



Advice guide 12: Fire Evacuation

Guidance and PEEPS

All Teesside University students must be able to leave buildings safely in the event of a fire or other emergency, and the University is committed to ensuring we meet our obligations by providing evacuation support and guidance. We understand that many people with disabilities or other medical conditions will be able to escape unaided; however, some may require assistance. Therefore, we request that you consider your emergency evacuation arrangements in relation to your own needs. If necessary, we will draw up a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) with you. A PEEP might for example specify the assistance you need in the event of an emergency evacuation and any precautions necessary, the use of equipment we may issue to you, and/or simply record the action you need to take in an emergency evacuation. Additional information on our PEEPS can be reviewed [here](#). If you have any additional queries or requests for support, please contact the University Health and Safety team healthandsafety@tees.ac.uk

Mobility Impairment: The majority of Teesside University buildings have disabled **refuges** in locations such as staircases and lobbies. These are protected from fire for at least 30 minutes. An intercom (wall-mounted panel) connects to Security Officers in the Security Control Room, who are automatically aware of your location, *even if you cannot hear them over the noise of the fire alarm*; you are immediately a top priority. They are also aware of exactly where the incident is located, and therefore the risk to you.

In many cases staff managing the evacuation will decide whether you should remain safely where you are, or they may decide to “horizontally evacuate” you to another safe location in the building; or it may be necessary to assist you to leave the building.

One method we may employ in assisting wheelchair users to evacuate a building is the “Evac chair”; we will need to ensure via your PEEP (Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan- see *below*) that you can safely transfer to it or find other ways to meet your needs. Note that on your way a disabled refuge point, you may find automatic fire doors shut which you normally encounter held open.





Visual Impairment: Most staircases have colour-contrasted markings on the steps. If you require assistance descending stairs, one possibility might be a “buddy system” whereby designated people nearby will assist you; another option might be to use a disabled refuge as described above.

Hearing Impairment: Some locations have flashing beacons in addition to fire alarm sirens or bells. Vibrating pagers or pillows, which respond to a fire alarm activation, can be issued. “Buddy systems” as described above might also be suitable.



Student Residences on Campus: Campus Services (Accommodation) are aware of all rooms allocated to persons with disabilities. In the event of a fire or other incident, Students with PEEPS are a top priority (as for disabled refuges – see above). You can be assured that if you are in any danger, a member of staff will arrive to assist you. If there is no danger to you (e.g. false alarms) they will visit or contact you whenever possible for reassurance – but please note that so long as you are safe, they may have other immediate priorities.

Temporary PEEPS as a result of medical conditions, injury, pregnancy etc: Pregnant women, persons with sports injuries, for example broken limbs, persons recuperating from





operations/treatment or those with other medical conditions might also need assistance (and therefore a PEEP- see *below*) in order to evacuate safely.

Fire Marshals & Security Staff as additional reassurance: Please note that many University buildings have appointed Fire Marshals. In an evacuation, they will “sweep” nearby areas as they make their way out of the building to ensure that no persons remain. They may be able to offer you assistance; at the very least, they will inform Security or Health and Safety staff who will then assist you.

Security Officers proceed immediately to investigate the location of a fire alarm activation identifying where the potential danger is. Therefore, if you are having difficulty evacuating or have not found your way to a refuge, and if you are in immediate danger from a fire, you will rapidly be found and assisted. However, a properly planned PEEP will greatly reduce the risk to you and those assisting you still further.

Lifts must not be used in the event of a fire evacuation.

If you consider you will encounter difficulties evacuating a building without access to lifts, then it is important that you have a Personal Evacuation Plan (PEEP) completed (see *below*).

For more information

W: <https://www.tees.ac.uk/sections/stud/disability>

E: studentlife@tees.ac.uk

T: 01642 342277





Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPS)

STUDENTS

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPS)

All Teesside University students must be able to leave buildings safely in the event of a fire or other emergency, and the University is committed to ensuring we meet our obligations by providing evacuation support and guidance. We understand that many people with disabilities or other medical conditions will be able to escape unaided; however, some may require assistance. Therefore, we request that you consider your emergency evacuation arrangements in relation to your own needs. If necessary, we will draw up a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) with you. A PEEP might for example specify the assistance you need in the event of an emergency evacuation and any precautions necessary, the use of equipment we may issue to you, and/or simply record the action you need to take in an emergency evacuation.

We do not expect you to make any extraordinary effort to exit safely in the event of an emergency. Some of the main types of assistance or equipment typically used and available are outlined on the information sheet enclosed. The equipment you require may vary in different locations and therefore different PEEPs might be needed for different buildings. You may not fall directly into one of the examples given; the objective of a PEEP, should you need one, is to ensure that your **individual needs** are met – and if necessary, to devise ways of achieving this.

If you feel you may need a PEEP, please complete and return the enclosed initial emergency evacuation questionnaire as soon as possible to the Health and Safety Team (healthandsafety@tees.ac.uk). Once you have completed the questionnaire, if we identify that you need a PEEP or if you would like to discuss these matters further, we will arrange a meeting with you. The staff involved in reviewing your requirements and drawing up PEEPs will work with you to find the best solutions. Please note that if you do not reply, you accept that you are able to respond to fire alarms and make your own way out of the building(s) promptly, unaided and without impeding any other person's emergency escape.

Your confidentiality is important to us, and your PEEP(s) will only be disclosed where necessary, as follows:

- Security or Support Services staff
- Your carer(s) or volunteer worker(s), if applicable
- School Disability Coordinator





- Any person assigned specific duties in providing assistance to you under the PEEP (this may include relevant members of staff where necessary)

PEEPs should be reviewed at least annually – if you have received one previously, we will need to verify that it is still adequate.



INITIAL EMERGENCY EVACUATION QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STAFF AND STUDENTS

This questionnaire is intended to be completed by any person who may require a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP). A member of the Health and Safety Team will review this information and where required will assist in the development of a suitable PEEP. If you prefer not to answer the question overleaf then that is your choice, however, please be aware that if you do not provide information which is necessary for the development of your PEEP then the Health and Safety Team may not be able to develop a suitable and sufficient plan.

Once developed the PEEP will be the accepted means of escape for you in the event of an emergency evacuation (including drills). If you consider there to be significant issues raised by this process that will require attention, please contact the Health and Safety Centre for assistance in finding suitable solutions.

1. Why you should fill in the form?

Teesside University has a legal responsibility to protect you from fire risks and ensure your health and safety at work. To do this properly we need to know if you require information about our emergency evacuation procedures and if you need assistance during an emergency.

2. What will happen when you have completed the form?

You will be contacted by the Health and Safety Team and provided with any additional information necessary about the emergency evacuation procedures in the building(s) in which you work/study. The Health and Safety Team may request a short meeting to discuss your needs.

If you need additional assistance, the PEEP will specify what type of assistance you need. It will be the responsibility of your School/Department to ensure you are provided with this assistance.





Please read the letter and information sheet accompanying this questionnaire.

Name _____

Date _____

Job Title _____

School/Department _____

Signature _____

You may need a PEEP if you have a disability or medical condition, such as those listed below which may affect your ability to evacuate a building unaided:

- Auditory impairment
- Visual impairment
- Cognitive impairment
- Mobility impairment

When considering your answer, consider if you are able to:

- Become aware of the need to evacuate
- Evacuate promptly without impeding the escape of other persons
- Evacuate without causing distress to yourself or others

Do you feel that you have a disability or medical condition that would impact on your ability to evacuate promptly and safely? YES/NO

If you answer YES to the above question, please return this form to healthandsafety@tees.ac.uk

A member of the Health & Safety Team will then contact you to discuss this matter in more detail and ascertain the requirements of your PEEP.

(If your answer is NO, no further action is required, and you do not need to return this form)

If you require more information on the University PEEP procedures or have any other questions relating to this, please contact the Health & Safety department or you may wish to view our [PEEP's procedure](#).



Typical Standard Emergency Evacuation Plans for persons with Medical Conditions

The following list gives an indication of types of escape arrangements/methods our PEEPS consider, and the possible assistance typically available. These can vary in different circumstances. In most cases the options set out below will form the basis of individual Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPS), according to each person's needs and, where possible, preferences. In some cases, a combination of several of these options will apply.

The use of mobile phones should not be discounted but emergency evacuation provisions must not rely on them.

Option	Description	Comments
1	Buddy system	Companion, carer, or assistant allocated to assist. This is a voluntary provision and may not always be feasible
2	Meet assistant at refuge	
3	Meet assistant at Workstation	Only practicable with a 'buddy system'
4	Make own way downstairs after main flow dissipates	Appropriate for those that can evacuate themselves slowly
5	Use of Evac-Chair	Training on the use of Evac-Chair can be provided to those assisting with evacuations
6	Individual cannot transfer readily to Evac-Chair	Assistance may need to be provided by more than one member of staff
7	Individual needs assistance to walk downstairs, 1 or 2 people	Only practicable with a 'buddy system'
8	Needs colour contrast on staircases	Most University Buildings have this provided; check whether contrast meets persons individual needs
9	Person needs showing escape routes	School / Department to arrange





10	Assistance required for person and guide dog	Utilise 'buddy system'
11	Person needs doors opening	Utilise 'buddy system' or investigate providing additional push pads
12	Person needs large print information or alternative format	Can be provided on request
13	Identification of escape route	Assess/predetermine most suitable escape route(s) from intended location. Health and Safety can advise on means of escape routes when required
14	Provision of flashing beacons	Some buildings/locations are provided with these. Additional coverage will be considered where required
15	Provision of vibrating pager, pillow or alternative alarm	Can be provided when necessary
16	Horizontal evacuation	Will be implemented wherever possible. For example, evacuating to another disabled refuge in the same building away from the incident.

