



Emergency Evacuation (Exams) Policy 2024-25

Purpose of the Policy

This policy details how Northleigh House School deals with an emergency evacuation of the examination room(s) by defining staff roles and responsibilities and confirming the emergency evacuation procedure.

When is an Emergency Evacuation required?

An emergency evacuation is required where it is unsafe for candidates to remain in the exam room. This might include a fire in the exam room, the fire alarm sounding to warn of fire, bomb alert or other serious threat.

In exceptional situations, where candidates might be severely disadvantaged or distressed by remaining in the exam room, the emergency evacuation procedure may also need to be followed. This might include situations where there is severe disruption in the examination room(s), serious illness of a candidate or invigilator or similarly serious incidents.

As each incident may be different, advice will be sought from the relevant awarding body as soon as it is safe to do so, particularly where the centre is concerned about the security of the examination(s) (ICE 25.4).

Where candidates are unable to return to the building to complete the examination, the relevant awarding body will be contact immediately for advice. The awarding bodies have procedures in place to ensure that candidates are not disadvantaged where they are unable to complete the examination due to circumstances beyond their control (ICE 25.5).

Emergency Evacuation of an Examination Room(s)

Roles and Responsibilities

Head of Centre

- Ensures the emergency evacuation policy for examinations is fit for purpose and complies with relevant health and safety regulation
- Ensures any instructions from relevant local or national agencies are referenced and followed where applicable
- Where safe to do so, ensures candidates are given the opportunity to sit examinations for their published duration
- Where responsible for the centre-wide emergency evacuation procedure, ensures all staff and appointed fire marshals are aware of the policy and procedures to be followed when an emergency evacuation of an examination room(s) is required

Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Examinations Officer

- Ensures appropriate arrangements are in place for the emergency evacuation of a candidate from an examination room(s) where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for the candidate
- Ensures the candidate is informed prior to taking their examinations of what will happen in the event of an emergency evacuation
- Ensures invigilators are trained in emergency evacuation procedures and how an incident and actions taken must be recorded
- Ensures candidates are briefed prior to examinations taking place, on what will happen in the event of an emergency in the examination room(s)
- Provides invigilators with a copy of the emergency evacuation procedure for every examination room(s)
- Provides a standard invigilator announcement for each examination room which includes appropriate instructions for candidates about emergency procedures and what will happen if the fire alarm sounds
- Provides an examination room incident log in each examination room
- Liaises with relevant staff prior to each examination where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for a disabled candidate
- Briefs invigilators prior to each examination where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for a disabled candidate
- Ensures appropriate follow-up is undertaken after an emergency evacuation, reporting the incident to the awarding body and the actions taken through application of the *special consideration* process where applicable (in cases where a group of candidates have been disadvantaged by a particular event).

Invigilators

- By attending training and/or update sessions, ensure they understand what to do in the event of an emergency in the examination room(s)
- Follow the actions required in the emergency evacuation procedure issued to them for every exam room
- Confirm with the examinations officer, where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for a candidate, they are invigilating
- Record details on the examination room(s) incident log to support follow-up reporting to the awarding body by the examinations officer (see below).

Other Relevant Centre Staff

- Support senior leaders, SEN/Examinations officer and invigilators in ensuring the safe emergency evacuation of examination room(s).

Recording Details

As soon as practically possible and safe to do so, details should be recorded. Details must include:

- the actual time of the start of the interruption
- the actions taken
- the actual time the examination(s) resumed
- the actual finishing time(s) of the resumed examination(s)

Further details could include

- report on candidate behaviour throughout the interruption/evacuation
- a judgement on the impact on candidates after the interruption/evacuation.

Review Date: November 2025

Emergency Evacuation Procedure

Invigilators are trained in this procedure and understand the actions they must take in the event of a fire alarm or other emergency that leads to an evacuation of the exam room.

Emergency Evacuation Procedure
Actions to be taken (as detailed in current JCQ Instructions for conducting examinations section 25, Emergencies)
Stop the candidates from writing
Collect the attendance register (in order to ensure all candidates are present)
Evacuate the examination room in line with the instructions given by the appropriate authority
Advise candidates to leave all question papers and scripts in the examination room Candidates must be advised to close their answer booklet
Ensure candidates leave the room in silence
Ensure the candidates are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room to make sure there is no discussion about the examination
Make a note of the time of the interruption and how long it lasted
Allow the candidates the remainder of the working time set for the examination once it resumes
If there are only a few candidates, consider the possibility of taking the candidates (with question papers and scripts) to another place to finish the examination (Candidates must be given the opportunity to sit the examination for its published duration)
Make a full report of the incident and of the action taken, and send to the relevant awarding body
Additional centre-specific actions to be taken