



Fire Safety Guidance for Mosques

MCB MUSLIM COUNCIL
OF BRITAIN

Why we've created this guide

The reason for producing this guide is to provide simple tips for mosques on being fire safe and ensuring compliance with national guidance.

The guide also provides some tips on protecting yourself from arson attacks which have sadly increased due to Islamophobia recently.

Ensuring fire safety processes and compliance at Mosques can help reduce the risk of harm.

Understanding fire safety law and governance

What does the law say? ¹⁰

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO) is the main piece of legislation governing fire safety in buildings in England and Wales.

The FSO applies to all workplaces and the common parts of buildings containing 2 or more domestic premises. It places legal duties on anyone in control of these premises (the Responsible Person - usually the owner or landlord) to undertake and record a fire risk assessment and put in place and maintain general fire precautions.

The Fire Safety Act 2021 clarified that the external walls, flat entrance doors and structure of buildings are all covered by the FSO and must be accounted for in fire risk assessments.

The Fire Safety (England) Regulations Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 and section 156 of the Building Safety Act Check your fire safety responsibilities under section 156 of the Building Safety Act 2022 brought in additional duties for Responsible Persons under the Fire Safety Order.

Fire safety duties for the majority of non-domestic premises in Scotland are set out in the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 and Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006.

²

These are the pieces of fire safety legislation Scotland must follow (plus any associated legislation/regulations).

Non-domestic premises include:

- workplaces and commercial premises
- premises the public have access to
- houses in multiple occupation that require a licence

1. <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fire-safety-legislation-guidance-for-those-with-legal-duties>

2. <https://www.gov.scot/policies/fire-and-rescue/non-domestic-fire-safety/>

Complete a comprehensive fire risk assessment

The importance of this risk assessment is to ensure that our Mosques have the best fire safety policy, which can potentially save lives.

The risk of fire can exist and to mitigate risks it's essential to complete a comprehensive risk assessment.



This can be done by:

- Liaising with the fire services or an expert company to conduct a comprehensive fire safety risk assessment that is approved by an appropriate regulated authority.
- Ensuring all aspects of the risk assessment are complete.
- Ensuring all risks are mitigated with implementation of an action plan to become a fire safe Mosque.

Fire safety guidance

Guidance is essential across our Mosques to ensure safety and reducing risk of harm.

This can be done by implementing the following areas:



- Ensure you have an up to date fire safety document as part of a policy and procedure.
- Ensure there is a Visitor log policy for safety and ensure all visitors sign in on arrival, this can be on paper or electronic via a software or device.
- Fire safety check list to be produced and completed so safety maintained.

Essential Fire safety training

This is essential training at Mosques to ensure collectively mosque management teams can give employees and trustees the confidence to deal with emergencies.

This training can be done as groups of Mosques in regions and localities.

Some of the areas to consider for this training include:

- Appoint a trained responsible person for the Mosque
- Fire awareness training
- Fire Marshall training
- Training on how to use fire extinguishers
- Training on types of fire extinguishers and when to use them



Fire safety equipment and process check

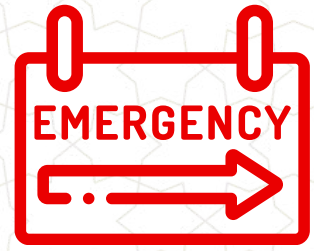
This is an essential part of fire safety by ensuring difference equipments and processes are in place to maintain fire safety.

The areas of fire safety equipment and process checks include:

- Fire extinguisher installed by a professional registered company, serviced and checked regularly at the Mosque by experts
- Fire extinguishers must be fully functional and checked regularly by the safety team at the mosque to ensure pins are in place
- Fire extinguishers to be correctly placed and wall mounted and must not be use to prop open doors
- Electric lighting fully operational, serviced and checked regularly
- Fire alarm fully operational, serviced and checked regularly
- Safety systems to ensure contact is made with key people and emergency services at the Mosque if a fire alarm is activated for prompt response and calling of emergency services.
- Install Fire safety doors that meet safety requirement as set out by regulations
- Ensure fire doors are installed in appropriate areas and are fully functional
- Ensure smoke alarms and Carbon Monoxide alarms are installed and fully working with an active service plan
- Fire drill tests at different times including during madaris, Jumah prayer times, salah times and other times to ensure mosques are prepared to respond in any worse case scenario
- Testing of fire alarm on a weekly basis to ensure it's fully functional
- Ensure electric work is complete and fully functional
- Electrical certificate are from an approved regulated electrician and fully working
- Regular portable appliance testing (PAT) to reduce risks of a fire
- Gas safety certificate to ensure all gas appliances are safe and working correctly

Fire emergency evacuation plan

A fire emergency evacuation plan and appropriate strategies can help save lives.



This involves:

- Comprehensive plan of fire escape in an emergency
- Routes cleared and kept clear for safe evacuation in an emergency
- Maps produced and visible of plan of evacuation on display in the building
- Fire exit signs clearly displayed and unobstructed
- Emergency lighting fully functional and tested regularly
- Assembly points clearly marked and located in a safe location away from the mosque
- Fire evacuation chairs for stairs for evacuation when lifts are not working and chairs are needed to safely bring people to safety
- Provisions for evacuation for children and those disabled should be implemented in case of a fire emergency

Appropriate signs in a Mosque

These signs are essential as they display key information and notices such as indicating high risk areas, evacuation processes and where you could find fire safety equipment.



Some of the signs to have are:

- Fire exit signs clearly marked
- Fire assembly point signs clearly marked
- No smoking signs
- Evacuation and building plans
- Types of fire extinguishers and where they are placed

Engage with local fire services

Communication with local fire emergency services is essential and can help to promote fire safety, the ways to do this include:



- Space marked for emergency vehicles if attending the mosque on the main street or area outside the Mosque
- Try to ensure ground markings if possible or cones placed outside mosque to allow emergency vehicles to park
- Ensure space for emergency vehicles to park in the mosque car park in case of emergency if there is a car park
- Work with expert fire safety experts to ensure all the potential risks are assessed and actions implemented.

Cooking safety

Some Mosques will have a kitchen on site and use this for cooking for events and possibly general classes, this can be considered a potential risk of fire and safety mechanisms must be implemented:



- Ensure safe use of gas hubs.
- Safe working of kitchen appliances.
- Safety features functional and in use in the kitchen.
- Keep flammable items away from cookers and hobs.
- Items such as kettles and toasters if used keep away from under cupboards and such areas where fire risk may develop and empty breadcrumb trays.
- Switch off all appliances when they are not used.
- Never put anything metal in the microwave.
- Always ensure when cooking is ongoing in the kitchen there is direct supervision and not left on whilst away.
- Ensure children are not allowed in the kitchen unsupervised and the kitchen is locked when not in use.
- When cooking with oil, ensure safety processes to avoid splashes or burns and specific types with safety mechanism to reduce risk of fire.
- Never put water on flames or a smoking pan - it can cause harm.

Reducing risk of arson

Sadly with Islamophobia growing in the UK and numbers at very high levels with national statistics showing muslims are affected more than any other religious community in the UK.

With greater risk of Islamophobia there is an increased risk of arson of Mosques with reported cases from parts of the country.

To reduce the risk of arson the following steps must be followed though this list is not exhaustive.

- Risk assess what precautions you can take to prevent malicious fire
- Ensure appropriate security to doors and windows or any other site of entry
- Ensure secure storage of bins/skips adjacent to the building
- Ensure letterboxes have internal metal box to contain any burning items or materials that may be pushed through and ensure no connection of letterbox to inside of the building
- Review and ensure appropriate security lighting across the mosque
- Ensure appropriate boundary fencing
- Ensure intruder alarms and CCTV installed and fully functional and serviced annually and checked it's fully functioning
- Ensure all intruder alarms are connected to a system to call out key individuals of the mosque team and emergency services if needed
- Ensure appropriate key holding arrangements and process to limit unauthorised access
- Remove items that can be easily set on fire internally or externally at the Mosque
- Caution with items such as candles and other items which could pose a fire risk

Other useful guides and resources

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/651567fe7c2c4a001395e180/14.310_HO_How_To_Guide_FINAL_RX_v04_.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6538e381e6c9680014aa9a58/Fire+Safety+_England_+Regulations+2022+fire+door+guidance.pdf

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6538e73fd10f3500139a68d0/Fire+safety+r esponsibilities+under+Section+156+of+the+Building+Safety+Act+2022.pdf>

<https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/advice-and-guidance/2018/06/fire-safety-guidance-evacuating-disabled-people-from-buildings/documents/fire-safety-guidance-evacuating-disabled-people-from-buildings/fire-safety-guidance-evacuating-disabled-people-from-buildings/govscot:document/Practical+fire+safety+guidance+-+evacuation+of+disabled+persons+from+buildings.pdf>

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