



EMERGENCY EGRESS & EVACUATION GUIDANCE - FOR THOSE REQUIRING SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE

Please note anyone wishing assistance on Disability matters at UCL should contact the appropriate person below in respect to staff or students:

Disability Issues for STUDENTS should be directed to the Disability Co-ordinator in the first place:		Disability Issues for Members of STAFF should be directed to in the first place:	
Student Disability Services www.ucl.ac.uk/students/support-and-wellbeing/disability-support Email: student.wellbeing@ucl.ac.uk		UCL Human Resources	
UCL fire safety team:	fire@ucl.ac.uk		
PEEP forms:	See TN 009 - www.ucl.ac.uk/fire		

1. Introduction to Evacuation Planning for People with Disabilities

- 1.1. The Fire Safety Order 2005 requires Employers to provide suitable evacuation procedures for people with disabilities, pregnant mothers and those with health conditions that make it difficult to self-evacuate in the event of an emergency. This includes the provision of refuges¹, communications, fire warning systems and training for staff as far as reasonably practicable.
- 1.2. To assist in understanding the individual person's emergency egress needs, UCL has developed a simple guide and assessment tool to be used by Head of Departments and their staff to develop an agreed individual strategy for emergency egress. The agreed procedures with individual and departmental responsibilities are formally set out in the form of a **Personal Emergency Egress Plan (PEEP)**. Reference A, includes a PEEP Template.

2. Heads of Department (HoD) Responsibilities

- 2.1. The Head of Department is responsible for the completion of an emergency egress risk assessment in respect of staff employed within their department and that the following actions are carried out:

¹ **Refuge** - area that is both separated by fire-resisting construction and provided with a safe route to a storey exit, thus constituting a temporarily safe space.

- (a). The HoD (*or a manager acting on their behalf**) to carry out an assessment and formulate an agreed PEEP with individual parties as soon as reasonably practicable upon notification that a person is or will be employed within the department and who may require support to evacuate in an emergency.
- **Staff** - in the case of an existing member of staff already employed within the department this must be undertaken as soon as a disability or mobility impairment or need disclosed that requires the development of a PEEP.
 - **Staff** - in the case of a new member of staff joining the department this must be undertaken prior to them taking up their role, wherever possible, and no later than the end of the first week of their induction.
- (b). In carrying out an assessment and formulating an agreed PEEP the HoD (*or manager**) can seek advice and guidance from the HR the main contact for disabled staff and their managers at UCL and will find information on disabled egress from the building's emergency plan. *Specific building plans are available through the UCL Fire Safety Manager*
- (c). The HoD (*or manager**), should submit the agreed PEEP to the UCL Fire Safety Manager for an assurance check that it is a workable plan.
- (d). The HoD (*or manager**), must carry out a review of an agreed PEEP with individual parties, on an annual basis, and or as part of the regular local fire safety training familiarisation arrangements (fire technical note form **TN086**).
- (e). The HoD is responsible for ensuring that proper procedures are pre-planned and that staff have received instruction in, and practised, the procedures adopted for the safe evacuation set out in the PEEP.

2.2. **Undergraduate and Graduate Students** - students at UCL attend many of their teaching seminars and lectures at centrally timetabled teaching facilities and therefore, it is unreasonable to expect the Head of the Department in which a student is registered to be responsible for the safe egress of a student with a PEEP from the wider campus.

- Help and guidance is available from **UCL Student Support and Wellbeing** based on the first floor the Student Centre.

3. General Planning Considerations

3.1. If working in or visiting the ground floor of a building, people a PEEP should be able to make their way out of the building, with facilities provided that allow them to do this.

- 3.2. For teaching purposes, each department's management **MUST** make every effort to locate persons with a PEEP (*but particularly persons with mobility impairments or who are wheelchair users*) in order to expedite their egress in the event of an emergency, as near the ground floor level as possible.
- 3.3. Currently, there are only a few lifts provided in UCL buildings that meet the design criteria to be used for emergency evacuation by people with mobility impairments. Any lift and refuges used for emergency evacuation should meet the guidance set out in *British Standard BS 9999-2017: Annex G - fire safety in the design, management and use of buildings - code of practice*.
- 3.4. If people with a PEEP are situated in the basement or upper floors of a building and are unable to make their way out using 'horizontal evacuation' into an adjoining building then, they may need to use 'Refuges' whilst waiting for help to move from the refuge to safety. **However, these areas should only be used as a last resort and all other options should be considered first.**
- 3.5. There is a real need in emergencies for Fire Evacuation Marshals, line managers and colleagues to provide reassurance and assistance to deaf and disabled persons who may become distressed during an incident.
- 3.6. **Assistance / Buddies** - departments should always allocate staff or students with PEEPs, an FEM or helper to assist them during an emergency and to accompany them when using a refuge and to a place of safety.
- 3.7. **Lifts** - all lifts ground on activation of the fire alarm and generally **cannot be used for evacuation initially** so you should not rely on them on your initial planning on their use.
- In some locations there are lifts that may be of assistance but specialist advice will be required.
- 3.8. **Evacuation Chairs** - provision of patented types of evacuation chairs to assist in the evacuation of disabled people should be considered. Whilst the provision of these chairs may assist in the evacuation disabled people, it should be **brought to the attention of departmental management and others** who have such responsibilities, that the following matters require consideration:
- (a). Both people using the chair and the operatives working the chair should be properly trained in their use, in order to avoid accidents and to maintain adequate safety for other users of the stairs. This will require sufficient numbers of staff to be trained in the use of, handling and lifting in to and out of chairs, as well as Manual Handling Risk Assessment and specific training in lifting correctly, which can be arranged through the *UCL Safety Services*.

- (b). The emergency egress assessment may indicate that some wheelchair users **are reluctant to be placed in these chairs** and would prefer to stay in their own chair.
- (c). There should be available at all times the individual is within the department, sufficient and suitable trained staff to supervise and operate these chairs.
- (d). The storage of the chairs must be such as to ensure that they do not obstruct the means of escape under normal circumstances and be convenient for use by nominated staff.
- (e). Inevitably, the use of such a chair will restrict the use of the route for means of escape by others. In order to minimise the problem of congestion on escape stairs and routes, those using the chairs should begin to evacuate from a 'Refuge', after allowing the bulk of the occupants of the building to pass before themselves, moving down the escape route. This is for the safety of:
 - (1). the occupant of the chair;
 - (2). people assisting and;
 - (3). other building occupants using the same stair;
- (f). **Stairs** conditions - can only be used to go down suitable stairs, chairs need to be matched to the stair treads they are being used on, staff training required (both chair use and manual handling and lifting), purchase cost and ongoing maintenance contract required).
- (g). **Basement or going up stairs** - chairs do not work for basement evacuation or up flights of stairs / steps (*a stair climber needed to go up, very expensive, large and need to be stored and charges in a suitable location that may not be in the stair due to fire safety issues*).
- (h). **Evacuation mattress** - may be a simple and easier mode to assist agreeable to potential users.

3.9. **Automatic opening doors** - once again advice need to be sought as there are a number of considerations that need to be taken in to account:

- **Fire doors** - will have restriction and cannot be restricted or interfered with and must have suitable overriding controls on how and when they open (see fire safety technical note TN001).
- Different solutions (*electromagnetic hold open doors, power operated doors etc*).
- *Security systems - is Gallagher systems fitted to doors?*

- Position of doors how they operate will need to be considered?
- What happens if the door fails, cost of converting doors and ongoing maintenance and misuse.

4. Further Information

- 4.1. **TN009** has been designed for members of staff and students who require assistance in emergency evacuation from a building, either permanently or temporarily. In addition, it helps to extract information for the HoD and their staff with regard to suitability of facilities, as well as helping in highlighting the person's specific needs. This assessment will assist in identifying the suitability of the UCL buildings, equipment and procedures to meet the specific needs in respect of emergency evacuation.

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP):

- 4.2. A PEEP is a summary of discussions, management procedures and practical assistance resulting from the 'Assessment of Emergency Evacuation Planning' can be found at Annex 1 (TN009), this will then form the basis of the PEEP.
- 4.3. The initial assessment should enable suitable management, practical and physical arrangements to be identified, which can then be implemented by the individual, UCL Departments, Estates, the Student Accommodation or any other interested parties.
- 4.4. **TN009** is to be used to assess the suitability of work areas for staff or the study, teaching and living space used by students at the UCL.

5. General Principles of Evacuating Premises with People Who Require Support and Assistance

Definitions:

- 5.1. **Refuge** - an area that is both separated from fire, by fire-resisting construction and provided with a safe route to a storey exit, thus constituting a temporarily safe space for disabled persons to await assistance for their evacuation.
- Some buildings due to their design (*particularly older Georgian style properties*) have limited access and no protected spaces to form a refuge.
 - If a safe refuge cannot be provided to protect vulnerable occupants during fire incidents then that the building or particular floors are non-accessible.
- 5.2. Impairments or disabilities that will need to be considered when assessing emergency evacuation procedures and which generally fall into one or more

of the following categories (*this list is by no means exhaustive and some people may have multiple access needs*):

- **Hearing impairment** - affecting a person's ability to hear or react to the emergency warning systems or instructions (i.e. the activation of the fire alarm or instructions given as part of the emergency procedures).
- **Visual impairment** - affecting a person's ability to identify escape routes, directional information, instructions, objects or hazards in such a way as to reduce the evacuation time of these persons.
- **Physical or mobility impairment** - affecting a person's ability independently to leave the premises or negotiate structural elements including stairs, steps, doors and fire doors etc.
- **Intellectual impairment (Neurodiversity)** – affecting a person's ability to understand emergency information.
- **Pregnancy** - may in some case provided mobility restriction, which will need to be taken into account.

6. Centrally Timetabled Seminar and Lecture Theatres

6.1. The accessibility of centrally timetabled lecture theatres and seminar rooms have been graded as follows:

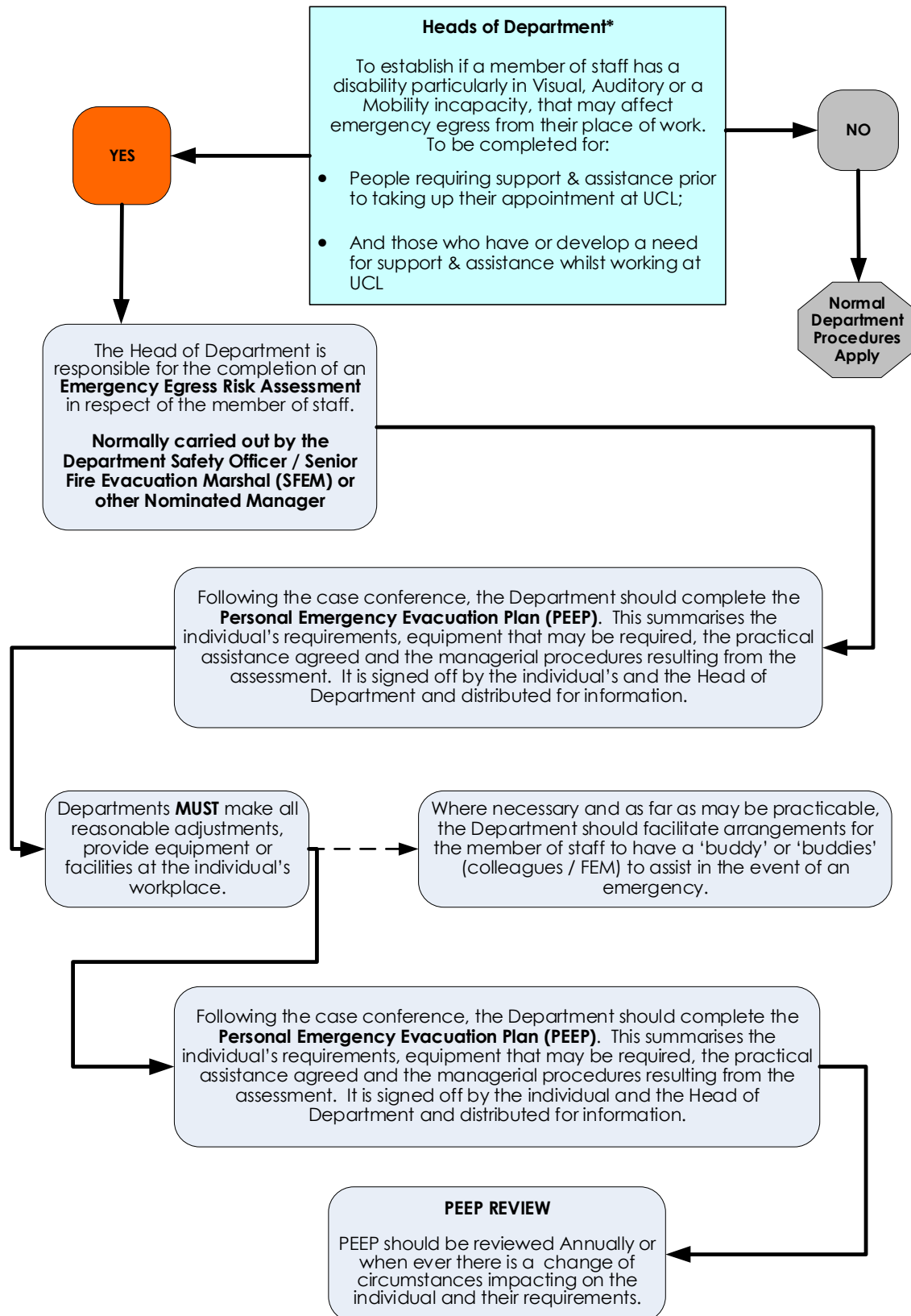
- **None** - no disabled access or egress available.
- **Limited** - emergency egress requires management and other assistance (*such as a buddies or helper*), should be planned and written up on PEEP.
- **Accessible** - access and egress available due to design without requiring assistance from someone else and where it is practical to self-escape.

6.2. This information is provided in the **Building Fire Safety Handbook** (FSHB) or the older building emergency plan, against those centrally timetable rooms in the premises - see the fire safety web page (www.ucl.ac.uk/fire).

7. Communications

- 7.1. At each Refuge, a suitable form of communication will be provided. This will take the form of a specially designed system of either:
- (a). **Big button telephone** - these units are specifically designed with large buttons, figures and hearing loop technology.
 - (b). **Emergency Voice Communication System (EVCS)** - these units will be found in larger and newer buildings conforming to BS 5839 Part 9. They have communication boxes specifically designed for emergency use by disabled persons located in the refuge.
 - (c). **EVCS units** - it should be noted that there is likely to be time delay in answering the call until the fire brigade / or UCL security arrive at the premises.
- 7.2. **Contact information** - at all telephone points, relevant instructions will be provided detailing contact telephone numbers at the UCL Security Control Room (24/7) and local assistance (building reception / security or department offices etc). Where communication boxes have been used, instructions on their use will be provided.

Flowchart for the Preparation of Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans



Flowchart for the Preparation of Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP)
*Head of Department (or Nominated Manager)