EMERGENCY EVACUATION POLICY (EXAMS)

2025/2026

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
Date of next review	October 2026

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how Hodgson Academy deals with an emergency evacuation of the exam room(s) by defining staff roles and responsibilities and confirming the emergency evacuation procedure.

Key staff involved in this policy

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	**Mrs S. Khan**
Exams officer	**Mrs O. Leader**
Exams Officer Line Manager (SLT)	**Mrs J. Shaw**
SLT member(s)	**Mrs J.Aionessi, Miss F. Bate, Mr A. Day, Miss J. Harvey, Mr C. McCann, Miss S. Hetherington, Mr L. Jenkinson, Mrs L. Foley, Mrs J. Bristow, Miss R.Buckley.**
SENCo/ Assistant SENCO	**Mrs L. Foley/ Mrs L. Beaumont**
Other staff	**Mrs E. Maxwell**

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 25.5)

Emergency evacuation of an exam room

Roles and responsibilities

- **Head of Centre**
    - Ensuring the emergency evacuation policy for exams is fir 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 exams for their published duration

- **Senior leadership team (SLT)**
    - 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

- **Exams Officer**
    - Ensuring invigilators are trained in emergency evacuation procedures and how an incident and actions taken must be reported
    - Ensuing candidates are briefed in 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 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 room
    - Liaises with 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 updated sessions, ensuring 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

- **Other relevant staff**
  - Support the senior leaders, 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:

- Reporting 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**)
Instruct the candidates to stop writing
Make a note of the time you stopped the candidates writing
Collect the attendance register and seating plan (in order to ensure all candidates are present)
Advise candidates to leave all question papers and scripts in the exam room Candidates must be advised to close their answer booklet
Evacuate the room one column at a time, in silence with an invigilator, informing candidates not to go and collect their bags and coats
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
Once outside at the designated fire assembly point do a register to check you have all candidates out of the building
Once back in the building note 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
Make relevant changes to the displayed finish time
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 – EO to discuss
Make a full report of the incident and the action taken, and send to the Exams Officer who will inform the appropriate awarding body

On hearing the fire alarm – the invigilator must take the following action in an emergency such as a fire alarm:

Stop students from writing and to close their answer/question booklet and tell them to sit quietly – examination conditions still apply and await further instructions. Once the fire alarm stops, and it has been confirmed from the site manager that it was a false alarm, then the exam will re-start and the time difference will be added to the whiteboards.

If the room needs to be evacuated, the examinations officer/SLT/SENCo will inform exam rooms / invigilators and the following instructions will apply:

- Tell the students to close the question/answer booklets and leave them on their desks
- Evacuate the room in an orderly fashion – 1 column at a time
- No talking – exam conditions still apply
- Students must not attempt to collect belongings
- Exams officer/ lead invigilator should collect the exam register and seating plans, evacuate the students by following the emergency exit signs
- Candidates who have a declared disability will be subject to the personal evacuation procedures in place at the school
- The separate exam fire assembly points are:
    - Sports Hall/Assembly Hall/The Library: Assemble on the courts behind the Sports Hall

- Meeting rooms at front of school MR1-MR4: Assemble on the grassed area at the front of school
- E05/E04/E03: Assemble on the courts behind the Sports Hall

- When assembled check the students against the exam register
- The examination students should not have contact with other pupils and must not have mobile phones in their possession
- Make sure that the students are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room
- Make sure there is no discussion about the examination. Inform students that they are still under examination conditions/ regulations
- Make a note of the time of the interruption and how long it lasted
- At the end of the emergency, the exams officer or SLT will inform invigilators when to return ro the exam venue
- On return to the examination venue allow the students the full working time set for the examination
- Change the finish time for all to view
- Invigilators to make a full written report of the incident to the Exams Officer who will report the incident to the relevant awarding body.