



## EMERGENCY EVACUATION POLICY DURING EXTERNAL EXAMINATIONS

Policy reviewed: October 2024

Next review: October 2025

This policy will remain valid until the end of the academic year 2024-25.

This policy is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that emergency evacuation from examination rooms at Palmers Green High School is managed in accordance with current requirements and regulations. References in this policy to ICE refer to the JCQ document Instructions for conducting examinations.

### 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 (ICE 25.6)

Where candidates are unable to return to the building to complete the examination, the relevant awarding body will be contacted immediately for advice (ICE 25.6)

### Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm the arrangements at Palmers Green High 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 25) which state that centres must have a written policy for dealing with emergency evacuation of the examination room which will be subject to inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service.

### 1. Emergency evacuation procedure

#### Actions taken in the event of an emergency evacuation of the examination room

At Palmers Green High School, the following actions (in accordance with ICE 25) are taken if an examination room has to be evacuated:





The first consideration must be the evacuation of the building to a place of safety. The following steps are to be taken to endeavour to maintain the integrity of the examination without in anyway compromising the safety of the girls and staff.

The invigilator(s) will lead the exam Candidates to the designated assembly point, which is away from the assembly point for the rest of the School. This will ensure that they are isolated from the other students.

In the event of an emergency evacuation, the following procedures apply:

- Note the time that the fire alarm went off and how long the examination has been running.
- Do not evacuate until directed to do so by The Examinations Officer.
- Stop the Candidates from writing and ask them to remain calm and to leave all examination question and answer papers on their desk. Nothing should leave the exam hall except the attendance register.
- Before the Candidates exit the Exam Hall, remind them that they are still under examination conditions and under no circumstances should they talk to one another or other students or access a mobile phone. Remind them that a breach of regulations could mean disqualification from their examination
- The awarding body attendance register and our internal register should be taken out with the invigilator.
- The Invigilator will lead the group via the main exam hall doors in single file and in absolute silence. Exit the school premises via the double wooden gates, turn left, and walk to the junction of Hoppers Road and Stonard Road and assemble along the wall in single file.
- The Invigilator should take a roll call to ensure that all students are present and accounted for.
- Candidates must supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room so that there is no discussion about the examination
- The Examinations Officer/Site Officers must secure the examination room.
- Once the incident is over, follow instructions given for return to the Exam Hall.
- Note the time of re-starting the exam and change the finish time. Candidates are allowed the remainder of the working time set for the examination once it resumes.
- A full report is made of the incident and of the actions taken (and retained on file if required by an awarding body)

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.





### **On return to the examination hall**

- When/if allowed to return to the examination room, invigilators allow candidates time to settle down, reminding them they are still under formal examination conditions and that they must not open their answer booklets until instructed to do so
- Invigilators announce clearly to candidates when they may begin and how much time they have (the examination will formally restart at this point)
- Invigilators record the time the examination(s) restarted and amend the displayed finishing time(s) for all candidates to see
- Invigilators are trained to record as much detail on the exam room incident log when able to do so (ensuring candidates are continually supervised and giving complete attention to this duty at all times) and to ensure the exams officer is fully briefed at the end of the examination(s) to enable a full report to be submitted to the awarding body/bodies
- Where not allowed to return to the examination room, or the decision is made by the appropriate authority that the examination(s) cannot be resumed, the centre's examination contingency plan will be invoked and invigilators/candidates briefed accordingly at the time

## **2. 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
- Ensure that any instructions from relevant local or national agencies are referenced and followed where applicable (ICE 25.1)
- Ensures any breach of question paper security or malpractice is reported to the awarding body immediately (ICE 25.5)

### Senior Management Team

- 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

- Ensures invigilators are trained in emergency evacuation procedures and how an incident and actions taken must be recorded
- Ensures candidates are briefed, 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 procedures for each exam room
- Provides a standard invigilator announcement for each exam which includes appropriate information for candidates regarding 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 the special consideration process
- 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)
- 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

#### 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 each 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)

### 3. 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 exam(s)

Further details which may also be recorded include:

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

