PAUL MELLON CENTRE
for Studies in British Art

Accessibility Guide for the Paul Mellon Centre

Welcome

We warmly welcome all visitors to the Paul Mellon Centre (PMC), located at 16 Bedford Square, London, WC1B 3JA.

The Centre is in a Grade I listed historic building, subject to strict planning regulations, so we try to strike an appropriate balance between delivering an accessible and safe environment in which to work and receive visitors, and safeguarding the integrity of our architectural heritage.

Please get in touch if you require any further information about specific access or need advice on planning your visit:
info@paul-mellon-centre.ac.uk or **020 7580 0311**.

Alternatively, please view our accessibility film located on the **Visit Us** page of our website.

At a Glance

Level Access

There is level access from the main entrance to our:

- Reception
- Display Room
- Seminar Room
- Unisex accessible toilet
- Storage lockers

Visual

Some rooms in the building use low lighting during presentations and events.

Getting here

Travel by Public Transport

You can get to the PMC by bus, tube, car or by walking.

The nearest **bus stops** are on:

- Percy Street Stop E (0.1 miles/0.16 km)
- Tottenham Court Road Stop C (0.2 miles/0.32 km)
- Tottenham Court Road/Great Russell Street (0.2 miles/0.32 km)
- Chenies Street Stop D (0.2 miles/0.32 km)

The nearest **tube stations** are:

- Tottenham Court Road (0.3 miles/0.48 km)
- Goodge Street (0.3 miles/0.48 km)

Bedford Square is accessible by car or taxi. Please note there is no dropped kerb immediately outside the Centre but there is by numbers 25 and 26 Bedford Square.

Parking

There is no parking at the PMC; however, there are three Blue Badge parking spaces on Store Street, which runs parallel, directly behind Bedford Square. There are also pay and display parking bays on Bedford Square, subject to local parking restrictions.

Additionally, the following car parks are nearby:

- Adeline Place, WC1B 3AJ (0.2 miles/0.32 km) – 140 spaces, two of which are disabled bays
- Bloomsbury Square, WC1A 2RJ (0.4 miles/0.64 km) – 300 spaces, two of which are disabled bays

Arrival

Path to Main Entrance

From the street to the main entrance there is level access.
The path is 990 mm wide, or more.

Main Entrance

- The main entrance at 16 Bedford Square has three steps up to a landing (each 130 mm rise) then a fourth at the threshold (90 mm).
- There are no handrails although there are railings.
- The secondary entrance at 15 Bedford Square has four steps up to a landing (all of 120 mm rise) then a further small threshold step.
- The main door has two narrow leaves, 550 mm width, opens inwards and has a rounded knob door pull. It is heavy and assistance may be required to open it.
- A portable ramp can be deployed to enable wheelchair access. Ring the bell on the right-hand railings outside the main door at number 16 if required.
- The walkway to Reception is made of stone and carpeting.

The Front Entrance from Street Level

The Accessibility Doorbell

The Front Entrance Hallway to Reception

Getting Around Inside

Ground Floor

Reception

All visitors should report to Reception on arrival to sign in.
The desk has a low section.
The waiting area has two types of seating. The sofa seat height is 370 mm and the chair seat height is 400 mm; both have low armrests.

The Reception

Public Toilet

There is an accessible toilet for disabled visitors on the ground floor, within the main public bathroom.
From the main entrance to the accessible toilet there is level access.
The toilet is left-hand transfer using horizontal grab rails.
The nearest Changing Places toilet is at the DMS Watson Library, Gower Street, WC1E 6BT (0.4 miles away).

The Accessible Bathroom

Lockers

Our storage lockers are kept in the ground floor public bathroom area.

- Lockers are free for the public to use.
- Lockers range from floor level to standing head height. If you require a lower-level locker, please ask a member of Front of House.

Lift

Unfortunately, we do not have a lift in the Centre; all access to the basement or above the ground floor is via stairs.

The Staircase from Ground to First Floor

Using the Public Rooms

Basement Floor

Public Study Room

- From the main entrance to this area, access is down one flight of carpeted stairs with a handrail.
- The door has two narrow leaves, 660 mm width each, which open inwards.
- The floor of the Public Study Room is hardwood and flat.
- There is a comfort area for readers immediately next to the Public Study Room with two chairs with a seat height of 470 mm and low armrests.
- If you would like to view Archive items but are not able to use the stairs to the Public Study Room, we have an area on the ground floor where materials can be brought to you, with prior notice.

The Staircase from the First Floor down to the Public Study Room in the Basement

The Public Study Room

The Readers Area

Ground Floor

Library Annex

This is located down an additional two steps down from the Public Study Room area.

- It has smooth, flat concrete flooring.
- If you require assistance to use the rolling racking, please ask a member of staff.

The Library Annex

Display Room

From the main entrance to this area, there is level access.

- The display cabinets are of a height to be visible for wheelchair users, and there is seating available.
- Some displays are presented electronically on a tablet.

The Display Room

Seminar Room

From the main entrance to this area, there is level access except for a small but flat incline between the Drawing Room and the entryway to the adjacent 15 Bedford Square.

- The Seminar Room table is at an accessible height for wheelchair users and some of the chairs have no armrests, allowing for transfer from a wheelchair.
- Please note, the room often has low lighting during presentations and events.

The Seminar Room

First Floor

Lecture Room and Anteroom

From the main entrance to this area, access is via the Reception or Drawing Room and up two flights of stairs with a handrail.

- If you are unable to access the first floor for an event or meeting there, please let us know and we will try to move the event to the Seminar Room. If that is not possible, with advance notice we can provide streaming or remote participation, either from our Seminar Room or from another, preferred location.
- Please note the Lecture Room often has low lighting during presentations and events.

The Lecture Room

Customer Care and Support

Accessibility Equipment

- We can provide a wheelchair ramp from street level to the front entrance – where possible, please provide prior notice of when you will be visiting so we can have this ready for you on your arrival.
- If you're unable to go downstairs to the Public Study Room, we can provide a designated space on the ground floor where Archive materials can be brought to you. Please note that advance notice of what you would like to view is required.
- Visitors accessing our Library & Archives materials can use provided colour overlays for neurodiverse people or those who get visual stress.
- We have hearing loops for Reception and the Public Study Room, as well as portable hearing assistance systems for meetings in the Seminar Room and Lecture Room.
- All our printed information can be provided in large print, following the guidelines produced by the Sensory Trust and the UK Association for Accessible Formats.
- We can provide a BSL interpreter for events we host. Please note that advance notice of what event(s) you would like to attend is required.
- We are happy to host the personal assistants of disabled visitors or event attendees.
- We welcome guide dogs, assistance dogs and support animals, and can provide water bowls for them. Please ask staff for assistance.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

If visitors would require assistance in the event of an emergency evacuation, they must make this known to us, in the following ways:

- by contacting info@paul-mellon-centre.ac.uk or 020 7580 0311 before their visit
- by contacting the member of staff with whom they are meeting, before their visit
- by responding to event invites and filling in the appropriate section
- by alerting our Front of House staff, on their arrival

We can then discuss how we may assist you and provide you with a tailored Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan.

Please note, the PMC is aware of its obligations under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and is committed to processing your data securely and transparently. Any personal information you supply with regard to emergency evacuation procedure will be used solely to assist you in the event of an emergency evacuation. It will not be used for any other purpose. It will be held securely in accordance with the Centre's retention schedules. Please consult the Privacy Notice on our website for more information.

Customer Care Support

All relevant staff members have disability awareness training.

Guide last updated: May 2025

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16 Bedford Square, London, WC1B 3JA

www.paul-mellon-centre.ac.uk

Company registered in England 983028
Registered Charity 313838