

Queen Elizabeth High School



Exams Emergency Evacuation Procedure

#EX2

Last updated: 31 January 2026

Review Date: 31 January 2027

Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	Martin Farmer
Exams officer	G Mitchell
Senior leader(s)	S Seneque, M Lake, T Lloyd, M Watkiss, D Racic, M Langley,
SENCo (or equivalent role)	E Davies

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how Queen Elizabeth High 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 (ICE 26)

Where candidates are unable to return to the building to complete the examination, the relevant awarding body will be contacted immediately for advice.

Emergency evacuation procedure

Key staff involved in the emergency evacuation policy/procedure

Role	Name(s)
Head of Centre	M Farmer (S Seneque Head of School if HoS is not on site)
Executive Team	D Wiles

Roles and responsibilities

Head of Centre / Head of School

- Ensures the emergency evacuation policy for exams 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, including information from the National Counter Terrorism Security Office on the *Procedures for handling bomb threats* <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bomb-threats-guidance/procedures-for-handling-bomb-threats>
- Ensures any breach of question paper security or malpractice is reported to the awarding body **immediately** (ICE 25.5)

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

Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) or equivalent role

- 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

Examination Officer

- Ensures invigilators are trained in emergency evacuation procedures and how an incident and actions taken must be recorded
- Ensures candidates are briefed through Candidate exam handbook and exam assemblies prior to exams taking place, on what will happen in the event of an emergency in the exam room –
- 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 or equivalent role 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.
- Ensures a full report of the incident is produced and retained on file if required by an awarding body (ICE 25.4)
- Ensures an online application for special consideration is submitted to the relevant awarding body where candidates have been disadvantaged (ICE 25.7)

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 Examination 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 Examination Officer (see below)

Other relevant centre staff

- Support the senior leader, SENC or equivalent role, Examination 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 a bomb alert 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

In the event of a fire alarm at Queen Elizabeth High School during exams the instruction is:

Invigilators should await instructions from the H&S Officer or member of SLT whether the exam room should be evacuated.

Advise candidates to leave all question papers and scripts in the examination room.

Candidates must be advised to close their answer booklet.

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.

Ensure candidates leave the room in silence.

Ensure that the candidates are supervised as closely as possible whilst 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.

Make a full report of the incident and of the action taken (to be retained on file if required by an awarding body)

Additional centre-specific actions to be taken

The exam room must be evacuated by the nearest fire exit.

Candidates must be escorted to the assembly point To the left-hand side of the playground.

On returning to the exam room allow candidates time to settle down, reminding them they are still under exam conditions.

Restart the exam and allow candidates the full working time set for the examination.

Make relevant changes to the displayed finish time.

All information regarding the evacuation must be recorded on the exam room incident log.

