



SFC Call for information

Cladding Assessment update

Issue date: 28 November 2019

Reference: SFC/CI/10/2019

Deadline: 12 December 2019

Summary: To seek assurances from Scotland's Colleges and Universities regarding fire safety in their estate.

FAO: Principals / Chairs of Scotland's colleges and universities

Further information: **Contact:** Deanne Holden
Job title: Policy / Analysis Officer
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Cladding Assessment update

1. In [June 2017](#) and [December 2017](#) SFC sought information relating to wall cladding systems on your buildings following the tragic events at Grenfell Tower in London.
2. The responses received at that time provided the necessary information and assurances, including details of any necessary remedial action.
3. You will know that in Scotland, student accommodation is classed as “relevant premises” under the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005. That means that landlords, as duty holders, have a responsibility to ensure that fire risk assessments of the building are undertaken. Student accommodation is also subject to risk based audits by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to assess the adequacy of the fire safety risk assessment and the fire safety measures in place in such buildings.
4. The fire at The Cube student accommodation at the University of Bolton on 15 November has again brought the matter of wall cladding materials to the fore, and SFC believes it is in the public interest to confirm that any necessary action identified in 2017 has been undertaken. The questions relating to student accommodation relate to all buildings used to provide student accommodation owned or managed by the institution, or in the case of third party provided student accommodation, those with which the institution has contractual or student nomination rights.
5. In this regard, we now seek confirmation:
 - That any remedial action identified in 2017 has been undertaken and all buildings have been subject to fire safety risk assessments.
 - That institutions are following the developing research into the safety aspects of alternative cladding types and taking appropriate action.
6. You will also recall that we wrote to you on 5 July this year highlighting a programme of fire safety tests commissioned by the UK Government on a range of non-ACM cladding products. The Scottish Government requested that we bring this to your attention and advised that you have as clear as possible an understanding of the cladding materials and systems used on buildings within your estates.
7. We, therefore, seek confirmation that you have a full understanding of the extent of cladding materials used on your buildings and that this is addressed within fire risk assessments undertaken. At this stage, we are not looking for information on individual buildings, although we anticipate that this will be required in due course.

8. Lastly, given the need to urgently rehouse students displaced following emergency situations we would also require assurance that an appropriate crisis management and business continuity plan is in place to deal with such events.
9. Please complete your responses to the questions below at Annex A, provided as a separate Word document.

Estate-Wide

<p>Has all remedial action identified in 2017 been undertaken? (Y/N) If not, please explain and outline when this work is likely to be completed?</p>	
<p>Has your Institution collated up to date information on the cladding types used on each of the buildings within your estate? (Y/N) (We do not require a breakdown at this stage, but you should be prepared to provide this in due course). If you have identified any issues you should ensure that you are taking appropriate action.</p>	
<p>Is your Institution following the developing research into the safety aspects of alternative cladding types? (Y/N)</p>	

Student Accommodation

	Response
Is your institution satisfied that all reasonable steps have been taken to ensure that cladding on relevant student accommodation is safe? (Y/N) If not, please explain and outline when this work is likely to be completed?	
Have your buildings have been subject to a fire safety risk assessment? (Y/N)	
Are arrangements in place for sharing of fire risk assessment information with residents, where requested? (Y/N)	
As part of your duty of care to students, has your Institution considered providing guidance or other resources to those considering occupying third party residences? (Y/N) If yes, please provide brief details, as we may wish to share good practice.	
Do you have an appropriate crisis management and business continuity plan in place? (Y/N) If not, what action do you intend to take?	

10. In addition, please complete the attached Excel template at Annex B and provide the addresses and bed numbers of student accommodation buildings:
- Owned or managed by the institution.
 - Owned or managed by a third party for which the institution has contractual, or nomination rights.
- (This information will be shared with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service)
11. Please arrange for responses to be sent to my colleague Deanne Holden, tel: 0131 313 6615, email: dholden@sfc.ac.uk by **12 noon, 12 December 2019**. If that will not be possible, please advise Deanne of the date by when you will be able to respond.
12. If you have any questions on this matter, please contact either Deanne Holden or Bob Wilson, tel: 0131 313 6541, email: bwilson@sfc.ac.uk.