

EXAMINATIONS EMERGENCY EVACUATION POLICY

Approved by: Fortis Academy Council

Date: September 2020

Review date: September 2021

This policy is reviewed and updated annually on the publication of updated JCQ regulations and guidance on access arrangements and instructions for conducting exams

**Responsibility: Head of Centre
Chris Czepukojc**

1. Introduction and Aims

Fortis Academy is committed to ensuring that exams are managed and administered effectively.

The aim of this policy is to ensure:

- The planning and management of exams is conducted in the best interest of candidates
- Our system of exams administration is efficient and clear, and staff and pupils understand what is required and expected of them
- We comply with requirements and guidance set out by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and awarding bodies

2. Purpose of this Policy

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

3. 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. 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)

4. 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 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>
- 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

Special educational needs coordinator (SENDCo)

- 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

Exams manager

- Ensures invigilators are trained in emergency evacuation procedures and how an incident and actions taken must be recorded
- Ensures candidates are briefed in Edge sessions and in the 'Information for Candidates' material distributed with timetables, 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 SENDCo 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 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 – for example TAs supporting candidates as readers/ scribes

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

5. 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

6. Monitoring and Review

The head of centre is responsible for ensuring that this policy is reviewed and updated annually on the publication of updated JCQ regulations and guidance on access arrangements and instructions for conducting exams. References in this policy to AA and ICE relate to/are directly taken from the [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2020-2021](#) and [Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2020-2021](#) publications

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)

When dealing with emergencies you **must** be aware of any instructions from relevant local or national agencies.

The invigilator must take the following action in an emergency such as a fire alarm or a bomb alert:

In the event of an emergency: Stop the candidates from writing – note time

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 on their desk in the examination room

Candidates must be advised to close their answer booklet. All bags, coats etc should be left in the room

Candidates should leave the room in silence and remain silent for the duration of the evacuation

The room should be locked once you are sure everyone has exited

Make sure that 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

On arrival at the assembly point immediately take the register using the seating plan to check all candidates are present. Invigilators should remain vigilant at all times to ensure exam rules are met. You should notify the Exam Manager once you have checked the register and flag immediately if any students are missing.

Once the all clear has been announced return to the examination room: Use the seating plan to ensure all students have returned and then restart the exam

Make a note of the time of the interruption and how long it lasted

Allow the candidates the full working time set for the examination. If students chose not to take the full time they must sign the pro-forma to acknowledge they declined to take it

After the examination: Make a full report of the incident and of the action taken on the 'Notice of Evacuation

Form' and hand this to the Exams Manager ensuring they are fully briefed

The Exam Manager should formulate a special consideration report and send to the relevant awarding body

Retain the 'Notice of Evacuation Form' with the day's paperwork

Assembly Points for students sitting exams

For students sitting exams in Senior Academy:

- Senior Academy playground in normal circumstances
- If the emergency is in Senior Academy then assemble on the recreation ground at the side of school.

For students sitting Art or IT exams in Foundation Academy:

- On the Leisure Centre car park where it borders the school field in normal circumstances
- If the emergency is in Foundation Academy then assemble on the grassed car parking area behind the Leisure Centre.