

SOMERSET HOUSE

Frequently Asked Questions about holding an event at Somerset House.

Can I hire Somerset House for an event for only a couple of hours?

Yes. However, all our venues are hired out to one client exclusively each day. Therefore whether you chose to utilise a venue for a couple of hours or up to the full hire period, you will still incur the same venue hire fees.

What do the venue hire fees include?

- Exclusive use of the venue on your chosen day for the full hire period.
- The full operational support from our Event Team in the run up to your event and one of our Event Managers to co-ordinate and deliver your event on the day.
- Security staff
- Cleaning
- Event hostesses for the duration of your event

Who will be there from Somerset House on the day and what will they do?

You will have a member of the events team present on the day of your event to help co-ordinate proceedings. They will also oversee the planning of access for caterers, florists, musicians and other suppliers. They will also brief your hostesses who will be in key positions throughout the venue for the duration of your event.

What is the booking procedure?

- Provisional bookings can be held for up to 14 days without commitment.
- Confirmation of an event requires a signed copy of our terms and conditions, together with payment for our venue hire fees+VAT.
- A 30% deposit invoice will be sent out with your contract and the remaining 70% balance invoice will be sent to you 6 weeks prior to your event date. All payments must be paid 14 days prior to the event date.

What is your cancellation policy for confirmed events?

- If your event is cancelled more than three (3) months before the event date, then the deposit is forfeited.
- If between one (1) month and three (3) months (inclusive) before the event date, then 50% of the hire fee is forfeited.
- If less than one (1) month before the event date, then 100% of the hire fee is forfeited.

**SOMERSET
HOUSE**

SOMERSET HOUSE ENTERPRISES LIMITED COMPANY NO 3920330.
WHOSE REGISTERED OFFICE IS SOMERSET HOUSE STRAND LONDON
WC2R 1LA. VAT REGISTRATION NO 751893404

**THE
COURTAULD
Gallery**

THE COURTAULD GALLERY COMPANY NO 4464432.
WHOSE REGISTERED ADDRESS IS SOMERSET HOUSE STRAND
WC2R 0RN. VAT REGISTRATION NO 798646648

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Does Somerset House ever offer a discount on the venue hire fees?

The funds generated from venue hire are a vital source of income for Somerset House, a charitable trust, and we therefore try and maximise revenue from events and other commercial activities. However, we offer 10% discounts to registered UK charities.

Can we bring in our own caterer, entertainment, florist or production company?

Somerset House venues are all Grade I, Heritage-Listed buildings and the greatest of care must be taken to prevent damage. Therefore, only our approved suppliers for catering, entertainment, floristry and production are allowed to provide a service for any event at Somerset House. This also allows us to restrict the range of suppliers to those that only provide a service to the very high standards of delivery that we expect for our clients.

Please be aware that only our resident caterer, Leiths, may provide catering for the Seamen's Hall.

What about access and set up for caterers and suppliers?

The start of your hire period marks the point at which your chosen venue will be ready to receive you and your guests. Caterer and supplier access to the building for setup is pre-arranged directly between your suppliers and with Somerset House Events Team, based on the event requirements.

Can we use our own photographer?

Yes, as they provide a service which is not intrusive, does not require power from the venue and are not logistically crucial to your event they may be sourced outside of our approved list. We have a selection of recommended photographers that we regard highly should you need suggestions.

Can we deliver or set up the day before an event?

All setup, breakdown and deliveries must be on the day / evening of your event with prior consent and agreed times with the Somerset House Events team. The Events Team will liaise directly with our approved suppliers to arrange suitable delivery times based on your event requirements. Additional set up / pack down time may be available, usually for a hire fee.

Can we arrange to leave items in the venue overnight?

Generally no, and everything must be collected immediately after the event. Somerset House cannot except any responsibility for items left at any of our venues. However, we may be able to store non-valuable items (e.g. leaflets) overnight. Please liaise with your event manager.

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Can we provide our own alcohol (BYO)?

Yes – please liaise directly with Somerset House approved caterers to discuss your event beverage options. All Somerset House caterers offer the option of client self-supply of alcohol, drinks packages on a per head basis, the consumption of beverage on a sales-or-return basis and evening cash bars.

Are there any restrictions regarding branding or decorations?

Due to the Heritage Listing of all of our venues, nothing may be affixed to any surface, either internally or externally. Freestanding branding or stands are acceptable within the hired area but please consult with our Events Team to discuss your requirements.

Can we use our own electrical equipment in the venue?

All electrical equipment must be provided by Somerset House approved suppliers. This is due to the site sensitive nature of Somerset House venues, for health and safety and to ensure the success of your event.

Can we smoke inside the venue?

No – smoking is only permitted outside the venue.

Can we have candles, if so what are the restrictions?

Unfortunately, candles and naked flames are not permitted at Somerset House. However, florists are able to provide battery operated candles, which are a great alternative.

Is there any parking at Somerset House?

Somerset House does not have any parking on site. The nearest car park is at NCP on Drury Lane, or metre parking is available on Aldwych and the Victoria Embankment.

Is there disabled access at Somerset House?

All our venues are fully accessible for disabled and elderly guests and we have a portable induction loop.

Do you have an outdoor space that is available for hire?

Somerset House offers various venues that are available for corporate and private hire. Our venues come with varying degrees of outdoor space that is included in your exclusive hire space but (with the exception of the River Terrace) the focus of your event will most often be indoors.

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Can we hire a space for a photo shoot or filming?

We have a variety of locations at Somerset House in addition to our venues; please contact the Events Team.

Is there an external phone connection, internet access or photocopying facilities within the venue?

There are no external phone connection points, internet access or photocopying facilities. Please consult the Events Team for advice about what you may be able to source out and what might have to be planned around.

Furthermore, as we are not a fully equipped conference centre, we do not include pens, paper, etc for events so you are welcome to bring these on site.

What about our policy on:

Animals? Somerset House does not allow animals on-site with the exception of assistance dogs.

Dancing? Dancing is permitted in certain venues with the provision of a dance floor being brought in to protect the floors. Please speak to your Event Manager about your options.

Guided tours / private views? These are available for permanent collections, temporary exhibitions, and architectural historical tours. Please speak to your Event Manager for more information.

Air conditioning in the rooms? As a Grade I listed building, we do not have air-conditioning installed in our rooms. However you can hire in a temporary air-con unit for your event.