



Access to Roof Space - Working at Heights Procedure

There are a wide range of Health and Safety regulations which cover working at heights. The *Work at Height Regulations 2005* state a place is at height if a person could be injured falling from it, even if it is at or below ground level.

Any roof space can be particularly hazardous in that they may house mobile phone antennas, fumes from extraction system, fragile roof areas, plant room areas, cables and weather conditions etc, in addition where it is possible to sustain a fall, suitable roof edge protection should be provided.

To ensure the University fulfils its duty of care and under health and safety legislation, the following points need to be considered and implemented :

1. Access to all University roof areas will only be permitted by a **completed and authorised Permit to Access Roof Area form**.
2. The School/Service **must prior to any access to roof areas or working at heights** carry out a full risk assessment of the work to be carried out and ensure suitable and sufficient control measures, systems of work, emergency procedures, etc. are in place before any permission to access is given. Any staff/students must be aware of the identified hazards and must follow safe systems of work.
3. Any requirement for access to a roof area must be notified to security in advance.
4. Roof access will only be through keys held by designated personnel, i.e. Security, Property & Facilities and **by the Permit-to-Access system (sign in, sign out)** to ensure that the whereabouts of the person(s) is known in the event of an emergency evacuation or accident.
5. All roof access doors/hatches will have locks fitted and appropriate signage.
6. Bad weather increases the risk presented by working at height in the open, therefore no access to the roof spaces should occur where the weather may compromise safety, i.e. during high winds.
7. Ensure that where any roof areas are accessed, that they are load bearing and suitable to walk on. Identification of fragile roof areas or fragile roof lights must be provided and protected by suitable signage and a physical barrier, i.e. guard-rails. (Further information can be obtained from Property & Facilities – ext. 5000).
8. Suitable edge protection or suitable control measures should be provided where there are exposed edges and where it is possible to sustain a fall.

9. Suitable and sufficient means of access to and from the roof spaces should be provided where required and where there is ladder access, they should be suitably secured and maintained in a safe condition.
10. Specific procedures for contractors working on the roof should be agreed before work commences, including a Permit-to-Work/Access.
11. Areas on the ground at risk from activities being undertaken at roof level should be cordoned off with no public access allowed.
12. Where roof work is required in the vicinity of mobile phone antennae, then measures should be taken to ensure:-
 - a That there are appropriate hazard information and warning signs and the appropriate area around each antennae is marked off as a restricted area as necessary.
 - b Safe working practices are carried out when working on or in close proximity to the installation and transmitters are turned off in cases when it is so required.

More information and guidance on working at heights can be found at:

www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg401.pdf

www.hse.gov.uk/construction/pdf/fallsqa.pdf

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