



Safety Note 47

Access to roofs at the University of Reading

Scope

This Safety Note applies to anyone who is considering accessing the roof of a building owned or operated by the University of Reading.

Roof Access

Roofs, by the very nature of their height, can be inherently dangerous. There is a risk of falls, and other hazards such as slip and trip risks, exposure to hazardous substances from exhaust ducting, and limited access and egress. Therefore roofs should only be accessed for essential University work. All roof spaces in the University are under the control of the Director of Estates and Facilities Management (FMD). Only those persons authorised by the FMD Head of Maintenance and Grounds (or their nominated representative) should access a roof. Before authorisation is given to access roofs where local operations in the building could present a health and safety risk to persons on the roof, the Building Manager must be consulted. If necessary, local operations should be shut down. NB this refers primarily to buildings with local exhaust ventilation extract systems from science facilities.

Essential University work includes work by FMD Maintenance staff (or their contractors) carrying out work such as inspection or repair; contractors who carry out “essential work” on behalf of another University department e.g. Information Services; or employees or contractors of other organisations who have leased space on the roof of a University building e.g. for installations such as telecommunications.

Anyone accessing a roof should be familiar with the roof area hazard assessment and safe system of work for the roof which they intend to access. The hazard assessments are available to download from the Maintenance section of the FMD website. They must have undertaken a risk assessment for the work/ activity which they are intend to carry out.

In general, students, members of the public and any others proposing non-essential work will not be permitted access to the roofs of University buildings.

Additional guidance:

If you need further advice or guidance contact Health and Safety Services on ext. 8888.

University procedures and guidance on Work at Height is given in Safety Guide 35.