
Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans: Guidance for Disability Coordinators

About PEEPs

A Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) is used to document how people will be evacuated when they have difficulty responding to a fire alarm or escaping from a building unaided, in the event of an emergency.

PEEPs are particularly relevant for some students (or indeed staff) with mobility and/or sensory impairments (visual/hearing). Additionally, depending on the nature/severity of the impact of the impairment or condition, in some limited circumstances it might be relevant to create a PEEP for students with other disability types. For example, severe PTSD or an autism spectrum condition where an alarm could be triggering or distressing/disorientating.

Each PEEP should be unique to the individual, considering what issues they face, how they can be helped to get to a place of safety (what procedures, equipment or human support are needed) and how to communicate the plan to other relevant parties.

Not all risk can be completely mitigated, but it can be managed by identifying areas where evacuation might be problematic, and providing the student with information, instructions and helpful points of contact.

Key Considerations and Potential Challenges

- Student engagement – information overload at the start of the course, time pressures, perceived importance/need for a PEEP.
- Clarifying lines of responsibility and collaborating across colleges/departments/libraries – avoiding duplication and sharing good practice.
- Identifying who to share information with – who ‘needs to know’.
- Keeping track of students as they move around from term to term and year to year – will they have tutorials at another college, or lectures in a different building/part of a building?
- Covering the 24-hour period (managed versus unmanaged hours) – briefing students on how to respond to a fire signal and communicate with fire/security services outside office hours.
- Annual reviews – who does them and how/where are they recorded?
- Emergency evacuation versus general mobility support plan.
- Considering whether individuals with PEEPs should be given advance warning of practice fire drills.

Role of a Disability Coordinator

The relevant building/facilities manager(s) and/or local safety officer is responsible for writing the PEEP for each building the student will be attending. They should lead the process, write the PEEP and establish clear lines of responsibility. However, whilst disability coordinators are not expected to create the PEEP itself, they play an important role in facilitating the process.

- Ideally a PEEP should be completed before the student starts their course, or at the earliest possible stage.
- PEEPs should be reviewed regularly in case of possible changes in the person's circumstances, areas of the building being visited, availability/training of helpers, and the general working environment.
- Talk to the student to find out more about their evacuation support requirements as soon as you become aware of the potential need for a PEEP (e.g. from a recommendation in a DAS Student Support Plan, from observing the student and/or your existing knowledge about the nature of their condition).
- Notify the relevant building/facilities manager(s) and/or local safety officer for **each** building the student will be attending; they may not need to know names until later, but they do need advance warning, and should lead the process with input from other relevant staff, including the disability coordinator.
- Agree with the building/facilities manager(s) and/or local safety officer the levels and lines of responsibility within the various areas of control to assist the student; involve library staff for buildings that contain libraries with separate jurisdictions.
- Support the process by actively encouraging student engagement; communicate the importance of the PEEP and set up a pre-term meeting with the student and the building/facilities manager(s) and/or local safety officer.
- Help identify key people with whom the PEEP might need to be shared, e.g. accommodation or welfare staff.
- Talk to your counterpart in the college/department to identify whether it would be helpful for disability coordinators to share information about action in their respective areas.

Additional Resources

- Information about PEEPs is available from <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/safety/firesafe/faqfire/> and <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-safety-risk-assessment-means-of-escape-for-disabled-people>
- For further advice and information staff may contact Ben Smith, Accessibility Advisor in Estates Services (benjamin.smith@admin.ox.ac.uk) or Stephen Emery, University Fire Officer in the Safety Office (steve.emery@safety.ox.ac.uk)
- For further discussion about individual student's disability support requirements, contact the Disability Advisory Service by email on disability@admin.ox.ac.uk or telephone 01865 (2)80459

Disability Coordinators PEEP Actions

