

Emergency Evacuation Policy (Exams)

2022/23

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
Lauren Calver	
Date of next review	September 2023

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how Ancora House School deals with an emergency evacuation of the exam 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 exam room, 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 contacted 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 24.5)

Emergency evacuation of an exam room

Roles and responsibilities

Head of centre

- Ensures the emergency evacuation policy for exams is fit for purpose and complies with relevant health and safety regulations
- Where safe to do so, ensures candidates are given the opportunity to sit exams for their published duration

Senior leader

- 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 exam room is required

Additional learning support (ALS) lead/Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- Ensures appropriate arrangements are in place for the emergency evacuation of a disabled candidate from an exam room where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for the candidate
- Ensures the candidate is informed prior to taking their exams of what will happen in the event of an emergency evacuation

Exam's officer

- Ensures invigilators are trained in emergency evacuation procedures and how an incident and actions taken must be recorded
- Ensures candidates are briefed (information provided before every exam, evacuation procedure visible in every classroom) prior to exams taking place, on what will happen in the event of an emergency in the exam room.

- The above will involve candidates being reminded of the horizontal evacuation procedures prior to the exams starting by the education team
- Provides invigilators with a copy of the emergency evacuation procedure for every exam room
- Provides a standard invigilator announcement for each exam room which includes appropriate instructions for candidates about emergency procedures and what will happen if the fire alarm sounds
- Provides an exam room incident log in each exam room
- Liaises with the SENCo and other relevant staff prior to each exam where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for a disabled candidate
- Briefs invigilators prior to each exam 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 exam room
- Follow the actions required in the emergency evacuation procedure issued to them for every exam room
- Confirm with the exams officer, where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for a disabled candidate they are invigilating
- Record details on the exam room incident log to support follow-up reporting to the awarding body by the exams officer (see below)

Other relevant centre staff

- Support the senior leader, SENCo, exams officer and invigilators in ensuring the safe emergency evacuation of exam rooms

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 exam(s) resumed
- the actual finishing time(s) of the resumed exam(s)

Further details could include:

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

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 so that 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
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
In line with the wards policy the <i>Horizontal Evacuation</i> process must be followed whereby the candidates are returned to the ward, monitored by the invigilator
In the event there are students from different wards, an additional member of staff will assist the invigilator in monitoring candidates

Lockdown Procedure

Dealing with a Bomb Threat

In the event that a bomb threat is made, the priority is the safety of all staff and students in the school and 'Horizontal Evacuation' may not be the most appropriate course of action. If a threat is made via telephone, try and keep the caller on the phone whilst alerting another member of staff to phone the emergency services and notify Sian Thomas, Headteacher who will liaise with the ward managers to establish the best course of action. During the call make a note of the time, the content and any other pertinent information (telephone number etc.) about the conversation, remaining calm at all times.

If the threat is deemed credible and the 'device' is inside the building then it will be appropriate to evacuate, in this instance follow the procedures set out on page 1, however instead of following 'Horizontal evacuation' escort the candidates out of the building. Advice must be taken from the awarding body as to what appropriate steps are taken next. Once the incident has been dealt with, and on advice from the exam board, ensure that candidates have the full time to complete their examination – as we are a small centre with small numbers, an alternative site where applicable can be sought for this.

If candidates are unable to continue the exam, the awarding body must be contacted as soon as possible as they will be able to advise on appropriate action.

If a bomb threat is made via email or social media, do not respond, keep a screenshot as evidence and contact the emergency services, following the steps as advised above.

In the event that the 'device' is not within the building and is believed to be in the surrounding area of the building, evacuation may not be the best course of action, if advised by SLT staff and pupils must all navigate to a central part of the building away from windows and outside walls. This area would be in the shared corridor near the sanctuary, as it is the most central part of the building. The procedures set out above for leaving the exam room and contacting relevant agencies must also be followed in this instance.

Horizontal evacuation is normally used when you move horizontally on the floor to a different area on the same floor, this predominantly used in Hospitals and other Health Care settings in the event of a fire or other emergency.

Access to site for Emergency services

In the event of a medical emergency during an exam, nurses would be on hand within minutes due to the school being located above the hospital ward.

In the event of a Fire or scenario where police presence is required 'Ancora House School' is clearly signed as you come onto the Countess of Chester Hospital grounds. The first sign at the round-about on the grounds instructs to bear left for Accident and Emergency and Countess of Chester Main site and to bear right for Bowmere Hospital, out of hours and any other services. Once you have taken this right turn, we have our own 'Ancora House' sign to clearly guide any services to our establishment.