



FIRE EVACUATION POLICY (EXAMS)

Recommended by:	Senior Vice Principal
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Ratified by:	LAGB
Signed:	<i>J. Goodman</i>
Position on the board	Chair of Governors
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Next Review:	November 2026
Policy Tier (Central/Hub/School):	School

Introduction

An emergency evacuation is required where it is unsafe for candidates to remain in the examination room. This might include a fire, 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 room, the emergency evacuation procedure may also need to be followed. This might include situations where there is severe disruption in the examination room, serious illness of a candidate or invigilator or similarly serious incidents.

- As each incident may be different, advice will be sought (if applicable) from the relevant awarding body as soon as it is safe to do so, particularly where there is concern 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 25.5)

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to confirm the arrangements at Gospel Oak School for dealing with an emergency evacuation of an examination room by defining staff roles and responsibilities and confirming the emergency evacuation procedure.

This policy ensures compliance with JCQ regulations '[ICE – Instructions for conducting examinations - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#)' (ICE 25.2) which state that centres must have a written policy for dealing with emergency evacuation of the examination room which is subject to inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service.

Emergency evacuation procedure

Actions taken in the event of an emergency evacuation of the examination room at Gospel Oak School, the following actions (in accordance with ICE 25.3) are taken if an examination room must be evacuated:

- Candidates are instructed to stop writing
- The attendance register is collected, to ensure all candidates are present
- The examination room is evacuated in the line with the instructions given.
- Candidates are instructed to leave all question papers and scripts in the examination room.
- Candidates are advised to close their answer booklet(s) and leave the room in silence.
- Candidates are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room so that there is no discussion about the examination.
- The time of the interruption is noted and long it has lasted.
- Candidates are allowed the remainder of the working time set for the examination once it resumes.
- If there are only a few candidates, the possibility is considered of taking the candidates (with question papers and scripts collected by the invigilator) to another place to finish the examination
- A full report is made of the incident and of the actions taken and sent to the relevant awarding body.
- When not allowed to return to the examination room, or the decision is made that the examination(s) cannot be resumed, the centre's Exam Contingency Plan will be invoked, and the invigilators and candidates will be informed.

Roles and Responsibilities

Head of Centre:

- Ensure that the emergency evacuation policy for examinations is fit for purpose and complies with relevant health and safety regulations.
- Ensure that any instructions from relevant local and national agencies are followed where applicable. (ICE 25.1).

Senior leader in charge of exams:

- Ensure that all staff and appointed fire marshals are aware of the policy and procedures to be followed when an emergency evacuation of an examination room is required

SENDCO:

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

Exams Officer:

- Ensure that invigilators are trained in emergency evacuation procedures and how an incident and actions taken must be recorded.
- Ensure that candidates are briefed prior to examinations taking place, on what will happen in the event of an emergency in the examination room.
- Provide invigilators with a copy of the emergency evacuation procedure in every room
- Provide 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.
- Provide an exam room incident log in every examination room.
- Liaise with relevant staff and invigilators prior to each examination session where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for a disabled candidate.
- Ensure that 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:

- Attend training and /or update sessions, ensure they understand what to do in the event of an emergency in the examination room.
- Follow the actions required in the emergency evacuation procedure issued to them for every examination 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.

Recording details

As soon as practically possible and safe to do so, the following details will be recorded (see **Roles and Responsibilities** for the members of staff who will record these details):

- 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 exams(s)
- A report on candidate behaviour throughout the interruption/evacuation.
- A judgement on the impact on candidates after the interruption/evacuation