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General Fire Safety Regulations of the University of Vienna



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This is only a translation and not a legally binding document. Legally binding are only the versions issued in the University Gazette.

General Information (Purpose)

These General Fire Safety Regulations, in conjunction with the side letters on fire safety for individual buildings/locations, provide important guidelines for conduct to ensure safe operations, avoid danger to persons and property and minimise damage caused by fire, as well as for conduct in case of fire.

The side letters supplementing the Fire Safety Regulations include those provisions that are required for specific properties, systems or facilities in addition to the provisions of the General Fire Safety Regulations.

Scope of Application

The General Fire Safety Regulations shall apply to all premises, buildings and rooms used by the University of Vienna, irrespective of the legal basis for their use.

Terminology

- FSR General Fire Safety Regulations
- FSR side letter(s) Side letters supplementing the General Fire Safety Regulations
- FSO Fire Safety Officer
- FSC Fire Safety Coordinator
- FW Fire Warden

Responsibilities

Initiation and implementation of measures

Measures to be taken in the context of these FSR that concern the entire University shall be initiated and implemented by the responsible vice-rector on behalf of the Rector. Regarding rooms of individual facilities, the head of the organisational unit concerned and the chair of the Austrian National Union of Students at the University of Vienna shall be responsible for taking the relevant measures.

Compliance and checks

The fire safety officers (FSO) or fire wardens (FW) shall be in charge of ensuring compliance with the FSR and checking the fire safety equipment within their areas of responsibility. The above persons shall also be responsible for notifying the Fire Safety Coordinator and the persons responsible for individual areas according to section 4.1 on any shortcomings and on possible remedial measures.

Sanctions

Any non-compliance with regulations or with the provisions of the FSR shall be subject to sanctions.

Structure of the Fire Safety Organisation

Regulations

The applicable regulations covering fire safety have been laid down in the following documents:

- General Fire Safety Regulations
- side letters supplementing the General Fire Safety Regulations

The General Fire Safety Regulations shall be deemed to be the binding basic document whose provisions must be observed.

Side letters supplementing the General Fire Safety Regulations

For each facility, a side letter supplementing the FSR shall be drawn up, to account for specific circumstances and conditions at the location in question (e.g. increased risk of fire, assembly areas). The side letters are binding for the location in question, and their provisions must be complied with.

The FSR side letter must at least include the following sections:

- responsibilities
- what to do in case of fire
- technical fire safety system
- information on assembly areas
- organisational fire safety (e.g. required number of FSO, FW, etc.)
- building-related fire safety
- alarm and evacuation plans
- notification list.

Organisational Fire Safety Structure

A fire safety coordinator (FSC), plus a deputy FSC, shall be nominated, to be in charge of the entire University of Vienna.

The vice-rector in charge of fire safety shall be informed concerning any relevant incidents in the area of fire safety by means of an annual report. The Fire Safety Coordinator, in cooperation with the FSO, shall be responsible for said reporting.

Fire Safety Coordinator

Appointment

- The FSC and his/her deputy are nominated by the vice-rector in charge.
- The FSC and his/her deputy must accept the nomination in writing. The vice-rector in charge can terminate the appointment of the FSC by written revocation of the nomination. In this case, the deputy shall take over the tasks of the FSC until a successor has been appointed.
- The vice-rector in charge can terminate the appointment of the deputy FSC by written revocation of the nomination. In this case, a new deputy shall be appointed without delay.
- The FSC and his/her deputy shall, upon presenting their authorisation, be granted access to all facilities and rooms of the University, and they shall be assisted in performing their tasks.

Tasks

- The Fire Safety Coordinator shall be responsible for the coordination of fire safety tasks at the University of Vienna and shall report to the head of the Facility and Resources Management service unit in charge. The FSC shall have authority to give instructions to the fire safety officers and fire wardens, evacuation officers, evacuation agents and evacuation assistants.
- The Fire Safety Coordinator shall be responsible for organising the necessary maintenance, inspection and checks of the fire safety system.
- The Fire Safety Coordinator shall liaise with the fire safety officers, fire wardens, evacuation officers, evacuation agents and evacuation assistants with regarding fire safety matters.

Training

The Fire Safety Coordinator shall have completed training as a fire safety manager in accordance with ISO IEC 17024, or similar training. In addition, the Fire Safety Coordinator shall attend all relevant technical continuing education and training courses.

Fire safety officers; evacuation officers

Appointment

- The FSO and evacuation officers are nominated by the vice-rector in charge. For each FSO and evacuation officer, a deputy shall be appointed. If university staff members are nominated as fire safety officers or evacuation officers, they shall perform the corresponding tasks as part of their normal duties.
- The FSO or evacuation officer must accept the nomination in writing. The vice-rector in charge can terminate their appointment by written revocation of the nomination. In this case, the deputy shall take over the tasks of FSO or evacuation officer until a successor has been appointed.
- The FSO or evacuation officer shall, upon presenting their authorisation, be granted access to all facilities and rooms of the University in their area of activity, and they shall be assisted in performing their tasks.
- The fire safety officers shall always act as evacuation officers as well. However, responsibility for maintaining the fire safety log book, organising fire drills and issuing hot work permits shall lie exclusively with the fire safety officer nominated for the location in question.

Tasks

The tasks and duties of the FSO or evacuation officers are derived from the applicable laws, requirements laid down in official notifications, standards, regulations and guidelines. In particular, they include:

- making proposals for the revision and update of fire safety regulations;
- drawing up a plan for checks and implementing self-checks;
- preparing fire service operations;
- maintaining the fire safety log book;
- keeping a list of the names of the fire wardens or evacuation agents reporting to them;
- receiving and communicating information on all fire safety matters;
- checking the implementation of, or if needed, initiating periodic checks of fire safety equipment – unless this task has been taken over by another person. In this case, only an entry to this effect needs to be made in the fire safety log book.
- organising or coordinating alarm and evacuation drills;
- issuing permits for work involving fire risks (hot work permits);
- giving instructions or ensuring that instructions are given;
- taking alternative measures if fire safety equipment needs to be deactivated.

Training

Fire safety officers and evacuation officers must at least have completed training in accordance with the technical guideline for preventive fire protection TRVB O 117:2006. This mainly comprises completion of basic modules 1 and 2. In addition, they shall attend all technical seminars that are relevant for the location in question.

Fire wardens; evacuation agents

Appointment

- For each facility, the vice-rector in charge shall appoint staff members as fire wardens (FW) or evacuation agents for individual areas of responsibility. The respective subunit heads shall suggest competent staff members for this task.
- The FW or evacuation agent must accept the nomination in writing. The vice-rector in charge can terminate their appointment by written revocation of the nomination. In this case, the FSO or evacuation officer, respectively, shall take over the tasks of FW or evacuation agent until a successor has been appointed.
- The FW or evacuation agent shall, upon presenting their authorisation, be granted access to all facilities and rooms of the University in their area of activity, and they shall be assisted in performing their tasks.
- As a rule, the fire wardens also perform the tasks of evacuation agents.

Tasks

The tasks and duties of the FW in their areas of activity are derived from the applicable laws, requirements laid down in official notifications, standards, regulations and guidelines. In particular, they include:

- making proposals for the preparation and update of the fire safety regulations, in consultation with the FSO;

- informing the FSO on the localisation of dangers;
- contributing to drawing up the evacuation plan;
- drawing up a plan for checks and implementing self-checks in the FW's or evacuation agent's area of activity;
- drawing up, or helping draw up, documents for preparing fire service operations, in consultation with the FSO;
- maintaining the fire safety log book for their area of activity. The respective entries shall be communicated to the FSO at regular intervals (at least once a month), and in urgent cases, immediately.
- taking part in alarm and evacuation drills, as well as providing assistance in emergency cases;
- providing consultancy and information on fire safety to all staff members of the facility;
- consulting the FSO in all technical questions; communicating suggestions to the FSO.

Training

Fire wardens or evacuation agents must have completed training in accordance with the technical guideline for preventive fire protection TRVB O117: 2006 (module 1) and shall attend one annual internal training in safe evacuation procedure.

Evacuation assistants

Evacuation assistants help the fire wardens or evacuation agents fulfil their duties. Unless precluded by reasonable grounds (e.g. health reasons), all staff members shall act as evacuation assistants.

The evacuation assistants are trained by internal instruction. Regular participation in refresher training sessions is required.

Obligation to Cooperate

Every individual spending time on premises or in buildings and rooms used by the University of Vienna is obliged to observe the FSR.

Taking part in evacuation drills is obligatory for every individual spending time on premises or in buildings and rooms used by the University of Vienna.

The FSO or FW in charge shall immediately be informed of any defects that present a risk to safety, as well as of other sources of danger or shortcomings. Information on how to contact the FSO in charge is provided in the display cases, on the notice boards and at the porters' desks. If you cannot reach the FSO, please notify the security staff.

In the event of fire or dangerous situations, everybody is obliged, as far as can reasonably be expected, to provide first aid and to contribute to the rescue of persons and property, as well as to incipient fire extinguishing.

Everybody is obliged to make themselves familiar with the fire safety regulations that apply in their case, and in particular, they shall be able:

- to activate a fire alarm and call the fire service;

- to inform the porter (in buildings with porter's desks);
- to indicate the location of the fire extinguisher that is nearest to the room (workplace) and to use it;
- to indicate the nearest escape route;
- to locate the nearest equipment for immediate and advanced fire control assistance and the nearest first-aid kit;
- to indicate assembly areas.

Fire Safety Rules

General rules

Comply with the provisions of the relevant laws, regulations and guidelines.

Ensure cleanliness and orderliness, as this is a fundamental prerequisite for fire safety.

Authorised persons shall have free access to all master switches and stopcocks (electricity, water, gas) at any time.

Any machines and machine-driven devices shall be operated and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Do not take bicycles into buildings, nor obstruct passages, doors, stairs and exits with bicycles. Always park your bicycle in the designated areas.

Do not obstruct any passages, doors, stairs and exits.

Storage and transport of flammable liquids and gas cylinders; compressed gas containers; gas equipment

Easily flammable objects, liquids, gases and other substances shall always be stored in suitable containers and rooms (observe regulations for maximum permissible storage quantities!), in consultation with the fire safety officers.

Compressed gas containers of any type (including gas containers such as oxygen cylinders) shall be stored at cool temperatures, in a stable upright position and in a way that enables easy removal in case of danger. Always observe the statutory maximum quantities.

Liquid gas containers and compressed gas containers (both full and empty) must be closed when transported, with tightened valve nuts and fitted valve protection caps. Make sure that during transport the containers are in a stable upright position and are not exposed to heat or sunlight.

Close the valves of gas equipment that is no longer in operation. In the event of gas emergencies, danger or fire, close the valves of gas equipment.

Observe the statutory provisions on storage and storage prohibitions (section 18 of the Flüssig-gasverordnung (liquid gas regulation), section 10 of the Arbeitsstättenverordnung (workplace regulation), sections 64 and 65 of the Allgemeine Arbeitnehmerschutzverordnung (general workers' protection regulation), sections 2 and 8 of the Verordnung über brennbare Flüssigkeiten (flammable liquids regulation)).

Smoking and use of open fire/flames

Use of open fire and flames is prohibited throughout the premises of the University of Vienna. Exceptions for certain areas have been defined in the applicable side letters, in accordance with the provisions therein, and any exceptions based on special permission shall be subject to conditions stipulated by the vice-rector in charge.

Smoking is strictly prohibited in all public areas of the University of Vienna, as well as in all rooms used for events at the University. Smoking is only permitted in the designated smoking areas outside the building.

The contents of ash trays used in the smoking areas shall always be emptied into safety waste containers or fire-retardant waste containers. Ash trays must not be emptied into normal waste containers.

Electrical appliances and electrical equipment

Portable heating and cooking appliances (particularly appliances used for cooking or heating food and beverages) shall be placed on non-flammable surfaces. Always keep them at a safe distance of 0.5 m from flammable objects.

Do not place or store objects on cook stoves.

The use of privately owned electrical appliances (such as heating or cooking appliances) is subject to approval by the FSO.

Any electrical equipment must be operated and maintained as required. Any modifications or repair must only be carried out by authorised persons. Any temporary installation of electrical equipment by non-authorised persons is prohibited. Switch off electrical appliances after use unless they are suitable for permanent operation.

Stoves

Stoves shall only be installed and operated if approved by the Facility and Resources Management service unit. They must be maintained and operated as required.

Any combustion residues shall be kept in non-flammable containers with non-flammable lids.

Escape routes

Take care that parked vehicles on university premises do not obstruct thoroughfares or escape routes or access routes for emergency vehicles.

All main thoroughfares, escape routes and emergency exits shall be kept free of any stored items and shall not be locked or obstructed.

The statutory minimum width of escape routes shall be observed.

Storage of items; waste

Combustible waste or waste prone to spontaneous combustion (such as cleaning cloths soaked with oil or coating substances) shall be kept in non-flammable containers with self-closing lids.

Do not store items of any kind (both flammable and non-flammable items) in unsuitable places (escape routes, stairwells, exits, emergency exits, or at a distance of less than 5 m from stairwell exits and emergency exits, in passages, hallways and other thoroughfares, in attics, or near stoves, in garages or similar places).

Do not store or dry flammable objects (e.g. wood, packing material, work clothes) near stoves, steam or exhaust gas ducts (e.g. exhaust pipes).

Hot work, work with open fire

Hot work (e.g. welding, disc grinding, flame treatment) shall not be executed without prior notification of and written approval (hot work permit) on the part of the FSO in charge. This does not apply to such work carried out in specially equipped work rooms and work places intended for this purpose. The FSO in charge shall assess the risk situation for the respective area. Should it be necessary to deactivate fire alarm systems, this must always be effected by the FSO in charge or his/her deputy. The Fire Safety Officer shall decide on adequate alternative measures. The company performing the corresponding work shall be obliged to take the required alternative measures (e.g. providing additional fire extinguishers) and have checks carried out until 2 hours after the completion of their work. In case fire alarm systems must be deactivated for an uninterrupted period of 1 week or longer, the Fire Safety Coordinator shall be notified. He/she shall inform the building managers or insurance company of the situation and specify the location and duration of works, as well as any alternative measures taken. The Fire Safety Coordinator shall inform the university security team and instruct them to make additional checks of the relevant parts of the building during their rounds.

Appendix B to these Fire Safety Regulations refers to hot work permits and information in German, English, Czech, Turkish, Croatian and Polish for companies carrying out said work.

Fire safety equipment

The clear opening width of fire safety compartments must be kept free from objects at all times. Do not obstruct or deactivate self-closing systems. Do not wedge fire doors open.

Access to hand-held and other fire extinguishers, extinguishing agents and extinguishing equipment for immediate and advanced fire control assistance shall not be obstructed, nor shall they be hidden from sight (e.g. by hanging items of clothing or decoration over them), unduly removed from their designated location or used in a way other than intended.

Do not hide from sight, damage or remove any safety lights, or signs and notices that are relevant for fire safety.

Always keep fire doors closed unless they are equipped with a fire-activated self-closing mechanism operated through the fire alarm system. Do not obstruct or manipulate (deactivate) fire doors.

Operation of Equipment and Systems

Users/operators shall be responsible for the safe installation and operation of devices, equipment and systems, as well as the safe handling of substances, tools and similar objects ('causation principle').

In the case of an obvious risk situation, of unsupervised permanent operation, or in case of doubt, users/operators shall consult the FSO or FW in charge and jointly agree on safety measures to be taken.

Existing Fire Safety Equipment

General provisions

Fire safety equipment (e.g. fire alarm systems or stationary extinguishing systems) shall only be deactivated provided alternative measures have been put in place for the period of deactivation (e.g. fire watch). Any deactivated fire safety equipment shall be reactivated immediately after the work has been completed. Any deactivation measures are subject to approval by the FSO in charge, who shall effect the deactivation.

Fire alarm systems

This section applies to locations equipped with fire alarm systems.

Manual call points (push-button alarm):

Manual call points (push-button alarm), if available, are installed near emergency exits and after the staircases on the different floors (red box with black button on white background). These call points activate a fire alarm. If you press the button, a fire alarm is activated at least for the building concerned (siren and parallel indicator panel). In certain buildings, the fire service is notified automatically. Every user must be familiar with the locations of manual call points – as a rule, they are near exits or emergency exits – and activate the call point should he/she discover a fire.

Automatic fire detection systems:

In buildings equipped with ceiling-mounted automatic fire detectors, a fire alarm activates if a certain smoke concentration limit is exceeded.

In order to avoid false alarm in the case of certain work such as welding, cutting or soldering, or in the case of elevated dust and smoke levels, please contact the Fire Safety Officer, who will then take the necessary steps (e.g. deactivate the group of fire detectors affected).

Delayed-response fire detection systems:

This section applies to locations equipped with delayed-response fire alarm systems.

As automatic fire detectors cannot distinguish between a genuine alarm and a false alarm, they are not directly connected with the fire service in order to avoid unnecessary call-outs.

When a fire detector activates, a fire alarm is first raised in the building.

During a defined time-delay period, the fire safety staff can then investigate the reason why the alarm has been activated.

As soon as they confirm that the automatic fire detector has activated due to an actual fire, the fire service is immediately alerted by using a manual call point.

If it proves that the automatic fire detector has responded to a false signal, the fire detection system can be reset within a predefined period (“intervention time”), and the fire service is not alerted. This helps avoid unnecessary, unjustified call-outs.

Sprinkler systems:

This section applies to locations equipped with sprinkler systems.

An automatic fire extinguishing system, i.e. a sprinkler system is installed in the building.

It prevents the fire from spreading further, brings down the temperature and reduces smoke levels. In the best case, its water can automatically extinguish the fire. A network of water pipes is installed in the ceiling, with nozzles fitted at regular distances. The nozzles are closed with glass vials or fusible links. If a predetermined temperature is exceeded, the glass breaks, or the fuse melts, respectively, and water flows out.

It is imperative to avoid any damage to the sprinkler system as its water, when discharged, can cause major damage.

If the sprinkler system activates, an alarm is automatically triggered, which alerts the fire service.

Further fire control measures (e.g. use of fire extinguishers) shall be taken in any case.

Gas-operated extinguishing systems:

This section applies to areas equipped with extinguishing systems using gas as an extinguishing agent.

This type of system is activated through the installed fire detection system and automatically extinguishes the fire by reducing the atmospheric oxygen concentration, or by a chemical reaction.

It is equipped with optical and acoustic signalling devices.

If these devices activate, leave the corresponding room/area immediately. Close the doors.

Always observe the warning signs at the entrances and in the protected area itself.

After the extinguishing system has activated, do not re-enter the protected room/area before the fire fighters have given the all clear.

Before starting work that involves the risk of fire in a protected area always consult with the Fire Safety Officer, who must deactivate the fire extinguishing system in order to avoid danger to persons due to an unintentional activation of the extinguishing system.

What to Do in Case of Fire

Keep calm

Alert

If you detect a fire, immediately call the fire service, irrespective of the extent of the fire. Do not wait to see whether your own attempts at extinguishing the fire have been successful: Use emergency phone number 122 or the European emergency number 112. Give the following information:

- Who are you?
- Where is the fire?

- What is on fire?
- How many people are injured?

Also activate manual call points, whenever available (to ensure that others in the building are alerted).

Rescue and escape

After the alarm has been set off, find out if other people are at risk – while avoiding putting yourself in danger. Rescuing people always takes priority over firefighting.

Warn people who are in danger. If someone's clothing is on fire, prevent them from running outside. Wrap them in blankets, coats or cloths (do not use textiles made from synthetic fibres), make them lie on the floor and smother the flames.

If somebody is trapped in a room, open or break the windows and shout to alert the fire fighters.

Leave the room using the marked escape routes and emergency exits until you have reached an assembly area.

Shut off the ventilation and air conditioning system if possible, without putting yourself at risk.

Close all doors behind you.

Close doors in stairwells and emergency doors, open stairwell windows. Attention: Open windows can affect the width of escape routes.

Activate smoke extractors if available (switches are installed on the ground-floor and on the top-floor).

Do not use elevators in case of fire.

Extinguishing

Use the available fire extinguishing equipment (e.g. wall-mounted hydrants or portable fire extinguishers) and start to extinguish the fire (lay down used extinguishers horizontally to indicate that they are empty). The correct use of portable fire extinguishers is described in Appendix A.

If massive smoke development or the extent of the fire renders futile any further extinguishing efforts with the available equipment, stop fighting the fire, in the interest of your own safety. Leave the fire area, close the doors and windows if possible, and wait for the fire service.

Your own safety comes first! Fight the fire only as long as you do not put yourself in danger.

What to Do during a Fire

The fire safety or evacuation officer in charge shall open the entrance for the fire service and inform the fire fighters of further details.

Do not attempt to rescue others unless instructed by the fire fighters.

Keep clear any areas used by the fire service and do not obstruct access routes.

Always follow the instructions given by the fire fighters.

When extinguishing the fire:

- Never enter rooms full of smoke (fire fighters must wear heavy-duty respirators).
- Do not direct the extinguishing agent into smoke or flames but directly aim at the object on fire.
- Remove easily flammable objects near the fire or cool them with water to prevent them from igniting.
- In the case of spotting due to sparks and firebrands, close all openings of buildings at risk, particularly doors and windows, especially in attics.
- Make room for the fire fighters and follow their instructions.

What to Do after a Fire

Do not enter rooms affected by the fire.

Inform the leading fire fighter in charge, your superior or the Fire Safety Officer of any incidents you have noticed that can help identify the cause of the fire.

Inform the fire safety officer or the fire warden in charge of the extinguishing equipment (hand-held fire extinguishers, wall-mounted hydrants, etc.) that has been used. Lay down horizontally all hand-held fire extinguishers that have been used but are still standing upright.

After use, do not return portable fire extinguishers to their original designated place before they have been refilled and maintained.

Notify the fire safety officer and the fire warden in charge of any fire, even if incipient fire extinguishing has been successful, and always inform the Fire Safety Coordinator as well.

Evacuation Alarm

In the event of fire in a building, or another dangerous situation that requires the preventive evacuation of the building, an evacuation alarm shall be activated upon instruction by the leading fire fighter in charge, the fire safety officer or evacuation officer in charge, or the fire warden.

Always keep calm. Avoid shouting “fire” or similar calls that could cause panic.

All staff of the University of Vienna shall leave the building as quickly as possible and proceed to the assembly area. Do not leave the assembly area without approval by the leading fire fighter in charge. This helps verify whether staff are missing.

All other people present shall be instructed to leave the building via the marked escape routes and go to the designated assembly area.

Immediately inform the leading fire fighter in charge if people are missing.

Events Organised by Third Parties

In the case of events organised by third parties, the organiser or head of said event shall be responsible for compliance with the Fire Safety Regulations. They shall be informed of this responsibility upon approval of the event. On request, they shall receive a copy of the FSR.

When events are held by third parties, they shall follow the responsible fire safety officer's or fire warden's instructions regarding fire safety.

Entry into Force

The FSR are a Rectorate guideline. They shall enter into force after the day of their publication in the University Gazette and are made available on the website of the University of Vienna.

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