Emergency Evacuation Policy – Exams

Magna Academy

Approved by:		**Date:** November 2024
Last reviewed on:	September 2026	
Next review due by:	September 2027	

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how Magna Academy 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 any other similar 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 25.6)

Emergency evacuation of an exam room

Roles and responsibilities:

Principal

- 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 National Counter Terrorism Security Office - Protect UK https://www.protectuk.police.uk/ on the *Procedures for handling bomb threats*
- 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

Senior leader

- 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
- Advises parent/carers after an emergency evacuation and the process regarding special consideration where a student or groups of students have been disadvantaged by the event

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 Officer

- Ensures invigilators are trained in emergency evacuation procedures and how an incident and actions taken must be recorded
- Ensures candidates are briefed, during the Exam Assembly (held 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

Support the Principal, SENDCo, 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:

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

EXAM EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

EVACUATION:

- When fire bell rings, students to be told to put pens down
- An invigilator to make a note of the time of the interruption
- Students to be told to close their exam paper
- An Invigilator to collect the exam register and take it with them
- Invigilators to escort students out through the nearest fire door
- Students and invigilators to assemble on the running track, in front of the 6th form muster point well away from other students
- Make sure the students are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room to make sure there is no discussion about the exam (no talking)
- Register/s are to be taken
- After returning to the exam room, students are to be seated in silence (no talking whilst students are re-entering the room)
- An invigilator to record the time the exam resumed and the time lost is to be added to the previous finish time of the exam
- Make a report of the incident and of the action taken. To be given to the Exam Officer

- Parents/carers informed of the event and the actions taken to ensure their child has not been disadvantaged

The Exam Officer will make a full report of the incident and of the action taken, and send it to the relevant awarding body.

A situation may arise where it is not possible for the examination to continue and candidates will be sent home. This decision will be made by the Principal/Vice Principal in conjunction with the Exams Officer.

In deciding whether to continue the examination, the following points will be considered:

- the length of time that has passed since the start time of the exam
- whether the minimum time for remaining in the examination has passed to maintain the integrity of the examination
- the amount of time left to complete the examination
- whether there is sufficient time to complete the examination before another session starts
- whether continuing the examination will take candidates over the session limit of 3 hours, taking particular care to consider candidates with access arrangements which include extra time. In deciding to continue the examination, the Exams Officer must be satisfied that communication between candidates has not taken place outside of the examination room. Only if completely satisfied that no communication whatsoever has taken place must candidates be allowed to continue the examination

If the session is to be abandoned, this will be either:

- because of consideration of the criteria above
- because re-entry to the premises cannot be secured, or
- because the risk of communication between candidates, which would invalidate the examination, cannot be eliminated.

If the examination has to be abandoned:

- The Examinations Officer will take the first opportunity to contact the relevant exam board for further advice and then seek to apply for Special Consideration for all the candidates affected.