



400 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

Lockdown Policy (Exams)

Policy approval date	February 2025
Policy review date	February 2026
Policy Lead	David Sykes Liz Bradbury
Governor or SLT approval	SLT
Governor committee responsible for policy	N/A

This policy is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that a lockdown during the conducting of examinations at Richard Hale School is managed in accordance with current requirements and regulations.

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm the arrangements at Richard Hale School for dealing with a lockdown when examinations are being conducted.

In addition to this policy, centres are encouraged to provide a summary to all centre staff of the information relating to a lockdown during the examination period by completing and sharing the Department for Education's [Lockdown Template](#) (see Appendix 1).

Staff engaged directly with the conducting of examinations (e.g. exams officer, exams officer assistant, invigilators, facilitators of access arrangements, etc.) should be instructed to refer to the full policy.

Richard Hale School has devised lockdown procedures during the conducting of examinations after consulting ProtectUK guidance and the Department for Education's [School and college security](#) guidance..

Depending on the nature of the incident, centres may also decide to invacuate (an inward evacuation) or use protected space(s). However, this policy focuses specifically upon the actions, roles and responsibilities during an exams-related lockdown.

A lockdown may be required in the following situations:

- an incident or civil disturbance in the local community which poses a risk
- an intruder on the site with the potential to pose a risk
- local risk of air pollution, such as a smoke plume or gas cloud
- a major fire in the vicinity
- a dangerous animal roaming loose
- an internal threat from a student
- any other external or internal incident which has the potential to pose a threat.

Where a lockdown may be required when conducting examinations, the focus will be:

- the welfare and safety of candidates and exams staff
- maintaining the integrity and security of the examination/assessment process.

In the event of a lockdown during an examination the focus before, during and after an exam will be:

- training staff engaged/involved in the conducting of examinations
- how to achieve an effective lockdown
- implementing Run, Hide, Tell principles
- the welfare and safety of exam candidates and centre staff engaged in the conducting of examinations
- how to let people know what's happening
- maintaining the integrity and security of the examinations/assessments process

1. Roles and Responsibilities

Head of Centre

- Ensure that a dedicated lockdown alarm tone is in place and recognised by all staff and candidates
- To ensure that all staff involved in the conducting of examinations are trained in how to raise the alarm for a lockdown, act effectively and made aware of their responsibilities
- Arrange appropriate training for all exams staff in lockdown procedures
- Ensure candidates are aware of the procedures relating to a lockdown, particularly those arriving late for an examination who cannot access the examination room due it being locked down
- Ensure all candidates and staff are aware of a possible exit point in case an intruder manages to gain access, or the room becomes unsafe
- Provide written lockdown procedures for examination room/invigilator use
- Inform the relevant emergency service(s) immediately in the case of any potential threat to the safety of exams staff and candidates.
- At the earliest immediate opportunity, the Head of Centre will ensure that any breach of question paper security or malpractice is reported to the awarding body.

Senior Leader

- Assume responsibility for exams staff and candidates taking examinations during a lockdown
- Arrange training/drills for examination candidates on lockdown procedures
- Inform parents/carers about the centre's Lockdown Policy in relation to the conducting of examinations
- Have a presence around examination room areas prior to the start of each examination session
- Liaise with the appropriate authorities and awarding bodies regarding candidates taking examinations during a lockdown
- Use the examination room attendance register(s) to compile a list of any candidates not accounted for.

Exams Officer

- Train invigilators in the centre's lockdown procedures
- Where safe/possible, liaise with senior leaders/invigilators in all examination rooms during a lockdown
- Assist with lockdown training for staff and candidates where applicable to the conducting of examinations.

Invigilators

- Be aware of the centre's lockdown procedures
- To quickly and physically secure access/egress points
- To be aware of an effective communication system to inform authorities of the situation
- Complete attendance registers as soon as possible so candidates can be identified in the event of a lockdown
- Where safe/possible, to communicate with the exams office/officer during a lockdown to confirm the situation in a particular examination room.

2. Lockdown procedures

Where a lockdown is required, the following procedures will be employed at Richard Hale School:

Before an examination

As candidates are entering/waiting to enter the examination room:

- Invigilators will:
 - instruct candidates to enter the examination room immediately
 - instruct candidates to remain silent, hide under desks or sit against a wall/around a corner but not near the door and to ensure mobile phones are on silent and non-vibrate mode
 - lock all windows and close any/all curtains/blinds
 - switch off all lights
 - lock all doors and/or use tables, or any other furniture, to barricade the entrance to the room
 - take an attendance register/head count if possible
 - (if the threat is a chemical or toxic release) instruct candidates to cover their nose and mouth (their own clothing can be used) and attempt to use anything to hand to seal up cracks around doors and any vents into the room
 - where safe/possible, not leave the examination question papers unattended/out of sight.
- A senior leader/authorised person will be present around the examination room(s) area(s) and where safe/possible, communicate the situation to the exams office/officer (via mobile phone/walkie talkie on silent and non-vibrate mode)
- The exams office/officer will collate the information from all examination rooms and forward this to the Head of Centre immediately
- The Head of Centre will make informed decisions on alerting parents/carers, awarding bodies and emergency services.

During an examination

When candidates are in the examination room:

- Invigilators will:
 - tell candidates to stop writing immediately and close their answer booklets
 - collect the attendance register
 - make a note of the time when the examination was suspended
 - instruct candidates to remain silent, leave all examination materials on their desks and hide under desks
 - where safe/possible, communicate (via mobile phone/walkie talkie) the situation to the exams officer (ensuring that all mobile phones/walkie talkies are on silent and non-vibrate mode)
 - lock all windows and close any/all curtains/blinds
 - switch off all lights
 - lock all doors and/or use tables, or any other furniture, to barricade the entrance to the room

- (if the threat is a chemical or toxic release) instruct candidates to cover their nose and mouth (their own clothing can be used) and attempt to use anything to hand to seal up cracks around doors and any vents into the room
- where safe/possible, not leave the examination question papers unattended/out of sight.
- Where safe/possible, the exams office/officer will collate the information from all examination rooms and forward this to the Head of Centre immediately
- The Head of Centre will make informed decisions on alerting parents/carers, awarding bodies and emergency services
- If appropriate, where safe/possible, and following instruction from the appropriate authority, the exams office/officer and/or invigilators will initiate the emergency evacuation procedure
- Where safe/possible, the exams office/officer will collect all examination question papers and materials for safe/secure storage following advice from the appropriate awarding body/bodies.

After an examination

As candidates are leaving the examination room:

- Invigilators will:
 - stop dismissing candidates from the examination room
 - instruct candidates who have left to re-enter the examination room
 - instruct candidates to remain silent and hide under desks/tables
 - where safe/possible, communicate (via mobile phone/walkie talkie) the situation to the exams officer (ensuring that all mobile phones/walkie talkies are on silent and non-vibrate mode)
 - lock all windows and close any/all curtains/blinds
 - switch off all lights
 - lock all doors and/or use tables, or any other furniture, to barricade the entrance to the room
 - (if the threat is a chemical or toxic release) instruct candidates to cover their nose and mouth (their own clothing can be used) and attempt to use anything to hand to seal up cracks around doors and any vents into the room
 - where safe/possible, not leave the examination question papers unattended/out of sight.
- Where safe/possible, the exams officer will collate the information from all examination rooms and forward this to the Head of Centre immediately
- The Head of Centre will make informed decisions on alerting parents/carers, awarding bodies and emergency services.

Ending a lockdown

- The lockdown will be ended by either:
 - the sound of a defined alarm, or
 - the identification/authorisation of emergency service officer/senior leader/Head of Centre entering the examination room
- A specific word or phrase may be used to confirm that the instruction to end the lockdown is genuine

- Invigilators will undertake a head count/register and confirm attendance with the exams office/officer/senior leader
- Where applicable and if advised to do so by a senior leader/head of centre, if there is sufficient time (and following JCQ regulations), candidates may be allowed to restart their examination
- Invigilators will:
 - ask candidates to return to their desks, remind them they are under formal examination conditions and allow a settling down period
 - allow candidates the full working time remaining for their examination
 - calculate the revised finish time(s)
 - tell the candidates to open their answer booklets and re-start their examination
 - amend the revised finish time(s) on display to candidates
 - note how long the lockdown lasted on the exam room incident log (to later inform a report to the awarding body/bodies).
- The exams office/officer will:
 - provide a report of the incident for the awarding body/bodies (via the special consideration process or as advised by awarding bodies)
 - safely/securely store all collected exam papers and materials pending awarding body advice/guidance.

and where this may be applicable:

- ensure appropriate follow-up is undertaken after the incident, reporting the incident to the awarding body and the actions taken, where this may be applicable
- where this may be applicable, ensure a full report of the incident is produced and retained on file if required by an awarding body
- where this may be applicable, ensure an online application for special consideration is submitted to the relevant awarding body where candidates have been disadvantaged.
- Where applicable/possible/available, the senior leader/exams office/officer will:
 - discuss any alternative examination sittings with the awarding body/bodies
 - offer, arrange and provide support services to staff and candidates.
- At the earliest immediate opportunity, the senior leader/Head of Centre will prepare a communication to parents/carers advising them of events (including relevant actions and outcomes)
- Where possible, exams staff and candidates will be invited to attend an assembly lead by the Head of Centre to discuss the lockdown and offer ongoing support;
 - If this is not possible, communications will be provided via a centre text/email/newsletter and information uploaded to the centre website.



Department
for Education

Lockdown Template

There are important differences between the lockdown and shelter arrangements. Lockdown is necessary when children and staff need to be **locked** within buildings for their own safety i.e. in an emergency situation such as a hostile intruder, terrorist attack or other criminal activity.

Signals

Alarm or signal for lockdown shelter	<i>[insert]</i>
Signal for stand down / all-clear	<i>[insert]</i>

Incident Control Officers & Response Team

Role	Name	Emergency Contact Number
Incident Control Officer		
Deputies		
Communications Officer		

It is important to remember that it is very much **the exception** to evacuate a building in the event of a hostile intruder. Unless the location of the intruders is known, a "blind" evacuation may be putting people in more danger (e.g. from an intruder or device at one of the entrances/exits) than if they had remained within the building

Rooms most suitable for lockdown during an examination

1. Classrooms
2. Hall
3. Sports hall
4. Offices

It is important to make sure that items that could be used as weapons (kitchen implements, sports equipment, tools, cleaning products) are securely locked away when not in use

Communication arrangements

Wherever possible use silent communications and keep noise to a minimum especially if the intruders are close by. Make sure any communications devices are secure and cannot be intercepted

Two-way radios

Classroom telephones

Mobile phones

Instant messaging / email

Other (TV's / Whiteboards / etc)

Alternative place of safety in the event that it is considered necessary to leave site (for example, partner school/college/leisure centre) must be pre-arranged

Name of venue

Type of venue

Contact name

Contact telephone number

Additional information (e.g. distance from school, directions, capacity, opening hours etc.)

Other useful contacts:

Name	Emergency Contact Number

Action Plan (The actions below are provided as an example and should be amended/added as required)	Completed by (sign and time)
Sound Alert - Activate lock-down procedures immediately	
Dial 999	
Direct all children and staff and signed in visitors (e.g. JCQ inspector) to the nearest safe place (this may be dependent on what and where the risk is)	
Secure rooms and take action to increase protection from attack - Lock and barricade doors and windows	
Close windows / blinds	
Turn off the lights, fans or mobile air conditioning units (this will reduce noise and the risk of exposure to any chemical/biological attack)	
Hide, sit on the floor under desks, and away from windows	
Stay as silent as possible - put any mobile devices to silent (consider writing / displaying instructions on the exam board as long as it can't be seen by the intruder)	
Ensure that students, staff and visitors are aware of an exit point in case the intruder does manage to gain access	
If possible, check for missing students and staff (e.g. those who may have temporarily left the exam room)	
Keep doors and windows locked shut and remain inside until an all-clear has been given, or unless told to evacuate by the emergency services	