

Standfirst – TBA

The Fire Safety Academy: Helping shape the Future of Fire Safety Training

The field of fire safety qualifications is a specialised yet crucial sector, with only a handful of providers offering comprehensive training for new entrants as well as graduate fire engineers.

As a relatively new entrant, The Fire Safety Academy has swiftly established itself as a key player, delivering high-quality, bespoke training solutions tailored to the needs of fire safety professionals across various sectors.

The Fire Safety Academy was founded in 2021 by Chris Wilson. Chris's journey in fire safety education began during his tenure with Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, where he played a pivotal role in developing training programmes for staff when serving as a specialist fire safety officer. His expertise was further honed during his seven years part time work at the Fire Service College in Moreton-in-Marsh, where he contributed to shaping national training standards.

Driven by a passion for improving fire safety education, Chris set out to design and implement a fully integrated training programme for fire safety inspectors. His vision was ambitious: to create a structured pathway that would take new entrants through a three-year development journey, culminating in their qualification as fully-fledged fire safety inspectors. The programme included all necessary training elements, ensuring a comprehensive and practical learning experience.



Chris worked with one awarding body to develop the Introductory Certificate in Fire Safety, a qualification that laid the foundation for structured learning in the field. This pioneering course was later delivered through The Fire Safety Academy and adopted by multiple fire and rescue services across the UK as an opening to further development.

Chris credits much of his success to the encouragement and guidance he received from his two mentors, who, despite being competitors, provided invaluable advice and support. Their passing marked a profound loss, but their influence continues to inspire Chris in his mission to elevate fire safety training standards and educating fire safety professionals through his other connections in the Institution of Fire Engineers, where amongst other roles, Chris is a Fellow member and helps to process Engineering Council applications.

Through perseverance and dedication, The Fire Safety Academy quickly gained traction, securing contracts with fire services in Surrey, Gloucestershire, Manchester, Norfolk, and Warwickshire. While these courses were initially delivered in-house, their success provided the foundation for an ambitious expansion into Open Courses, making fire safety qualifications accessible to a broader audience.

Recognising the constraints and pressures faced by fire safety professionals, The Fire Safety Academy ensures that submission deadlines are more flexible, allowing candidates additional time to complete their work. This approach acknowledges the realities of working in

“Training is the key to developing new skills knowledge and understanding, you can’t buy experience but you can buy training”

the service and ensures that learning can be balanced alongside operational duties.

Additionally, The Fire Safety Academy offers one-to-one mentoring, flexible course delivery, and more digestible, bite-sized pre-course learning, ensuring that every candidate receives the support they need to succeed. These provisions enhance the accessibility and effectiveness of the learning experience, making it easier for professionals to upskill while managing their workloads.

Beyond qualifications, The Fire Safety Academy also provides legal case preparation and training. Chris's extensive experience as a Senior Lead Fire Safety Inspector in Oxfordshire, and his expertise in legal casework is now channelled into specialised training, equipping fire safety professionals with the knowledge and skills to navigate difficult legal frameworks effectively.

Today, The Fire Safety Academy operates open courses in cooperation with the Kents Hill Park Conference and Banqueting Centre in Milton Keynes, offering a range of accredited courses. The current programme includes the

Level 3 Certificate, Level 4 Certificate, and Level 4 Diploma in Fire Safety, with plans to introduce additional courses as demand grows. This initiative ensures that fire safety professionals from any organisation, not just fire and rescue services, can access high-quality training tailored to their specific needs.

Chris's commitment to continuous learning and professional development is evident in his own academic pursuits. Currently studying Building Engineering and Law, he continues to expand his expertise to enhance the quality and scope of training provided by The Fire Safety Academy. Chris is also working with Skills for Justice Awards and the Home Office to draft new qualifications in Fire Risk Assessment.

As The Fire Safety Academy moves forward, it remains dedicated to its founding principles: delivering high-quality, flexible, and practical fire safety training that meets the evolving needs of professionals across the industry. With a growing portfolio of courses and a steadfast commitment to excellence, The Fire Safety Academy is set to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of fire safety education in the UK and beyond.

See us on stand 4/M55 at the Fire Safety Event at the NEC, Birmingham, 8–10 April 2025.

www.oxfordfiresafety.co.uk/fire-safety-academy




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