in a condition that does not cause an
unnecessary risk to yourselves or others. Room inspections will be undertaken by your Residential
Team to ensure the areas are not unsafe.

ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES
You are responsible for the electrical equipment you have brought with you and for any harm which
may occur to anyone because of these items. Any equipment must be safe and comply with current
European electrical safety standards. We retain the right of inspection and confiscation of
equipment found to be unsafe or specifically prohibited. Please refer to accommodation terms and
conditions for list of prohibited items.

E-SCOOTERS
Use of E-scooters on campus is prohibited and these must not be stored or charged in University
premises. The majority of fires related to e-bikes and e-scooter have happened in homes. Fire
investigators say blazes are often linked to poor quality, damaged or incorrectly charged lithium
batteries, which can explode if not handled properly. Never block your escape routes with e-bike or
e-scooter. Further advice is available via www.london-fire.gov.uk for e-bike/ e-scooter safety off
campus.
MISCONDUCT

Please respect the fire safety equipment and your fellow residents. Excess alcohol consumption is not an excuse for dangerous or malicious behaviour and misconduct action will be taken if problems occur. For breaches of Hall Rules (including Fire Safety) the Hall Life Team has the power to levy fines and/or instigate bans from College accommodation. If the issue represents a serious breach of College rules (the Student Conduct Regulations), as well as Hall rules (the Terms and Conditions in this document), the matter may be treated as a College Student Misconduct issue. In such cases, in addition to a possible requirement to leave Halls and/or exclusion from residential areas, the student may face a review of their registration at the College.

In order to help you understand how to live safely in your Hall, please watch the video here. It highlights the main fire safety issues for Students. It is less than 5 minutes long and contains some very important information that will help prevent fires and unwanted fire alarm activations.

Your safety is our concern, but we cannot provide a safe environment without your cooperation. Please observe the fire safety rules and help us maintain a safe Campus. If you see anyone putting themselves or others at risk, it is important you report this to Security by calling 01784 44 3063

Thank you for reading and as always- stay safe.

Alex
Aleksandra Walczak
Health & Safety Officer (Fire & Accessibility)
Royal Holloway University of London
If you have any questions or concerns regarding this, please do not hesitate to contact our Health and Safety team at HealthandSafety@rhul.ac.uk