



Testlands, Green Lane ● Southampton, Hampshire  
Phone: 023 8202 6700 ● [contactus@testlands.com](mailto:contactus@testlands.com)  
Web: [www.testlands.com](http://www.testlands.com)

# **Testlands Hub (*Green Lane, Southampton, SO16 9FQ*)**

## **Fire Safety Policy**

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## **1. Policy statement**

1.1. Testlands is a responsible employer that takes its fire safety duties seriously. For that reason this policy has been formulated to help Testlands Hub (Green Lane, Southampton, SO16 9FQ) comply with its legal obligations to staff and visitors under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (The Order). Testlands is committed to taking all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of staff, students, community users, hirers, contractors and other persons who may be affected by its activities.

1.2. This policy addresses our obligation under The Order that requires Testlands to:

- a) Develop a policy to minimize the risks associated with fire

- b) Reduce the risk of an outbreak of fire

- c) Reduce the risk of the spread of fire

- d) Provide a means of escape

- e) Demonstrate preventive action

- f) Maintain documentation and records in respect of fire safety management

1.3. This fire safety policy also forms part of the College's general health and safety policy.

## **2. The responsible person**

2.1. Testlands Hub has appointed a 'responsible person' who is charged with the responsibility of ensuring the safety of the staff and any person who may legally come onto the premises and of anyone not on the premises but who may be affected.

2.2. The body appointed as the responsible 'person' is: Testlands Hub Leader.

2.3. The responsible body must ensure that competent persons carry out Fire Safety Risk Assessments (see Section 9, below). The responsibility for health and safety matters relating to staff and visitors is generally carried by Testlands Hub Leader.

## **3. Fire marshals**

3.1. Testlands Hub Fire Marshals are the Hub Leader, shift leaders and Hub Leisure Assistants.

3.2. The Marshals:

- a) Make contact with the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service

- b) Assist in evacuations.

- c) Provide essential information to the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service

## **4. Competent persons**

4.1. Testlands Hub will appoint competent persons to carry out the following duties:

- a) Carry out risk assessments

- b) Advise Fire Marshals

- c) Assist with fire drills

4.2. The competent persons will include the Testlands Hub Leader, Chief Operations Officer, Senior Leader and Chief Executive Officer.

4.3. A competent person will only be regarded as competent if they have the appropriate level of training, experience, and knowledge. Training and supervision will be provided for nominated competent persons.

## **5. Documentation and records**

5.1. Testlands Hub documents and keeps records to prove that we have acted responsibly. The following records will be kept in good order, up to date and available for scrutiny at any time in the main office, unless otherwise stated:

- a) This fire safety policy.
- b) Fire evacuation procedures.
- c) Copies of all risk assessments.
- d) Records of all fire training.
- e) A record of all fire drills (at least four per year) listing all attendees, evacuation times and any comments.
- f) Records of weekly tests of fire alarms, final fire exits.
- g) Record of annual inspection and testing of all firefighting equipment.
- h) Records of periodic tests of emergency lighting.
- i) Records of all scheduled and unscheduled maintenance of fire detection and alarm systems.
- j) Records of inspection, risk assessment and maintenance of workplace and electrical equipment, storage of hazardous substances and other hazards identified with fire safety.
- k) Records of any unwanted alarm activations and action taken - the Testlands Hub Leader to maintain a separate list of all activations and pass information on for action where appropriate.
- l) Plans of Testlands Hub building.

## **6. Duties of staff**

6.1. ('Staff' includes all employees and trustees of Testlands)

All staff have a duty to take reasonable steps to ensure that they do not place themselves or others at risk of harm. They are also expected to cooperate fully in complying with any procedures that Testlands Hub may introduce as a measure to protect the safety and well-being of all staff and visitors.

## **7. Communication**

7.1. Testlands will ensure that any person it employs (directly or indirectly) is provided with all information related to fire safety and consult with our employees on all matters of fire safety policy and arrangements. We will keep staff informed of any changes that are made to our fire safety procedures and fire risk assessment. A fire safety briefing will form part of the induction training for new members of staff.

7.2. We will also ensure that all visitors to our premises are briefed in the evacuation procedures and not left alone unless they are aware of, and familiar with, all available escape routes.

## **8. Procedures**

8.1. Testlands Hub has introduced the following procedures in order to maintain high standards of fire safety:

8.2. The fire evacuation procedures will be practiced at least four times annually.

- a) All staff will be given training, including a fire safety briefing as part of the induction process, and will receive refresher training as appropriate. Further training would be required if there were any change that may affect fire safety. All training will be provided during normal working hours as far as reasonably possible (e.g. any evening and weekend staff may be required to attend during the day).
- b) It is Testlands policy that key staff will be trained in the use of fire extinguishers, whether or not they have been given specific firefighting duties.
- c) All escape routes will be established, kept in good working order and free from obstruction and combustible materials at all times. Operation of fire exit doors will be tested and recorded in the fire log on a monthly basis.
- d) Firefighting equipment will be provided. In general this means fire extinguishers but additional provision of fire blankets or hoses may be made where deemed appropriate by the findings of a risk assessment.
- e) All fire related equipment will be regularly serviced and maintained by a competent person or contractor. If any member of Testlands notices defective or missing equipment, they must report it to a competent person.
- f) All available technological solutions to fire prevention will be examined by Testlands and innovative practices and equipment will be adopted as appropriate - advice on available equipment and solutions will be sought at regular intervals from Southampton City Council.
  
- g) An appropriate fire detection and alarm system will be provided. The type and extent of the alarm system provided will be based on the findings of the relevant risk assessment. Alarm systems will be tested regularly. Staff will be told when a test is scheduled.
  
- h) Emergency lighting will be provided for escape routes where applicable. The need for and the extent of the system will be determined by the findings of the relevant risk assessment.
- i) The risk of fire spread will be controlled by the provision of fire resisting construction, and or fire/smoke resisting doors. These provisions will be kept in good order as part of our regular maintenance schedule. All staff are required to ensure that any fire door provided remains closed at all times.
- j) Any other safety systems provided will be checked regularly to ensure correct operation, where necessary e.g. emergency lighting, fire doors etc.
- k) Appropriate signs and notices will be displayed, giving clear instructions to staff and others in the event of a fire. In addition signs will be provided to indicate the position of fire extinguishers, fire alarm call points and, to indicate the emergency exit routes.
- l) In the normal course of their work, housekeeping and maintenance staff will make it their business to ensure that residents, students, staff, visitors and other users of Testlands Hub keep exits and lobbies clear of debris, furniture etc, that fire doors are not propped open, fire extinguishers have not been removed from their brackets and fire signs and notices have not been removed.
- m) This policy will be included as part of the terms and conditions of employment. Failure to cooperate may be treated as a disciplinary matter.

## **9. Risk Assessment**

9.1. Following the training of the competent persons, those persons shall make, record, review and, where applicable, revise Fire Safety Risk Assessments at regular intervals in accordance with The Order. They should also be carried out if there has been any significant change in the physical layout of a building or staircase or a change of use.

9.2. The Fire Safety Risk Assessments must take into consideration everyone who may come on our premises, whether they are employees, visitors or members of the public. Particular attention will be paid to people who may have a disability or anyone with special needs.

9.3. Senior leaders have a duty to identify all hazardous substances and other potential or actual hazards and to make this information available to those who carry out the risk assessments.

9.4. A 'five step' approach will be taken as follows: Step 1 - Identify potential fire hazards in the workplace.

Step 2 - Decide who might be in danger, in the event of a fire, in the workplace or while trying to escape from it, and note their location.

Step 3 - Evaluate the risks arising from the hazards and decide whether the existing fire precautions are adequate or whether more should be done to get rid of the hazard or to control the risks (e.g. by improving the fire precautions).

Step 4 - Record findings and details of the action taken as a result.

Step 5 - Keep the assessment under review and revise it when necessary.

The policy statement will be regularly reviewed and updated as necessary. Testlands as an organisation endorses this policy and is fully committed to its implementation.

**Last reviewed:** August 2019

**Date of next review:** August 2020