



PEGASUS ACADEMY

Emergency Evacuation Policy (Exams) 2025/26

Issue number:	001
Approved by:	Kimberley Buttery
Date:	September 2025
Review date:	September 2026

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations.

Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	Andrew Landers
Exams officer:	David Ingram
Senior leader(s)	Andrew Landers, Kimberley Buttery, Sarah Lawson, Sonya Griffiths & Maxine Young
ALS lead/SENCo	Rachel Anslow

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how Pegasus 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, particularly where the centre is concerned about the security of the examination(s). (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. 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 25.4)

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.
- 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.

Additional learning support (ALS) lead/Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- 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 through the 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 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 ALS lead/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 application of 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 senior leader, ALS lead/SENCo, 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

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)
Stop the candidates from writing and remind them they must remain under exam conditions
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. Candidates must be advised to close their answer booklet
Ensure candidates leave the room in silence through the nearest available fire exits.
Ensure the candidates are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room so that 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
Additional centre-specific actions to be taken
Candidates should assemble in the staff car park (to the rear of the building).
Candidates should leave and re-enter the examination room a column at a time. They should line up in the designated area in the same layout as in the examination room, to aid in the taking of the register.
Candidates should remain in silence and be monitored by the invigilators to ensure they are not discussing the content of the examination.
When/if allowed to return to the examination room, 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.
Announce clearly to candidates when they may begin and how much time they have (the examination will formally restart at this point).
Record the time the examination(s) restarted and amend the displayed finishing time(s).
Record as much detail on the exam room incident log when able to do so (ensuring candidates are continually always supervised and giving complete attention to this duty) and 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 Exam Contingency Plan will be invoked, and invigilators will be briefed accordingly at the time.

Meeting point for Fire Evacuation:

The designated meeting point during fire evacuations is the back field area. Specifically, candidates taking the examination at that time will need to be stood by the bike storage which backs onto the main exam hall.

As per the instructions above candidates must be kept supervised throughout the entire duration of the evacuation/fire alarm to ensure no discussion of the exam paper takes place. Candidates should be lined up in the order they appear on the seating plan and separated by room accompanied by their designated invigilator(s).

Once the alarm/evacuation has concluded, candidates will be escorted back to their assigned rooms by invigilators supervised by the exams officer.

Once the candidates have returned to the exam room(s), the lead invigilator will address the room and resume the exam ensuring candidates have the full allocated time awarded to them by the exam board(s).

Should any incidents arise during the evacuation (i.e. candidates communicating with one another) this should also be noted on the incident log as per normal procedure for suspected and actual malpractice events which could take place during a formal examination.