SFG20

Taking over responsibility for maintaining a building in the education sector

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This guide, produced by SFG20 – the industry standard for building maintenance specification, is intended to help those responsible for maintenance in schools or universities with practical guidance to help deal with commonly encountered challenges in this sector. We will provide you with answers to these five questions:

1. What are the important questions to ask when you take over responsibility for a building?
2. What documents should you be provided with when you take over responsibility for a building?
3. What should you do if you don't have the maintenance instruction manuals for assets?
4. What should you do if you don't have the warrantees for assets?
5. What are the main considerations when you are setting up a new maintenance plan?

1 What are the important questions to ask when you take over responsibility for a building?

Taking over responsibility for a school or university's estates and maintenance can be a daunting experience. There are 3 main areas to prioritise:

1. Ensure you understand and carry out the maintenance tasks that are required to comply with legislation and keep everyone safe and well.
2. Identify what maintenance is required to keep facilitates available and operating as intended. Your maintenance regime should be optimised so that key locations are prioritised and maintained well.
3. Ensure maintenance tasks are carried out by a competent person for that particular job e.g., gas safe, electrician etc. Take time to carry out any necessary risk assessments and/or background checks, and make sure that any required work permits, qualifications, insurance etc. are all in place before work commences.

There are several important questions to ask that can help ensure a smooth transition. Firstly, it is essential to establish a detailed overview of the current systems in place, including the maintenance procedures and any ongoing projects. This will help you to identify any potential issues and prioritise tasks accordingly.

Secondly, it is vital to establish a clear understanding of the budget and resources available for maintenance and repairs. This will help you to plan and implement maintenance tasks effectively and ensure that the facility is a safe and welcoming environment for students and staff alike. It is also important to engage with the educational community and seek their input on any future plans or improvements. This collaborative approach can help to foster a positive and inclusive environment and ensure that everyone feels welcome and valued. By asking these important questions, you can help to ensure that roll out is successful.

Here is a list of questions to ask when taking over a school or university building's maintenance:

- What are the current maintenance policies in place? e.g., what assets are dealt with reactively on failure vs. those where maintenance is planned to prevent failure
- What preventative maintenance plans are in place?
- How often should the maintenance team inspect the facility and its components?
- What safety measures need to be taken during inspections and assignments?
- Are there any sector specific requirements that affect maintenance tasks/approaches for the facility?
- How much time and resources are allocated for the completion of specific tasks?
- Are there any alternative solutions available for addressing potential problems with the facilities or its components?
- What safety procedures are in place?
- Are building inspections regularly conducted?
- How is the budget managed and tracked?
- Are there any audits or accreditations that the school or university requires for its buildings and grounds?
- Are there any current contracts that need to be reviewed or renegotiated?

It's crucial to stay up-to-date with legislation and regulation relating to building and asset maintenance, as non-compliance can lead to fines, penalties, and even imprisonment.

2 What documents should you be provided with when you take over responsibility for a school or university building?

When taking on responsibility for an education facility's maintenance, it is important to be provided with the following documents:

- Building plans
- Risk assessments
- Maintenance schedules
- Emergency evacuation plans
- Fire safety plans
- Insurance information
- Vendor contracts
- Energy efficiency reports
- Environmental impact assessments
- Health and safety policies

It's important to obtain documentation on any past repairs or renovations to understand the history of the infrastructure. By having access to these crucial documents, you can ensure that the facilities are properly maintained and operate efficiently.

3 What should you do if you don't have the maintenance instruction manuals for assets?

Start by identifying the key assets that require regular maintenance, such as HVAC systems, plumbing, and electrical systems. Once you have a list of these key assets, reach out to the manufacturer or vendor to obtain the instruction manuals.

Investing in preventative maintenance can prevent costly repairs and ensure your infrastructure remains in top condition for years to come. Regularly inspecting and maintaining equipment, systems and fixtures helps to identify any potential issues before they can become more serious or costly to repair. It also minimises risks associated with failure of these systems or components, which can cause disruption to classes or other activities. Ultimately, regular preventative maintenance ensures that school and university estates remain safe, efficient, and comfortable learning environment for the students and staff.

4 What should you do if you don't have the warranty for an asset?

A comprehensive approach should be taken to evaluate the condition of assets. This should include inspections of equipment, systems and fixtures such as plumbing, HVAC systems, electrical wiring and safety features such as alarm systems and emergency exits. After assessing the condition of assets, it is important to plan regular preventative maintenance tasks to ensure that any potential issues can be quickly identified and addressed before they become more serious.

5 What are the main considerations when you are setting up a new maintenance plan?

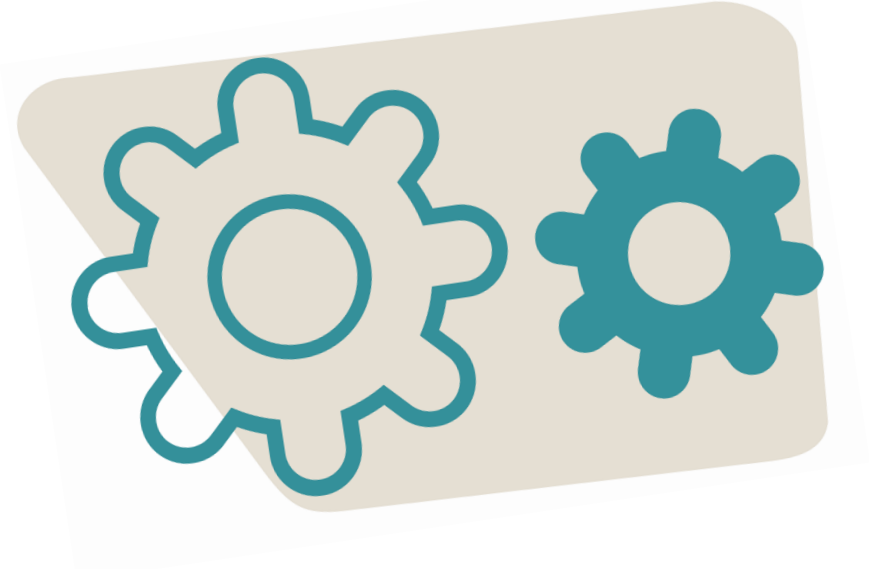
Setting up a new maintenance plan for school or university estates requires careful consideration of several key factors. Firstly, it is important to assess the current condition of the buildings and grounds to identify any areas in need of urgent repair. From there, the maintenance plan should prioritise tasks based on their level of importance and urgency. Your number one priority should be to complete any tasks that are required to keep your building safe and in line with all relevant legislation.

The second priority is then to ensure, in as far as is reasonably practical, the availability of critical assets and locations. A perfect example would be to ensure that your heating system is well maintained so it can operate efficiently, require less energy to run and reduces the chance of an unexpected breakdown. No heating can mean a closed school or university!

It is also important to establish a regular schedule for routine maintenance tasks, such as cleaning and upkeep of equipment. Cost is another factor that must be considered when developing a maintenance plan, as budgets can vary greatly. Finally, involving staff and stakeholders in the planning process can help ensure that the plan aligns with the needs and priorities of the community. Attention to these key considerations can help ensure that school and university estates are well-maintained and provide a safe and comfortable environment for students and staff alike.

Key considerations to keep in mind when creating a new maintenance plan for schools or universities:

- Identify the most critical areas that need regular maintenance and create a plan for addressing them.
- Map out a schedule that ensures all maintenance tasks are completed regularly and on-time.
- Set up preventative maintenance activities such as cleaning, lubrication, rustproofing, and other legally required and recommended practices.
- Establish clear policies for emergencies, such as evacuations or power outages, and assign responsibilities to staff members to carrying them out.
- Clearly define who is responsible for what types of maintenance and set expectations accordingly, including sufficient time allotted to complete specific tasks each month or quarter.



What is SFG20 and how can it help you with efficient maintenance?

SFG20 was developed by BESA, the Building Engineering Services Association, in response to a need for a best practice standard for maintenance. The SFG20 system has been designed and developed over three decades to keep pace with the changing maintenance profession, and it provides a technically robust standard that is also highly customisable to individual building needs. Totally unique, this web-based software is designed for facilities managers, building owners, contractors and consultants. It enables you to stay compliant whilst saving time, energy and money. In total, it offers over 2000 schedules, covering all possible aspects of a building and its operation – from building fabric and catering to water systems, heating and security. Each of these schedules provides insights into what maintenance procedures are legal requirements. It then further helps to categorise risk by indicating which tasks are mandatory, functional and discretionary. The system includes step-by-step detailed requirements for each maintenance task, with timings required for each – making scheduling and resource management easier. This can also prove particularly helpful for the tendering process. A client or consultant can create a clearly defined work package for contractors to quote for on a comparable basis. This also saves contractors significant time in the tendering process or in developing maintenance programmes for clients.

With legal compliance at its heart, the SFG20 system is constantly monitored and updated by a team of experts to ensure that it reflects the latest laws. A committee of industry professionals ratifies updates to ensure that any guidance reflects industry best practice. This saves users significant time and their own resource as well as giving peace of mind that their organisations will be fully compliant. One of the most important aspects of SFG20 for clients and contractors is that it provides flexibility as well as standardisation. Users can customise their own schedules to reflect the building (or buildings) that they maintain – enabling rapid location of any problem areas and reducing time on-site for technical teams. This ensures simplicity for users and reduction in on-site time results in a reduction of costs. And with the growing use of hand-held smart devices in the maintenance and FM fields, SFG20 can also be integrated with a number of leading Computer Aided FM (CAFM) software systems facilitating efficient, rapid and accurate working practices.

For more details on SFG20 or to request a demonstration with one of our experts, visit: SFG20.co.uk

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