


EMERGENCY EVACUATION & LOCKDOWN

RESPONSIBILITY:	HEAD OF CENTRE
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PROPOSED BY:	EXAMS OFFICER
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TYPE OF POLICY:	STATUTORY
ON WEBSITE:	YES

DATE AGREED:	OCTOBER 2025
FREQUENCY OF REVIEW:	ANNUALLY
NEXT REVIEW:	OCTOBER 2026

APPROVED BY:	PAUL PHILLIPS
DATE APPROVED AND ISSUED:	OCTOBER 2025
SIGNATURE:	 DEPUTY HEAD TEACHER

This document is reviewed and updated annually on the publication of updated JCQ regulations.

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 procedure policy

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

This procedure policy ensures compliance with JCQ regulations (ICE 25) which state that centres must have a written procedure policy for dealing with emergency evacuation of the examination room which will be subject to inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service.

<h2>1. Emergency evacuation procedure</h2>

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

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

- Candidates are instructed to stop writing
- The attendance register is collected (in order to ensure all candidates are present)
- The examination room is evacuated in line with the instructions given by the appropriate authority
- Candidates are instructed to leave the room in silence
- The time of the interruption is noted and how long it lasted
- Candidates are allowed the remainder of the working time set for the examination once it resumes
- Candidates are advised to leave all question papers and scripts in the examination room.
- Candidates are advised to close their answer booklet(s)
- Candidates are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room so that there is no discussion about the examination
- 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 retained on file if required by an awarding body)

Additional actions taken:

- In the event of a fire alarm, invigilators are trained to invoke the Centres Emergency Exam Evacuation procedure (appendix A)
- 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

The role of the Head of Centre

- Ensure that the emergency evacuation procedure policy for examinations 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
- Ensures any breach of question paper security or malpractice is reported to the awarding body immediately (ICE 25.5)

The role of the senior leader

- Where responsible for the centre-wide emergency evacuation procedure, 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

The role of SENCo or equivalent role

- 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 that the candidate is informed prior to taking their examinations of what will happen in the event of an emergency evacuation

The role of the 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 exam 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 prior to each examination session where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for a disabled candidate
- Brief 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
- Ensure a full report of the incident is produced and retained on file if required by an awarding body (ICE 25.4)
- Ensure an online application for special consideration is submitted to the relevant awarding body where candidates have been disadvantaged (ICE 25.7)

The role of invigilators

- By attending 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 (see below)

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

Emergency Lockdown procedure for exams

The signal for the instigation and cessation of the lockdown procedure will be an audible alarm, which sounds akin to an air-raid warning, and is completely separate and distinct from the school bells and fire alarm. This will sound across the whole site, ie we will only instigate a whole school lockdown (not a partial lockdown).

Depending on the circumstances of the emergency, staff will also be informed via a number of means all beginning with the word LOCKDOWN including All Staff email, SIMS message, and/or Edulink notification. Team leaders will ensure teachers and support staff in their area are informed. All staff are part of a team with a line manager so in this way we can be sure that all staff are made aware of the situation.

Where possible, staff and students are to lock themselves into the room, close all windows and blinds/curtains and take cover/ hide from view.

Students follow the instructions of staff and consequently must wait in silence.

Students are not to use mobile phones.

This state exists until staff are otherwise notified by All Staff email, SIMS message, Edulink notification or in person by a member of the Leadership Group or team leader. The electronic stand-down messages will begin with STANDDOWN and the same audible signal will sound again.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION

Invigilators should familiarise themselves with the emergency exits in the exam room when they arrive.

In the event of the exam room having to be evacuated due to an emergency, such as the fire alarm sounding, the following procedure will apply:

- 1. Students must follow the instructions of the invigilators outlined below.**
- 2. Candidates stop working.**
- 3. Scripts are turned facedown and left on the desks and a note of the time is made.**
- 4. Unless there is an obvious danger, only evacuate if the alarm continues to sound.**
- 5. If evacuation is necessary, collect the attendance register.**
- 6. Candidates are told to leave the exam room in an orderly manner by the designated, shortest route and assemble on the astro turf on the side nearest the English block, to ensure they are kept separate from other non-exam students.**
- 7. Candidates are supervised so that they can't discuss the exam with others. Other staff members will come and assist with supervision. The exam attendance register to be checked.**
- 8. Wait on the astro-turf until the all-clear is given.**
- 9. On return to the exam room, candidates mark their scripts at the place they stopped working. The exam is then re-started, with candidates having the full working time set for their exam.**