



EMERGENCY EVACUATION POLICY (Exams)

2025/26

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
Mrs C Lancaster Examination Officer	
Date of next review	January 2027

Key staff involved in the policy

Head of centre	Mrs L Fielden
Exams officer	Mrs C Lancaster
SLT member(s)	Mrs C George Miss A Yates Miss H Kellow Mr A Keefe Mrs H Dakin Mrs E Robertson
SENCo	Miss H Kellow

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how Bowland High 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. (ICE 25.6)

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)

- 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 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 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
- Ensures a full report of the incident and of the action taken (to be retained on file if required by an awarding body).
- 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)

Other relevant centre staff

- Support the senior leader, 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 a bomb alert 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 25.3, Emergencies)
Stop the candidates from writing
Collect the attendance register (in order 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 the candidates leave the room in silence

Ensure 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
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 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
Additional centre-specific actions to be taken
Candidates must be escorted to their designated assembly point on the school visitor car park (front of building) and line up in silence whilst kept under supervision from invigilators. ☐ All able bodied pupils should walk out of the building in single file by the quickest and safest designated route. ☐ In the Sports Hall this will be via the rear fire exit. ☐ From Room 79, this will be via the gate immediately to the left of the building as you exit, which will lead to the same designated assembly point. The gate is locked with a 'Mag-Lock' which will disable if the alarm is raised. ☐ From Pupil Services, this will be exiting out of the double doors to the right at the bottom of the main stairwell. Once outside, make your way to the visitors car park to join the rest of the exam cohort. ☐ Disabled pupils in wheelchairs will be evacuated by their TA and leave the building by the nearest ramped exit. The TA MUST report to the headteacher when the disabled pupil has arrived at the assembly point.
The exams staff should check against the attendance register that all pupils are present and report to the Deputy Headteacher
When all pupils, staff and visitors have been accounted for and it is safe to return to the exam room, allow candidates time to settle down, reminding them they are still under exam conditions.
Make relevant changes to the displayed finish time
Restart the exam and allow candidates the full working time set for the examination
Allow the candidates the full working time set for the examination
All information regarding the evacuation must be recorded in the exam room incident log and action taken will be compiled by the examinations staff and sent to the relevant awarding body

Emergency evacuation notice for candidates

We hope that no alarm sounds during the exam period. However, if the alarm goes off, these instructions must be followed in **complete silence**.

Should an alarm go off, firstly do not panic. Stop writing when told to do so and close your answer booklets. Do not attempt to finish the sentence you are writing.

You will be asked to leave the room in silence and in the order that you are sitting. Leave all equipment in the exam room.

When you leave the room you **must** be at least one metre away from the candidates in front and behind you.

You will be escorted to your own assembly point and must line up in silence. Do not line up with your tutor group, as you will have to be kept separate from the rest of the school. **Under no circumstances must you speak to any other candidate.**

When you return to your exam room, do not start writing until the invigilator tells you to do so

LISTEN CAREFULLY TO INSTRUCTIONS AND DO NOT PANIC!