

The Royal College of Defence Studies



2011/12

About us

RCDS – an international education in strategy for tomorrow's policy makers



The Royal College of Defence Studies (RCDS) is the senior college of the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom. We provide the capstone to the strategic education of those officers of the Armed Forces and equivalent civil servants who have the potential to reach the highest ranks and who must therefore understand and be comfortable working at the strategic level in a cross-government and international environment. We do so by providing a globally-respected course in international strategic studies at the post-graduate level.

The main features of the RCDS course are:

- One academic year in duration (mid-September to mid-July)
- Optional MA in International Security and Strategy
- Accredited by King's College, London
- Modular – providing flexibility to meet customer needs
- Senior people with broad experience
- About 115 Members on each course, including 90 full-time Members of whom about 30 are from the UK and about 60 from overseas.
- Members include military officers, civil servants, diplomats, senior police officers, members of parliament and private sector executives.
- Representation from every part of the world
- Serious discussion of strategic issues in a trusted and respectful environment
- International network of senior alumni

Organisation

The **Commandant** of the Royal College of Defence Studies is Vice Admiral Charles Style CBE.



VA Charles Style

The **Senior Directing Staff (SDS)** are 2-star officers from the Royal Navy, British Army, Royal Air Force and the Civil Service. They provide support, supervision, guidance and mentoring to RCDS Course Members with assistance from professors from King's College London. They also develop the content of the RCDS Course and lead specific elements.



RA Simon Williams AVM Brian Bates MG Andrew Kennett AUS Jeremy Jarvis

The **Chief of Staff** is responsible for the delivery and administration of the RCDS Course programme and associated activities. These tasks are performed by five small teams:

The **Directing Staff (DS)** are responsible for the day to day delivery of the academic elements of the course programme, including daily lectures and UK and overseas visits.

The **Information Services Group** is responsible for the provision of library, IT and photo-printing services, which includes support for the lecture theatre, websites and Member research activities.

The **Programme Management and Support Group** coordinates all college activities, including incoming visits, and provides administrative assistance.

The **Business Support Team** deals with all contract and budgetary issues including estate management, human resources, health and safety issues and compliance with MoD policy.

The **Member Services Team** is responsible for the recruitment and induction of Course Members and the provision of essential support during their time at RCDS, as well as the 'integrated programme' which includes spouses and partners. This team also provides all required support to RCDS alumni.

Programme



His Majesty King Abdullah II Bin Al Hussein of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan addressing RCDS

The Royal College of Defence Studies is a world-renowned institution committed to developing strategic thinkers and leaders. In an international environment, which provides perspectives and insights from around the world, we seek to inspire study, stimulate thinking and stir debate on contemporary strategic issues. Through contact and exchange across boundaries, in which the views of others are respected, the diverse international membership of RCDS provides a unique and enriching experience for all. Lifelong friendships are made and provide a global professional and social network of trusted interlocutors.



HRH The Princess Royal with RCDS members



Former Prime Minister Gordon Brown addressing the RCDS

Members join RCDS from about 40 countries each year on the basis of invitations sent by the UK Ministry of Defence through diplomatic channels. The majority of Members are from the Armed Forces, but we also welcome the nomination of diplomats, civil servants, police officers and others in the public sector. Private sector and non-governmental organisation participation is also sought in the interests of broadening the base of experience and gaining wider perspectives. Members share one thing in common: they must be high flyers in their profession. Already in positions of responsibility, they will be selected on the basis of their potential to reach the highest ranks in their parent organisation, either as top decision-makers or as strategic advisers. Most military Members are of OF5/OF6 rank (Colonel/Brigadier) although a small number of more senior and more junior officers are also present. Civilian Members will be of an equivalent grade or status.



RCDS Members in the ante room

In addition to full-time Course Members, RCDS offers Associate Membership to a small number of individuals who are able to attend a number of lectures and seminars at Seaford House on a part-time basis. London-based Defence Attaches and Embassy and High Commission staff may also join RCDS for the duration of the UK element of Term 3 (see below).

All Members must be fluent in the English language. Those who do not speak English as their first language must begin the course with a score of at least 6.5 on the IELTS (International English Language Testing System) scale. Refresher **English language training** is available prior to the main course for those who need it.

Those who attend the RCDS Course become Members of the College for life. They retain access to Seaford House and its facilities, including the library. They may attend lectures and other events, subject only to an overall limit on numbers. Alumni are authorised to access the Members website which provides up to date information on the College programme and the opportunity to discuss relevant issues with present and past course Members on interactive forums.

Alumni year groups each organise their own regular reunions. All Alumni are invited to an annual reunion and a 'Winston Churchill Memorial Lecture' at Seaford House.

RCDS Course



RCDS Course Members at work

The RCDS Course is a post-graduate level programme in international strategic studies, focusing on defence and security issues at the grand strategic level. We seek to inculcate an understanding of global trends and a habit of strategic thinking for those who will be the policy and strategy makers of tomorrow - or their senior advisers. In a trusted environment protected by the Chatham House Rule¹, the course attracts the best speakers from the UK and abroad, including not only top academics but also practitioners of strategy and strategic thinking, in the form of Ministers, diplomats, senior officers and officials, and even Heads of State.

The course explores the contemporary world in the light of observable strategic trends, in order to better understand conflict issues and how states can act collaboratively to assure their own peace and security and that of others. The approach is pragmatic and we use a minimum of theory or doctrine as we focus on our two signature themes: Strategy and Leadership. Considering the challenges of leadership at the strategic level and how strategy can be improved in this inter-connected world are examined in specific modules but are also the two golden threads running throughout the course, which is delivered across an academic year in four terms:

Term 1 – The Future Strategic Context



Interior of UN building, New York

¹ The Chatham House Rule originated at Chatham House in June 1927 with the aim of providing anonymity to speakers to encourage openness, free discussion and the sharing of information. This allows them to express personal opinions and views which may not be the ‘official’ position of the organisations they represent. The Rule states: “*When a meeting, or part thereof, is held under the Chatham House Rule, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed*”.

Term 1 examines the principal sources of and influences upon global instability and conflict, in terms of the strategic trends in geo-politics, economics and finance, society and culture, science and technology, and man's interaction with the physical environment (including demographic trends, climate change, migration, and food/water security). It includes study visits to the City of London and defence industry in the UK and concludes with a week's study in the USA, visiting the US government and international financial institutions in Washington and the United Nations in New York.

Term 2 – Conflict and Strategy in the Modern World



NATO HQ in Brussels

Term 2 examines the character of conflict in the 21st century and considers how the instruments of strategy can be used by governments to prevent, manage or resolve conflict, including through the prism of contemporary case studies. It includes a study visit to the EU institutions and NATO HQ in Brussels. It has a practical focus, including the first elements of strategic analysis to be encountered on the course and it concludes with a table-top exercise in strategy-making.

Term 3 – Contemporary International Issues



Protesters clash with security forces

Term 3 is organised on a regional basis but is designed to address the key cross-cutting themes in parallel. It examines what makes each region different, considers the prospects for security, stability and prosperity in key states and sub-regions, and teases out the related issues of strategy in both national and international contexts. It includes further study visits within the United Kingdom and three week study tours to a choice of regions of the world. These overseas study visits look in depth at countries that share a region both in terms of geography and security risks; we consider their

prospects in terms of governance, economics and security and the scope for regional and wider international co-operation. During this busy term the Members complete their dissertations and also produce a strategy paper on a contemporary issue.

Term 4 – Leadership in the Strategic Environment



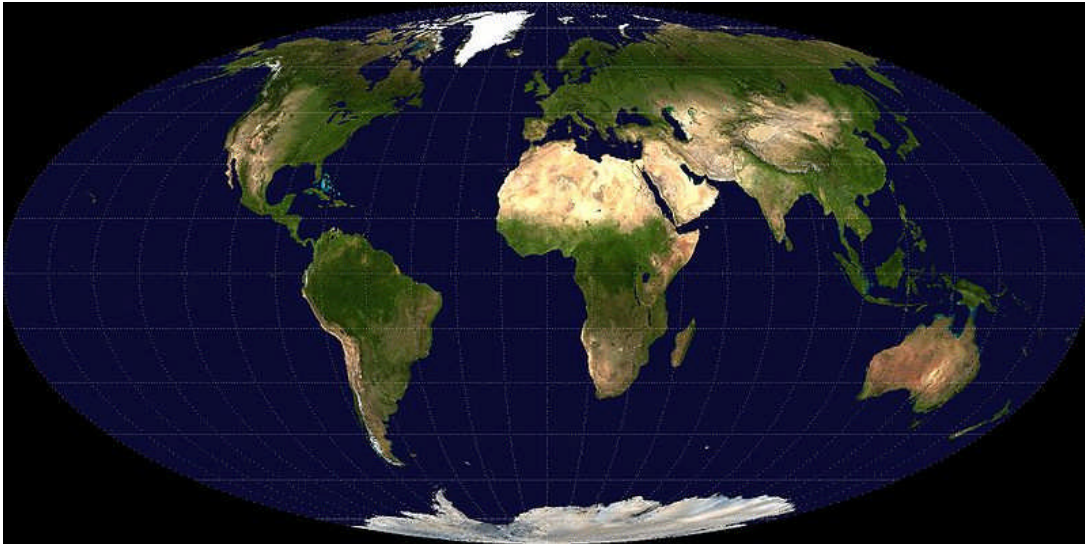
Lt Gen Jim Dutton in Afghanistan

Term 4 seeks to enhance understanding of the nature, function and requisite qualities of leadership at the strategic level, taking in both the public and private sectors. It concludes with the ‘Decision Game’ in which the skills in strategic analysis and strategy-making developed on the course are put to the test in a crisis scenario based on the real-world in the near future. Members will operate as country teams and international organisations engaged in diplomacy and ‘realpolitik’ to resolve a multi-dimensional international crisis.

Terms 1, 2 and 4 (and even the phases of Term 3) can be taken as separate modules by UK Members from government departments and fee-payers from the private sector. This enriches the experience for the great majority of Members who still attend for the whole academic year. RCDS continues to set enormous store by the totality of the Seaford House experience, including the excellence of the speakers we attract, the privileged access represented in the integrated programme, and the unique opportunity to work in diverse groups from around the globe on common challenges. The study tours to different regions of the world remain the culminating point of our engagement with contemporary issues and our work on making strategy. And they still cement friendships that last a lifetime.

The main course serves as the foundation for an MA in International Security and Strategy offered by King’s College London to those Members electing to undertake additional studies in parallel.

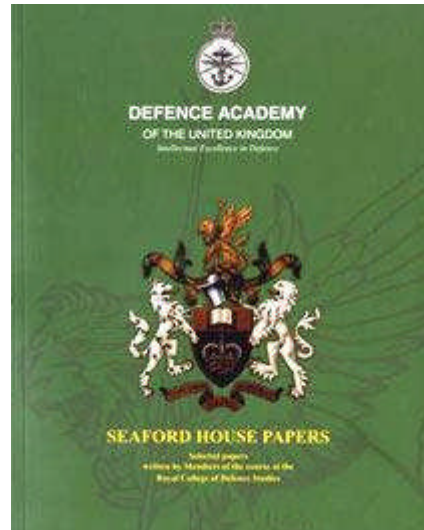
An International Experience



RCDS welcomes Course Members from all over the world. Since 2009, the following countries have sent their senior officers and officials to study at Seaford House:

Afghanistan	Lebanon
Algeria	Malaysia
Argentina	Morocco
Australia	Nepal
Austria	Netherlands
Bangladesh	New Zealand
Belize	Nigeria
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Norway
Botswana	Oman
Brazil	Pakistan
Canada	Poland
China	Qatar
Colombia	Romania
Czech Republic	Rwanda
Egypt	Saudi Arabia
Estonia	Serbia
Ethiopia	Slovenia
France	South Africa
Georgia	South Korea
Germany	South Sudan
Ghana	Spain
India	Sudan
Indonesia	Turkey
Iraq	Uganda
Israel	Ukraine
Italy	United Arab Emirates
Japan	United Kingdom
Jordan	Uruguay
Kazakhstan	USA
Kenya	Uzbekistan
Kuwait	Yemen

Dissertations



Seaford House Paper

Each full Member of the RCDS Course is required to write a dissertation of up to 10,000 words (the requirement is 15,000 words on the MA programme). This paper is a personal intellectual challenge, and enables Members to demonstrate their academic calibre. It is an opportunity to research a subject deeply, to provide fresh analysis, to test conventional wisdom, and to arrive at conclusions pointing to a way forward. Members have a free choice of subject provided it is a strategic issue. There will normally be an international relations, defence or security (broadly defined) focus.

A selection of the best papers from each course is published annually on the RCDS website at www.mod.uk/rcds, with an editorial introduction, as the Seaford House Papers.

Master of Arts Degree



King's College London

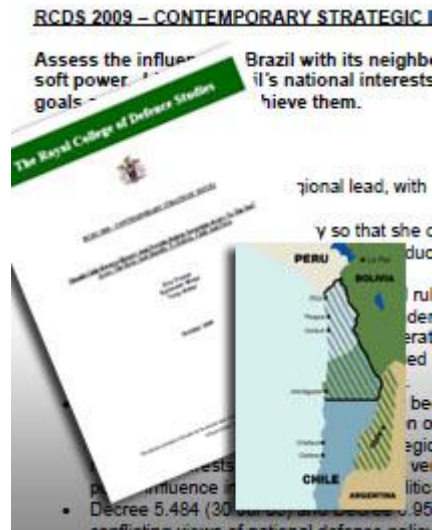
During their year at RCDS, Course Members can take the opportunity to study for an MA in International Security and Strategy with King's College London. This joint programme offers a unique opportunity to acquire a prestigious degree accredited by the University of London.

The existing RCDS lecture, seminar and study visit programme forms the main basis for accreditation. The dissertation is another common element, although it has to be a longer essay for the MA programme. In addition to the main course, the MA requires completion of:

- A score of 7.0 on the IELTS (International English Language Testing System) scale
- An entry exam
- 26 additional seminars
- 3 extended essays (4-6,000 words)
- A longer dissertation (15,000 words)
- A final exam

The programme has been running successfully since 2001. In recent years about one third of the Course Members have undertaken the MA programme.

Contemporary Strategic Issues



Contemporary Strategic Issue Papers

One of the aims of the RCDS Course is to develop Members' skills in strategic analysis and policy-making at government level. One of the ways we do this is by tasking the Members to conduct fresh research and analysis on current real world international security issues.

The papers they produce, unlike the main course dissertation, are not academic papers following scholarly convention. They are short summary papers of the sort needed in government which, although based on extensive research and the consideration of a number of scenarios or options, boil down the argument to a set of key judgements and supporting rationale. To test team-working and to exploit the unique range of personal and professional experience in the international RCDS Membership, this work is conducted in small groups of 2-4 Members. It is linked to the country or region they will be visiting on their overseas study tour.

A selection of the best papers each year is published on the RCDS website at www.mod.uk/rcds

Integrated programme



College events

The Member Services Group Manager coordinates an integrated programme for College Members and a tailored programme for spouses and partners. Where possible, the integrated programme also includes families, who play an integral part in the RCDS experience. This programme covers all the non-academic activities of the course as well as the events that mould the course together and provide a taste of what is both great and good in the UK. The programme includes an “International Night”; a Trafalgar dinner aboard HMS VICTORY; a ‘Burns Night’ supper at the Caledonian Club; a day at the horse races; dinner at Royal Naval College, Greenwich in the Painted Hall; the Army and Navy Rugby match at Twickenham; an evening at the Tower of London; a dinner at the RAF Museum; and an end of course ball.

The early part of the year sees a number of 'getting to know you' events based both at the college and in the community where most families are living. These integrated activities continue throughout the year and all are welcome to participate. Families are encouraged to bring their school-aged and older children with them for their year in the UK, so the RCDS experience can also be shared by the family, and remembered by all for life.

Whilst at the college, Members and their families have the opportunity to gain the full benefits of a year living in London, with easy access to continental Europe.

Library



Members using the library

Our library houses an important collection of approximately 26,000 books and pamphlets, focusing on security studies, politics and international affairs. It has a large collection of research papers - including a full set of Members' dissertations and Seaford House Papers and subscribes to just over 200 current periodical titles.

The Library provides Members with access to a number of e-journals and on-line databases primarily designed to assist them with their research. Further information is available on request. General Enquiries (telephone): 020 7915 4836

Library services



RCDS Library Staff

Opening hours:

Monday – Friday 0900 –1700
(Closed Public Holidays)

Access:

Restricted to staff and Members (MoD and other government departments by appointment)

Borrowing:

A loans service is primarily available to staff and Members. Requests from MoD and other government departments may be made although availability of material cannot always be guaranteed. Access to details of books, dissertations and journal articles is available on a computerised catalogue. Every Member is automatically registered as a library user. Where items are not in stock they can be obtained quickly and efficiently via the extensive network of libraries in the UK.

Research – The Strategic Studies Cell

We are seeking to develop our research into strategic studies at Seaford House. In this regard, our objectives are threefold:

- To sustain the quality of our teaching and mentoring of our Members on the main RCDS Course
- To improve our capability to support conferences, seminars and shorter courses at Seaford House
- To undertake research in support of UK Defence and the wider National Security, which will also enable us to cooperate more effectively with institutions engaged in similar strategic level research and educational activity around the world

In order to achieve these objectives, in September 2010, a small Strategic Studies Cell was established, led by Maj Gen Mungo Melvin, formerly SDS Army at RCDS. To date, activities completed by the Cell have included the following:

- The revision and publication of the third edition of the RCDS booklet ‘Thinking Strategically’, developing new material on strategic appreciation and strategic communication. This booklet has recently been adopted as required reading by the UK’s Higher Command Staff Course, the UK PINNACLE Course, the Civil Service Fast Stream Course and is recommended reading to students of the US National Defense University.
- The design of a new Strategic Staff Exercise and RCDS Strategy Exercise, to provide RCDS members with a practical understanding of the challenges of formulating strategy.
- The introduction of Regional Theme Seminars to help prepare RCDS members for their Overseas Study Tours by inviting external experts on the regions in question to discuss strategic issues with RCDS members.
- The introduction of Strategic Theme Seminars to promote debate of emerging strategic issues. The Seminars are in the style of a “fireside chat”, whereby a select number of attendees (from RCDS, Whitehall, industry and academia) listen to prominent figures from the defence and security community, speaking on grand strategic subjects reflecting their own expertise. As a result, the Cell is building a wide ‘community of interest’ in contemporary strategic issues.
- The coordination of a joint US National Defense College/RCDS Seminar as part of the RCDS visit to the United States, which examined aspects of the instruments of national power; the relationship between security and grand or national strategy; and the development of strategic thinking in the US and UK military.
- The provision of several ‘think pieces’ on strategic issues for the UK MoD including a major study into enhancing strategic capability as part of the ongoing defence reform process; organisation of a Strategic Communication Seminar for the Chief of Defence Staff; and a research project regarding the proposed establishment of the new Armed Forces Committee, recommended by Lord Levene’s Defence Reform report.

During the coming year, the Cell expects to become the platform for a broadly-based and externally supported inquiry into future cyber developments and their significance for the Defence and Security community.

WHISPER

Seaford House is also home to WHISPER (the Whitehall Strategy Programme), which is a personal network that links senior officials across UK government. Strategic in perspective, it covers issues well beyond the traditional remit of the defence and security community. Through meetings that take place at RCDS/Seaford House about six times a year, the WHISPER community focuses on the challenges that are common to most departments and shares views on the implications of change for the government's policy, capacity and culture. The work continues to be supported by Whitehall business leaders at the most senior level and well into 2012 is likely to concentrate on the themes of "Workforce Strategy" (what is the team of the future and how do we create it), "Supporting Exports" (how do we link together better the pockets of work around government) and Resources (can we improve how we recognise and track the key indicators).

WHISPER'S core membership is drawn from central and devolved government but links with other sectors are in place, mainly through the involvement of Senior External Advisers and a wide range of invited contributors. For more information please contact Susan Ambler-Edwards at sjae@rcds.mod.uk

Our history

Origins



Winston Churchill

The Royal College of Defence Studies, formerly the Imperial Defence College, owes its origins to the recommendation of a Cabinet Committee in 1922 presided over by Winston Churchill, then Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Churchill realised that our soldiers, diplomats, colonial officials and police had different mindsets arising from their background, training and education. The Imperial Defence College was designed to bring them together and to develop a shared understanding and a strategic approach to imperial defence. The RCDS today still fulfils the same function - both nationally for the UK and internationally - albeit in the globalised world of the 21st century and in the service, not of Empire, but of international peace and security.

The Early Years



Seaford House

The College was founded in 1927 and was located at 9 Buckingham Gate until 1939. Its work in those days was chiefly concerned with defence of the Empire, with 25 members drawn from the UK, Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

The experience of the Second World War underlined the need for an institution to educate senior service officers and government officials, and to promote a 'comprehensive approach'.

In 1946, the College reopened at its site at Seaford House, Belgrave Square, where it has remained to this day. This was the first year in which members from the United States attended the course.

1970 onwards



Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II with RCDS staff at Seaford House

The College was renamed The Royal College of Defence Studies, with the grant of a Royal Charter, in 1970. Participation has been progressively widened to include members from all parts of the world. Representatives from about 40 different countries attend each year.

We celebrated our 80th Anniversary in 2007. The occasion was marked by a visit by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh.

Our coat of arms



RCDS crest on the outside of Seaford House

Our armorial bearings were granted in 1977, on the occasion of the college's 50th anniversary. A painting of the design was presented to Admiral Sir Ian Easton, the Commandant, by Sir Anthony Wagner, Garter King of Arms, in the presence of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II during her visit to Seaford House on Friday 11th November 1977.



The Beast

The crest includes a representation of the 'Beast' which has been our unofficial emblem since 1932. The trident represents the Royal Navy, the lion the Army and the wings of the lion the Royal Air Force. The laurel wreath around the lion's neck symbolises the civilian component of the college and was added in 1977 after consultation with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The lion is shown sitting on a wreath, or torse, in accordance with heraldic custom.



RCDS crest

The basic feature of the shield is the Royal Crown which is a special privilege granted to the college. The book refers to the educational activities of the college and the green background is included to indicate the distinctive green onyx which decorates Seaford House and is a feature of the building.

The 'supporters' were inspired by the Beast and are in accord with the historical use of lions or leopards in royal heraldry. They are rendered distinctive by the inclusion of the wolf from the arms of Lord Hankey and the lion from those of Sir Winston Churchill, both of whom were involved in the establishment of the college.

The motto can be translated as 'concord (or co-operation) strengthens the limbs' or, more usefully, **'strength through unity'**.

Seaford House



Seaford House

In the middle of the 19th century, the area now known as Belgravia - situated between houses in Grosvenor Place and Sloane Street - included mixed pasture, market gardens, waste land and rubbish dumps.

The area was developed by the 2nd Earl of Grosvenor, also known as the Duke of Westminster, and the current Duke remains the owner of the whole area today. The architects he employed conceived 'a fine square as the centre-piece of the area with streets, crescents and other squares around it'.

The house was built in 1842 by Philip Hardwick (1792-1870), who was at various times architect to the St Katherine's Dock Company. Hardwick also designed the old Euston Railway Station and St. Bartholomew's Hospital. The original cost of the house was just £22,000 and it was described by a writer of the day as 'the largest and most magnificent house in the new square'.

The house conformed to the overall plan for Belgravia and included a stable-yard, coach-house, grooms' quarters and an octagonal clock tower. Originally, it had a 'porte-cochere', (a porch large enough to accept a coach and horses), but this was destroyed by a large bomb in 1940. Fortunately, the bomb failed to explode, otherwise the whole building would have been devastated. The Spanish and Portuguese Embassies, at the other corners of the square, still have similar constructions. Originally, the carriageway extended around the south side of the house, down to the stable-yard.



Hall and staircase

The lease was initially held by the Earls of Sefton, and it was called Sefton House. Both the 3rd and 4th Earls used it as a town house until the 4th Earl died in 1897.

Lord Howard de Walden, (who was also Baron Seaford) acquired the lease in 1902, and almost the whole of the inside of the building was then renovated, including the introduction of the onyx staircase and friezes. The panelling in the dining room (now the lecture hall) and the ceiling were also put in at that time. The marble for the staircase was imported by Lord Howard de Walden from South America; it is said that he bought the mine from which the onyx was extracted in order to

ensure sufficient supply. The house was renamed Seaford House, and became a prime example of an Edwardian town house, tailor-made for entertaining during the London Season. Today, it is one of the few houses with the public rooms remaining in virtually the original state.



Lecture Hall

Seaford House was requisitioned by the government on 13 June 1940 as headquarters for the Assistance Board. On the night of 14/15 October 1940, the building suffered some damage from bombing, including the destruction of the porte-cochere, and the Assistance Board was evacuated. The house was later occupied as offices by the Air Ministry from 30 March 1943 until March 1945.

The building was considered for use as the French Embassy, but this did not occur and the Directing Staff of the Imperial Defence College moved into Seaford House on 11 March 1946. The first post-war course started on 2 April 1946.

The lease of Seaford House was purchased by the Ministry of Works on 1 October 1947, and expired in 1963. In 1961 the Ministry of Works acquired an extension of the lease for a further 58 years, i.e. until 2019. In 1992, the building was extensively refurbished, including complete rewiring and installation of a new heating/cooling system.

Seaford House is listed under the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947 as a building of special architectural or historical interest, chiefly due to the unique staircase.

Contact RCDS



Map showing location of Seaford House

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