Emergency Evacuation Policy (exams) 2026/27

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations and reflects centre practice.

Effective from 1 September 2026

Approved/reviewed by	C. Walker
Date of next review	September 2027

Key staff involved in the exams policy

Role	Name(s)
Governors	
Head of centre	**Gary Kynaston**
Exams officer line manager (Senior Leader)	**Connie Walkers / Tim Bridle**
Exams officer (EO)	**Lucie Hrabankova**
ALS lead/SENCo	**Paulina Wajler**
SLT member(s)	**Chris Wilson, Hodo Isse, Jessica Adolphus, Shaun Flitton**
IT Staff	**Bekim Kastrati, D'mello Anthony**
Site Staff	**Anthony Raftery, Julio Pena Vera, Kamel Meziane**

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how Hammersmith 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 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 (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.

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
- Ensures any breach of question paper security or malpractice is reported to the awarding body immediately (ICE 25.5)

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 (SENCo) or equivalent role

- 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 (*Candidate exam handbook*), 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 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 SENCo (or equivalent role) 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
- 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)

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)

Facilities Manager

- Support the senior leader, /SENCo (or equivalent role), exams officer and invigilators in ensuring the safe emergency evacuation of exam rooms
- Liaise with the EO to ensures invigilators are trained in emergency evacuation procedures and how an incident and actions taken must be recorded

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

Emergency evacuation procedure

Invigilators are trained in this procedure and understand the actions they must take in the event of a fire alarm or a bomb alert or other emergency that leads to an evacuation of the exam room.

The chief invigilator should stop the examination if the fire alarm sounds and then carry out the one of the following procedures:

If the candidates are in immediate/obvious danger

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

- Stop the candidates from writing
- Candidates must be advised to close their answer booklet
- Collect the attendance register (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 in the examination room
- Ensure candidates leave the room in silence
- Take the candidates to the main assembly point, MUGA.
- Ensure 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
- Make a note of 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
- 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
- Make a full report of the incident and of the action taken, and send to the relevant awarding body

For on-screen assessments:

- candidates must be closely supervised if an emergency evacuation of the assessment room occurs
- invigilators should refer to any software specific instructions to safeguard the security of the assessment content and candidates' responses (For example, pausing the assessment for all candidates and locking the evacuated assessment room without closing down the software)

- invigilators should understand the procedures for re-starting an assessment after an unplanned break (i.e. an emergency or a technical failure controlling the re-starting of the assessment, re-setting the timing (where necessary) and ensuring, where this is technically feasible and permitted by the assessment regulations, candidates can reaccess their previous responsesinvigilators should understand the procedures for re-starting an on-screen assessment after an emergency evacuation of the assessment room, controlling the re-starting of the assessment, re-setting the timing and ensuring, where appropriate, candidates can access their previous responses

If the candidates are not in immediate danger

- Note the length of time elapsed since the examination(s) began and the actual time the examination was stopped (please use examination clock) this should be written on the examination log.
- Do NOT evacuate the examination room.
- Maintain silence in the examination room.
- Please wait for further instructions from Examinations Officer or a member of SLT.

Restarting the examination

- Tell the candidates to rule off the answer paper or answer book at the point reached when the examination was halted.
- Restart the examination(s) allowing for the whole of the remaining time for the examination(s).
- Rewrite a new finishing time on the board.
- Make a note of the new finishing time on the examination log and with papers.
- Reassure the candidates that the Examination Board(s) will be informed by the Examination Officer of the details of the disturbance.