

Qequality

Promoting Quality Service for Disabled People

University of Sheffield

Means of Escape for Disabled People Manual

Preparing a “Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan” (PEEP)

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Part A Organisation and Philosophy

1.0 Legislation and Compliance

The Fire Service's role in the issue of Fire Evacuation is primarily that of prevention of fires. It is the responsibility of the building manager to provide a Risk Assessment for the building, which includes a means of escape plan for all people including disabled people. In the case of multi-occupancy buildings the responsibility lays with the building manager for each occupying organisation. This could present a particular problem in multi occupancy buildings when the different escape strategies need to be coordinated at a central point.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) does not make any change to these requirements, it underpins Fire Legislation by requiring that employers or organisations providing services to the public have to take responsibility for ensuring that all people including disabled people can leave the building safely in the event of a fire.

Where an employer or a service provider does not make provision for the safe egress of disabled people from its premises, this may amount to discrimination.

Also, Public Bodies will have an additional duty, called the Disability Equality Duty DED, which from December 2006 will require them to proactively promote the equality of disabled people. This will require them to do even more to ensure that disabled people do not face discrimination by not being provided with a safe egress plan from a building.

This document provides guidance on how Sheffield University can ensure the safe egress of disabled people from their premises.

2.0 What the University needs to do

2.1 Appoint people to carry out roles:

- Disability & Dyslexia Support Services – Make initial contact with students requiring a PEEP.
- Personnel Department – Make initial contact with staff requiring a PEEP.
- All Departments – Trained representatives in each department to produce a PEEP for each individual requiring one with assistance as necessary.
- Estates Services – Ensure disabled contractors have suitable plans.
- Accommodation Manager – Ensure residents have suitable plans, day and night.
- Reception – Offer plan to visitors.
- Events - Booking administration.

2.2 Train people to carry out the roles

A number of training courses are to be held each year in order to ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities. Contact Safety Services for details.

2.3 Identify the disabled people using the building and provide a plan

The people responsible for this are detailed in 3.

2.4 Provide information to disabled people

Relevant information can be found in the following documents:

- Prospectus/Student Handbook
- Marketing material
- Handouts
- Booking forms
- Web

2.5 Generic Fire Safety plan for disabled people

- There is a fire safety plan for each building and this includes information for disabled people.
- Information about the systems in each building will be provided on the web.

2.6 Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP)

- Provide a personal plan for all people who have disclosed a disability who need additional measures or assistance to get out of the building in an emergency.

2.7 Assess the Risk and make provision

- Consideration should be given to ensure that all activities and lectures are held in the most suitable places, where effective escape plan can be planned and implemented.
- Room booking should consider the issue of means of escape, and where necessary priority should be given to groups with disabled people to rooms where there is suitable provision for unaided escape.

2.8 Building adaptations

- In exceptional circumstances and where it is deemed reasonable it may be necessary to make physical changes to the building to facilitate suitable escape.

3.0 Organisation and roles

3.1 Safety Services will provide:

- The Coordinating role.
- Standard plans for each building with assistance from Estates
- Assistance to people generating the PEEP
- Training for staff involved in the PEEP

3.2 Estates Services will:

- Provide technical information about each building to those people designated to prepare a PEEP. (Liaising with Safety Services)
- Undertake training to understand about fire safety and the needs of disabled people.
- Maintain facilities identified as necessary for the escape of disabled persons in a fit and proper condition.

3.3 Academic Departments

The Head of each Department is responsible for the staff and students in their department and will arrange the provision of the Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans for each student and member of staff requiring a plan. It may be necessary to provide a plan for each building and room that they visit. In order to do this they should liaise with Safety Services and Estates Services, Student Services and HR.

It is important that staff and student welfare is monitored and appropriate changes are made to PEEPs when required.

The Safety Reps, relevant staff and Fire Marshall's will require training. Contact Safety Services for details.

3.4 Executive level - the University will:

- Provide corporate Health and Safety expertise
- Oversee that the fire safety system and training is implemented through the various departments involved
- provide adequate facilities and funding

3.5 Building Management - the University will, via Portering or Department Representative:

- Provide information to disabled visitors
- Provide assistance in the evacuation if involved in a PEEP
- Undertake training
- Provide disabled visitors with a plan as part of the arrangements for them to visit the building. The person they are visiting will be responsible for organising this.

3.6 Student Service

Student Services are most likely to have the initial contact with disabled students, and will assist in the provision of an escape plan – where trained in evacuation techniques, and:

- Provide 'new starter' questionnaire
- Provide information to disabled students
- Liaise with Safety Services and Academic Departments to ensure PEEP's are produced for disabled students
- Generally liaise with and monitor the welfare of disabled students.
- Inform Safety Services of alterations in a students situation requiring altered arrangement for assisted escape

3.7 Human Resources Department will:

- Provide 'new starter' questionnaires to members of staff
- Provide information to disabled staff
- Liaise with Safety Services and Academic Departments to ensure PEEP's are produced for disabled staff
- Generally liaise with and monitor the welfare of disabled members of staff.

3.8 Accommodation Services

It will be necessary for Accommodation Services to provide suitable plans for the students who are living on campus. Suitable rooms for students who require assisted escape should be identified.

3.9 Conference Organisers

Conference Organisers will be responsible for ensuring that disabled people attending conferences either for the University or Private functions are provided with a relevant plan, and will

- Advertise the facility on marketing information
- Include relevant questions on booking forms
- Provide, as part of means of escape, procedures to be read out at beginning of meetings and seminars.

3.10 Adaptations

Only where reasonable, essential, and subject to funding will alterations be made to buildings.

4.0 Needs of Disabled People

4.1 Information provided by Safety Services on Fire Safety and means of escape must be made available to disabled people as a part of the support services and advice given by the Student Services or HR Department. Care should be taken that this is provided in an accessible format. This will help to ensure that where necessary disabled people request a suitable plan.

4.2 Avoidance of nuisance

Disabled people will not be expected to take part in fire drills where this may pose a risk to their health and safety. The University will make alternative arrangements to ensure that their means of escape plan is acceptable; however, the alternative arrangements should be practiced to ensure their suitability in an emergency.

4.3 Confidence in the procedure

All steps will be taken to ensure that disabled people using the University are confident in the plan provided and that their escape plan is correct and that sufficient cover is available to provide assistance.

4.4 Visitors to the Building

The person who is responsible for inviting the disabled person to the building has the responsibility of ensuring that suitable escape plans are provided.

Part B

Preparing a PEEP's Plan (Personal Emergency Egress Plan)

5.0 Preparing the plan

5.1 Send out initial letter

See proforma plan Appendix 11

5.2 Consult Matrix questionnaire

This gives options for different types of escape that disabled people may wish to use. It forms a starting point for discussions with disabled persons.

5.3 Notify Estates Services

Sometimes it will be necessary to make alterations to the building. Where this is the case Estates Services will need to be informed. For example:

- a) signage
- b) additional handrails
- c) step edge markings
- d) ramps
- e) stair lifts

5.4 Notify Safety Services

Contact Safety Services in order to obtain advice regarding existing fire escape strategies and to agree proposed method of PEEP.

5.5 Communicate the plan

The following people need to know about the plan:

- a) The disabled person to whom the plan is relevant
- b) Anyone else in the department who may need to know, e.g. Disability Liaison Officer, Fire Marshall, Lecturers, Pastoral carers,
- c) Porters if involved in assisting with the evacuation
- d) Student Services or HR Department as appropriate
- e) Safety Services
- f) Friends of the Disabled Person if involved in the Escape Plan

5.6 Training

Ensure that suitable training is provided to all of those who are involved.

5.7 Review the plan

Review the plan each 6 month or as required, and if the circumstances change, e.g.

- need for additional assistance
- change of location
- change to the building
- change to the department or departmental staff

6.0 Information Gathering

6.1 Meet the disabled person

Once a disabled person has been identified as requiring a plan, an interview should be organised to establish the evacuation procedures for each building they will visit.

6.2 Recognise the person's ability to help themselves

The matrix provides options that can be used by each person and selected options should be put into the PEEP plan alongside the fire safety information about each building. See section 6.3

Most disabled people will have a clear idea of what assistance is needed to get out of a building. In some instances the person will be able to facilitate their own escape where suitable aids and adaptations have been provided. The person working with the disabled person to write the plan should not make assumptions and must provide the disabled person with the information they need to determine the best options.

6.3 Identify the facilities available to facilitate escape

These can be any of the following:

- a) advance fire detection system
- b) hearing impaired fire alarm system
- c) evacuation lift fitted
- d) can the ordinary lifts be used – buildings with horizontal escape
- e) refuge area with communication system
- f) other designated areas to be used as meeting points during the escape procedure
- g) horizontal evacuation - movement to a safe area within another section of the building (large buildings only)
- h) escape stairs
- i) emergency exits and escape routes
- j) Fire Marshal identified and designated

6.4 Use of refuges

Where refuges are to be used as a part of the escape plan it is important to ensure that the staff who are designated to use them are aware of the refuge options available. This information can be obtained through Safety Services.

7.0 Establishing the suitable method of escape

7.1 Mobility Impairment

When writing a plan with someone who has mobility impairment, or who uses a wheelchair, the following information should be provided to them:

- Which routes have handrails provided
- How far the distance is to travel on particular routes
- The degree of compartmentalisation within the building and whereabouts
- The provision of evacuation chairs
- Which staircases are provided with handrails and what side of the stair they are situated on
- Whereabouts and opportunity to use lifts
- What staff assistance may be available

Questions to ask during the interview:

- How far can you walk unaided?
- Can you walk aided / unaided down the stairs
- Can you slide down stairs?
- How many flights can you manage?
- Would this be increased where assistance were made available?
- How many people would you need to assist you?
- How many times might they need to stop to rest?
- Would handrails be of use in assisting your escape?
- Are there positions along the escape route where handrails or other aids might assist you?
- How might your mobility be worsened, e.g. by smoke, etc.?
- Is your wheelchair electric powered, or manual?

Once this process has taken place, some people will decide that they can facilitate their own escape using those systems within the building. Others will decide that they require assistance from one or more people.

7.2 Hearing Impairment

Hearing impaired and Deaf people need to know that there is an escape in progress. Where an audible only alarm system is present they may not be able to hear the information. However, if sound enhancement systems are provided within the building it may be possible to transmit the message through that system, e.g. hearing loop or radio paging receiver.

The preferred options to alert hearing impaired people that an evacuation is about to occur are the use of flashing beacons installed as a part of the alarm system or by the use of a paging system. However, this cannot always be provided. Where this is not possible, there is a range of other auxiliary aids to provide this information.

Information required

When writing a plan with someone who has a hearing impairment or who is Deaf, information on the availability of the following equipment should be obtained:

- Visual Alarm System
- MSN Text Messaging
- Office Intranet
- Telephone Network – text-phone
- Vibrating Pager
- Team Member
- Fire Wardens
- Appointed Buddy
- Local Beacon

All pagers and other equipment should be tested regularly to ensure that they work.

Staff training

Where other staff are expected to alert hearing impaired or Deaf people that they need to leave the building, they should be trained in Deaf awareness. Often floor wardens sweep the building to ensure that there is no one left on the floor. These staff can be trained to look for signs that a hearing-impaired person is present who may not have heard the alarm. Typically this may occur in single offices, libraries, toilet accommodation or changing rooms. Fire wardens should not expect that a vocal call is sufficient.

Staff should also be aware that when a person does not react in a logical manner during the escape procedure that they may not have heard the alarm. Shouting louder is unlikely to be the answer. It may be necessary to walk right up to the person and explain with signs or even a written note or pre-prepared short written instruction about what is happening.

Fire instructions

It should also be recognised that many hearing impaired and Deaf people do not have English as a first language. It is important that a Plain English translation of the fire protocol is provided. It may also be an advantage to this group of people for pictogram to be provided to support the written information. Deaf people may prefer to have instructions explained to them through a BSL interpreter.

There are additional issues to consider when writing a plan for a hearing impaired or Deaf person.

The interview

The following information should be given to a Deaf person when writing their plan:

- The systems that are available to advise them of an evacuation e.g. alarm beacon, pager, personal contact etc.
- Technical operation of fire alarms, how to raise the alarm, how to contact the CONTROL Room

Ensure they are aware of the evacuation procedures- where to go, alternative routes and where to report to after evacuation.

The following questions should be asked when writing the plan:

- Do you work alone in the building?
- Do you work out of hours?
- Can you hear the alarm?
- Do you work as part of a team or in a group office environment?
- Do you have a dedicated text number?
- Do you have an email address?
- Are you likely to move around the building?

Lone working

Care should be taken to ensure that Deaf or hard of hearing people who are working alone in a building know what is happening. In these instances, it may be imperative that a visual alarm system or vibrating paging system is installed.

This is also important where a person is working out of hours where they may be no other hearing people available to advise them that there is an emergency evacuation in progress. Remember the evacuation system may be used for other purposes other than fire alone.

The working hours or working flexibility of hearing impaired or Deaf member of staff should not be restricted because inadequate provision for safe evacuation has been made. Such restrictions, if made without full consideration of reasonable adjustments, may amount to unlawful discrimination.

Example: A senior manager who is deaf is required to work late and be in the office early on occasions. The office has a twenty-four hour security presence and it is necessary for all staff to sign in and out at the security point. An arrangement is made that should an alarm be raised out of hours when the manager was present, the security guard would contact the manager on their text phone to alert them of the emergency. This was built into the instruction manual for all security staff on means of escape procedures

7.3 Visually Impaired and Blind People

People who are visually impaired are facilitated to escape by provision of good signage and other orientation clues. It should be noted that most visually impaired people have some sight and that they will be able to use this during the escape in order to make their own way out of the building as a part of the crowd. Where the physical circumstances are appropriate they will have no problems leaving the building.

Some organisations will not have made provision to provide specialist orientation information, for example: tactile information and audio signals. Use can be made of existing elements within the building that might help a visually impaired people to facilitate their own evacuation, this could be good colour contrasting, handrails on escape stairs, step edge markings on escape stairs or way finding information. Where orientation clues

are provided, these will further reduce the need for assistance. However, there will still be a need to inform visually impaired people of the presence of these via the PEEP.

Where there is a lack of orientation information, staff assistance is necessary to provide the guidance out of the building.

Orientation information

Improving circulation and orientation information can be of great benefit. Logical routes to escape stairs will not only assist visually impaired people but will be of benefit to all users of the building. Good colour definition and accessible signage will help visually impaired people to use the building. Extending these systems to include the escape routes can reduce the need for assisted escape.

A visually impaired person might not easily locate the exit signs and may not be aware of the travel direction to get out of the building, but they may remember their way out along the route that they entered the building. Using the escape routes as part of the general circulation space within the building will mean that visually impaired people will become more familiar with these routes and will therefore have more options for making their escape.

Fire instructions

Visually impaired people in general are not able to read the fire escape instructions provided in most buildings, as these are often in very small typefaces. Suitable instructions should be made available in Braille, large print or on audio-tape. It can be useful to provide a tactile map of the escape routes and to provide orientation training to visually impaired staff working in the building, so that they are more aware of the options for escape.

Staff responsibility

Visitors to the building are unlikely to spend time alone. Rather than provide a focussed means of escape plan for each individual person a philosophy should be adopted that gives staff the responsibility to ensure that their visitors leave the building safely whether or not they have a disability. This would be preferable to providing extensive and unappreciated escape training to the casual visitor.

Keeping route safe

Some other simple measures can be adapted to facilitate visually impaired people in making their escape. They may have difficulty in stairways where there are open risers and these should be avoided in escape routes. Where these are present then there may be a need for assistance or adaptations to the stairs to make them safer. Alternative a different stairway may be available.

When office furniture is rearranged, it is important that where escape routes are affected these changes are documented and made known to visually impaired people in the building.

The Interview

When writing a plan with someone who has a visual impairment, the following information should be obtained:

- What type of alarm system is available?
- Are the escape routes clearly marked?
- Is there sufficient orientation information?
- Are fire instructions provided in accessible formats?
- Are the step edge markings on the escape stairs?
- Are there handrails on the escape stairs?
- Are risers closed?
- Are there external open steel escape routes?

The questions that should be asked are:

- Do you work alone in the building?
- Do you work out of hours?
- Can you hear the alarm?
- Are you aware of the positions of all of the escape routes?
- Can you follow the escape routes unaided?
- Do you work as part of a team or in a group office environment?
- Are you likely to move around the building?
- Can you read the escape instructions? If not what format do you need them in?

7.4 People with Cognitive Disabilities

People with cognitive disabilities often have problems comprehending what is happening in escape conditions, or may not have the same perceptions of risk as non-disabled people. Provision of good orientation within the building.

There may be reluctance by some to take an unknown route from the building. Some people with cognitive disabilities may fall into the group of unknown disabilities, such as dyslexia, dyspraxia and autism, and may not be aware of the problem. The PEEP's system should be used to give the opportunity to understand the possible need for choice and direction change during an escape.

Orientation information

Orientation information and colour coding of escape routes can also provide a useful tool and practicing the route options can dramatically reduce the requirement for staff assistance. Practice is essential for this group of people, especially in situations where one person is responsible for a number of others, say, in a classroom situation. Use of escape routes for general circulation is an advantage.

Fire Instructions

This group of people may need to have the escape plan read and explained to them. A video explaining what to do can also be an advantage. A photographic explanation of the route can also be useful.

Rather than merely asking what this group of people needs it may be more relevant to ask what they understand and to develop the plan based on how they will find the escape routes.

Other factors

Sometimes they will move more slowly than the main flow and there may be a need for a slow and fast lane in the escape stair.

It is important to understand that not every person with a cognitive impairment will have a carer or helper with them, so efforts should always be made to enable the disabled person to understand how to leave the building rather than assuming that a carer or helper will take this role.

It may not be possible to tell that a person has a disability that affects their ability to orientate themselves around the building, and staff should be tactful when assisting a person who may seem lost during an escape.

The interview

When writing a plan with someone who has a cognitive impairment, the following information should be obtained:

- What type of alarm system is available?
- Are the escape routes clearly marked?
- Is there sufficient orientation information?
- Are fire instructions provided in accessible formats?
- Are the step edge markings on the escape stairs?
- Are there handrails on the escape stairs?
- Is it likely that there will be a need for two speed traffic on the stair? If so, are they wide enough to allow this?
- Are risers closed?
- Are there external open steel escape routes?

The questions that should be asked are:

- Do you work alone in the building?
- Do you work out of hours?
- Do you know what the alarm sounds like?
- When you hear the alarm do you know where to go?
- Do you work as part of a team or in a group office environment?
- Are you likely to move around the building?
- Can you read the escape instructions? Do you understand them? If not what format do you need them in?

7.5 Unknown Requirements

It should not be assumed that because a person has a disability they will need or ask for a PEEP. Some will be confident that they can get out of the building unaided. Conversely there should also be an opportunity for other people who may not be considered as having a disability to request an escape plan. All staff in a building should be given the opportunity to have a confidential discussion about their escape requirements and be clear that, if they need help, it will be provided. The Service Provider should adopt an approach that enables people to ask for a plan, when needed without them feeling it will affect the provision of that service to them in any other way.

One group who may find themselves in the category of unknown requirement are people with epilepsy. Many will be able to leave the building unaided, but many employers and service providers may not know this. There can be a lack of understanding about the condition and managers may assume that the person will have a seizure at the first sign of the fire alarm going off and therefore be lying in a room alone and no one knows where they are. This is very unlikely and the general practice for fire wardens sweeping each floor will cover this small possibility.

8.0 Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix I Matrix of Options
- 8.2 Appendix II Pro-forma Letter
- 8.3 Appendix III New starter questionnaire
- 8.4 Appendix IVa Pro-forma PEEP's Option 1
- 8.5 Appendix IVb Pro-forma PEEP's Option 2

8.1 Appendix 1

Options Matrix

Option	Type of escape	Electric Wheelchair user	Wheelchair user	Mobility impaired person	Asthma and other breathing/health issues	Visually impaired person	Hearing impaired person	Dyslexic/Orientation disorders	Learning difficulty / Autism	Mental health problems	Dexterity problems
1	Use of lift	*	*	*	*						*
2	Meet assistance at refuge		*	*		*				*	
3	Meet assistance at work station	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
4	Make own way down stairs slowly	*	*	*	*	*					
5	Move down stairs on bottom after main flow	*	*	*	*						
6	Use evacuation chair or similar	*	*	*	*						
7	Carry down 2 people	*	*	*	*						
8	Carry down 3 people	*	*	*	*						
9	Carry down 4 people	*	*	*	*						
10	Travel down in own chair with support		*								
11	Cannot transfer readily	*	*								
12	Can get down stairs using handrails	*	*	*	*	*			*		

Option	Type of escape	Electric Wheelchair user	Wheelchair user	Mobility impaired person	Asthma and other breathing/ health issues	Visually impaired person	Hearing impaired person	Dyslexic/ Orientation disorders	Learning difficulty / Autism	Mental health problems	Dexterity problems
13	Needs assistance to walk down stairs 1 person	*	*	*	*	*			*	*	*
14	Needs assistance to walk down stairs 2 person	*	*	*	*	*			*	*	*
15	Need orientation information						*	*	*	*	
16	Need a tactile map of the building					*					
17	Need colour contrasting on stairways						*	*	*	*	
18	Needs step edge markings			*		*		*			
19	Needs showing escape routes						*	*	*	*	
20	Needs assistance for person and dog					*	*				
21	Needs doors opening										*
22	Large print information					*		*	*		
23	Identification of escape route by reception/ security					*	*	*			
24	Provision of flashing beacons						*				

Option	Type of escape	Electric Wheelchair user	Wheelchair user	Mobility impaired person	Asthma and other breathing/ health issues	Visually impaired person	Hearing impaired person	Dyslexic/ Orientation disorders	Learning difficulty / Autism	Mental health problems	Dexterity problems
25	Buddy system						*		*		
26	Provision vibrating pagers	*	*	*			*				
27	Provision of alternative alarm system	*	*	*			*				
28	Additional checks by fire wardens						*	*		*	
29	Horizontal evacuation	*	*	*							
31	Use of refuge	*	*	*	*	*					
32	Need for taped information					*					

Assisted / Facilitated Escape Options

This section explains what each option shown in the matrix is. In order to use the matrix look at the option of escape suggested for each disability type. The corresponding number in this section gives additional information on this type of escape. The two can be used together as a part of the planning process for each person's PEEP.

1. Use of an evacuation lift

Four buildings within the University are provided with an evacuation lift. These are:

- Arts Tower
- Hadfield Building
- Hicks Building
- Husband Building

During a fire alarm scenario all lifts in the building that is in alarm condition will return to ground floor and park. Where an Evacuation lifts is provided disabled people should make their way to the lift point and use the communication system to contact the lift operator so that they are aware of the floor that they are waiting on. There is also a refuge communication system whereby the CONTROL ROOM can be contacted directly by the disabled person to inform them that they are in a refuge, usually adjacent to the evacuation lift.

In buildings where horizontal escape is used prior to exit in an ordinary lift, the instructions for horizontal escape should be followed first.

2. Meet assistance at a refuge

Some disabled people are not able to facilitate their own escape and will require assisted escape. In these cases it will be necessary to have a prior arranged meeting place. If the disabled person is likely to move around the building, a communication process will be necessary between the escape volunteer and the disabled person so that they can arrange to meet at a particular refuge point during the escape. There are refuge points available at the head of the stairs in the following buildings:

- **XXXXXX**
- **XXXXXX**
- **XXXXX**

3. Meet assistance at work station

Some people will need to meet their assistance at their own workstation e.g. an adjacent worker (buddy system). In this instance the allocated escape volunteer should go straight to the disabled person's workstation at the beginning of the escape. so they can evacuate together.

4. Make own way down stairs slowly

Even people some people who use wheelchairs may be able to make their own way down the stairs if they have a little mobility. It may be necessary to ensure that there are suitable handrails and step edge markings present. This is preferable as people can leave the building by their own efforts thereby reducing the chance of confusion.

Disabled People who choose this independent method of escape are likely to move slowly down the stair and it may be better for them to follow the main flow of people down the building. Evacuation stairs have a fire-protected shaft, which will be safe for up to 30mins. **Most of the academic building complex's that will take time to evacuate will have 30mins protected fire routes and stair shafts.** This greatly enhances the escape time, especially when fire alarm systems have advanced fire detection. However it is still important for building occupiers to keep fire doors shut and observe good housekeeping practices when occupying buildings.

Where this escape method is chosen it is important that this become part of the PEEP plan and recorded and monitored should there be a problem during the escape. The assistant should ask a member of staff to inform a Responsible Person / Fire Service at the main entrance **(or CONTROL ROOM?)** that a disabled person is slowly making their way out of the building.

5. Move down stairs on shuffling on bottom after main flow

In the same way that some people will prefer to take responsibility for their own escape by walking down the stairs others may prefer to have that responsibility and make their own way out by shuffling on their bottom. Again it will be best for this group of people to follow after the main flow of people. Where ever possible progress should be monitored.

6. Use an evacuation chair

Where this is the preferred method of escape the University will provide an evacuation chair. it will be allocated to a particular person and either kept along side their desk or in the most suitable refuge close to them.

In the case of a visitor who requests this method of escape the person who is responsible for booking them into the building should contact the Departmental Safety Officer to arrange for one to be brought to the building by the Portering service for the duration of their stay. It should then be returned to the central storage point.

7-9. Carry down

There are a number of carry-down techniques using 2, 3 or 4 people. Where a disabled person wishes to be carried out either using their own wheelchair or other method, a suitable team should be brought together and trained to take the person out safely. There are several commercial kits available to help with this evacuation technique. The appointed person (?) would require training.

10. Travel down in own chair with support

Some wheelchair users are strong and skilled enough to tip their chairs on their axis and travel down the stairs in this way. Others can do this with assistance. Where this method of escape is considered expert training will be required and the technique should be practiced regularly. Again, the escape should follow the main flow of people leaving the building.

11. Cannot readily transfer

Some people will find it difficult or impossible to transfer from their chairs into an evacuation chair **or other evacuation aid.** These people may require a hoist to assist with

this movement. The process can be quite difficult and suitable training is required. It may be appropriate that where possible this group's educational needs are met by allocating rooms in building where there is an opportunity for horizontal movement or for evacuation via lift. Priority to book accessible space should be given to Departments who have a disabled student who cannot readily transfer to evacuation aids, in order that they have access to teaching rooms in buildings that have evacuation lifts or horizontal transfer.

12. Can get down stairs using handrails

Some people will be able to make their own escape but will require a handrail to support them to get out of the building. This will be either to the right or left of the stairs. Some will not be able to use the right and others the left. Once you have established they require a handrail, check all staircases in the buildings in which they work to ensure that suitable handrails are provided. Where no suitable handrails are provided in a particular stair this information should be passed to Safety Services who will ensure that Estates Services are informed.

13-14. Needs assistance from 1 or 2 people

Some people will require a "buddy" to assist them out of the building. Some will be happy to organise this themselves on a casual basis. If this is the case, check that they will always be in a group of their peers or regular teaching staff. If not, then it may be necessary to establish a formal procedure for times when they are likely to be alone, e.g. in the library; in such cases it may be appropriate for them to use standard procedures set up in that building for visitors.

15. Need orientation information

Where a person requires additional orientation or information, it may be sufficient to give them a guided tour of the escape routes from the rooms that they use.

16 Need tactile map of the building

Some people will need additional guidance information in the form of tactile maps. These can be obtained through the Disability Services Unit (Student Services will need to produce these on demand.) Some visually impaired people will also require additional signs to guide them out of the building.

17. Need colour contrasting on stairways

Some people will require an orientation strategy to assist way-finding within the building, this can be achieved through colour contrasting the escape routes either by suitable decoration of the building or through simple signs. These can be as low-tech as laminated paper signs with (say) red triangles and yellow squares printed on them used to identify the routes. Estates Services intend to improve the visibility of signage during major refurbishments.

18. Needs step edge markings

Some people will be more confident making their own way out of the building where there is sufficient contrasting to the nosings on the stairs. If a person requests this option, the stairs should be checked to see if the step edges are highlighted. If they are not the person may require a buddy to help them out of the building. It may also be appropriate to allocate teaching rooms where there are suitable step edge markings.

19. Needs showing the escape routes

Some people will only need the escape routes pointing out to them and this will be sufficient.

20. Needs assistance for the person and dog

Where a person uses a guide dog they may prefer the dog to assist them out of the building. The escape routes should be pointed out to them. Others will prefer to take the responsibility away from the dog for means of escape and request a human assistant. In these cases, a buddy should be allocated to the person. It may also be necessary to provide a person to look after the dog. Again this may be provided in an informal or formal manner.

21. Needs doors opening

In an emergency fire control doors that are normally held back on magnets for general circulation purposes will automatically close when the fire alarm is activated. Some people may have difficulty negotiating these doors. Check if the building you are planning an escape for has this type of device. Where this is the case then assistance to open the doors may be required. Again this can be a formal or informal arrangement. Where a person may be alone in a building that has doors that may be difficult to open, it may be necessary to provide formal assistance. If the door closing device is set on too strong a pressure it may need to be adjusted, but remember that the doors must hold back smoke at a pressure of up to 25 pascals to be effective to protect all people and facilitate their escape.

22. Large Print Information

Some people will need fire evacuation information provided in large print. These can be obtained through the Disability Services Unit (Student Services will need to produce these on demand). Some people will require additional signs to guide them out of the building.

23. Identification of escape routes by reception and security

Visitors to buildings may need to be shown the escape routes when they arrive. This task should be allocated to the most suitable person for each building.

24. Provision of flashing beacons

Hearing impaired people need to be made aware when there is a need to evacuate. If they are likely to be alone in the building they may need to be provided with a flashing beacon or other similar device linked to the fire alarm system. If this type of system is required check with Safety Services to see if there is one available within the particular building. Where there is not then a suitable buddy system will be required.

25. Buddy system

A buddy system may be the suitable method for alerting a person to an alarm. This should be done on a FORMAL basis, in case everyone assumes that someone else has given the warning.

26. Vibrating pagers

The University uses a system of vibrating pagers both to alert deaf and hard of hearing people that there is an emergency and also to communicate with other people who are

part of the assisted escape system. The pagers can be used to inform people that there is an escape and also let them know which direction they should travel away from the seat of the emergency where there is the opportunity for horizontal escape.

If you feel that this type of system may be suitable for the person that you are working with contact [Safety Services](#)

27. Provision of alternative alarm system

There are other methods of contacting disabled people; i.e. through the telephone system or through the intranet. It is recommended that where a person cannot use the existing system, or needs support to use it, all other communication options should be explored.

28. Additional check by fire wardens

In order to provide back up wherever there is an assisted escape system in place, it may also be necessary for the Fire Marshals in that building to be aware of who is present and what escape plans are in place. They should then be trained to provide suitable assistance where necessary.

29. Horizontal Evacuation

In the following buildings, it is possible to evacuate people horizontally through the building into another fire compartment away from the emergency:

- Firth Court
- XXXXX
- XXXXXXXX
- XXXXX
- XXXXX

When the alarm goes off people who cannot use stairs will be directed to move along the floor level they are on to another fire compartment. This may be through the vibrating paging system or an alternative method of contact.

31. Use of refuge

People should never be left in a refuge to wait for the Fire Service, one of the escape choices listed in the matrix should always be used. Refuges are a suitable place in which to meet up with the person or persons allocated to assist, or to rest on the route out. If this is required as a part of the escape plan it must be documented within PEEP. Remember to ensure that suitable refuges are available along the route. Refuges can also be used as a resting place as a part of the evacuation.

32. Need for taped information

Where a person cannot read the fire drill instructions they may prefer the information in tape (or other) format. If this is required contact Student Services who will organise a suitable copy to be provided for the student.

8.2 Appendix II - Pro-forma letter

Dear

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (questionnaire)

We are currently reviewing and improving our evacuation procedures. Where appropriate, Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans will be prepared in order to ensure that those requiring assistance to leave the building in an emergency are catered for.

The plans are to be written to explain what is needed and who is designated to help the escape. Each will be written by the personnel department or department managers, who will have been trained to do so.

We are including a questionnaire for you to fill in to help you assess your own need for a plan. **Please return the questionnaire as soon as possible** (*add date*). If you do require a plan we will arrange a meeting with you to discuss it and later appoint people to help you if necessary. A written plan will then be provided and copied to your helpers where necessary and the fire incident controller (or other) who will pass it onto the fire service if necessary.

This does not affect your right to employment. As your employer we have a duty to provide you with a suitable escape plan regardless of your disability.

If you have a temporary disability such as pregnancy please inform us if you feel you need assistance. If your disability does not normally affect your work however might be a problem in an escape, such as asthma or heart problems please inform us so we can arrange suitable assistance.

Thank you for taking the time to fill in the questionnaire, which will enable us to bring about the necessary changes.

Yours sincerely

Personnel / Student record sheet

Name	Department	Evacuation plan

8.4 Appendix IVa - Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan

Option 1 (Form to be used)

Part 1

Name:

Location:

Building _____

Floor(s) _____

Room number(s) _____

Alternative working locations (If appropriate)

Building(s) _____

Floor(s) _____

Room number(s) _____

Indicate the number of separate plans that have been provided for each building and room visited

Part 2 Awareness of procedure

I have received the evacuation procedure in the following format:

- In Braille
- Electronic format
- On tape
- It has been explained in BSL
- In large print
- I have been shown the evacuation routes
- I have my own authorised plan

Alarm system

I am made aware of the emergency by:

- The existing alarm system
- Pager device
- Visual alarm system
- Members of my work team (*Each of these people require a copy of this sheet*)
- The fire wardens on my floor will inform me (*The fire wardens require a copy of this sheet*)

Names _____

Part 3 Getting out

I require ____ person(s) to show me the route out

Names _____

Back up _____

I require ____ people to assist me

Names _____

Back up _____

Each of these people require a copy of this sheet

I require the following assistance to escape

The following people are designated to help me

Names _____

Back up _____

Each of these people require a copy of this sheet

My specialist equipment to assist my escape is _____

Date

Practice Dates

Practices should be every six months dates should be put into diaries

Example

This is a step by step account of what will happen during the escape.

John and Gale will meet me at my desk.

Reserve volunteers are Maria and Mike

They will help me by taking hold of one arm each side

We will walk to the nearest escape route and wait in the space at the head of the stairs for other people to escape

When it is safe to do so we will move slowly down the stairs

The fire warden will advise the fire service which route we took

8.5 Appendix IVb - Example Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans **Option 2 (Simple record sheet)**

Option 15

Requirement

My sight is limited and orientation is difficult where there is no formal guidance.

Escape Procedure

The person you are visiting will take you to the refuge, which is within the evacuation stairway at each level of the building.

Please ring for assistance from the call point situated within the refuge. A member of our fire evacuation team will meet you there and guide you out of the building.

A more suitable variation on this is where all staff are trained to assist the visually impaired person out of the building

Specialist equipment to assist the escape is:

Fire warden checks
Communication point

Option 18

Code 11 - 0

Requirement

I am visiting the building with a group of people with moderate learning difficulty. There are three staff members with us.

Escape Procedure

Group booked tickets in advance.

A copy of the evacuation procedure sent out with tickets including a map of the building with information about colour coded escape routes.

Induction in evacuation will be provided by security staff on entering the building.

Group facilitated in making their own escape requirements.

Specialist equipment to assist the escape is:

Fire warden checks

Option 8 – Carry down by three staff

Requirement

I can walk along the flat but cannot manage stairs at all. I would need to be carried down the stairs.

Escape Procedure

Please make your way to the refuge, which is within the evacuation stairway at each level of the building. Please ring for assistance from the call point situated within the refuge

Our staff are trained to carry out with the use of an office chair and three staff.

A team will meet you in the refuge. You will need to sit on the chair, which has armrests to help support you. The three staff members will then carry you down.

Specialist equipment to assist the escape is:

Office Chair

Option 5 – Make own way on bottom

Requirement

I can walk along the flat but have difficulty with stairs. I will make my descent slowly on my bottom.

Escape Procedure

Please make your way to the refuge, which is within the evacuation stairway at each level of the building. Please ring for assistance from the call point situated within the refuge. For your own safety you will need to wait for the main escape to slow before beginning your descent.

Our evacuation stairwells have one-hour fire resistance and are smoke extracted.

Our Fire Wardens are trained in assisted escape principles and will be available to you if necessary. We will advise the Fire Service of your descent.

Specialist equipment to assist the escape is:

Fire warden checks