



Exeter College

GUIDANCE TO BE CONSIDERED IN DEALING WITH BOMB THREATS, SUSPECT PACKAGES AND EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Personal Telephone Numbers	College
Lodge Porter	279600
Head Lodge Porter	279991
Domestic Bursar	279658
Finance & Estates Bursar	279649
Sub Rector	279631
Rector	279647

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 The following guidance is provided to assist in the development of the processes and procedures to be adopted in the event of a bomb threat, suspect package or emergency evacuation procedure occurring at Exeter College Main Site.

1.2 Notification of a potential bomb threat or explosive device on the premises may come via a number of means:

- 1. Telephone or e-mail bomb threat*
- 2. Suspicious letter or package in the mail*
- 3. Suspicious unattended package discovered in an unusual location*
- 4. Direct police communication*

1.3 In all cases the decision on the immediate action to be taken is the responsibility of the Domestic Bursar, the Finance & Estates Bursar or the most Senior Manager present at the time.

This decision should be made in consultation with the Oxford University Security Services (OUSS). Thames Valley Police will offer advice on the appropriateness of evacuation using their bomb threat assessment model; however, the decision to evacuate is the responsibility of the Bursar or the most Senior Manager present at the time, who will act as the **Incident Controller**.

1.4 The importance of staff training and familiarisation cannot be underestimated in ensuring the effective and appropriate response to incidents. Heads of Departments should seek to incorporate this advice and guidance into regular exercises to ensure staff are fully familiar with the procedures contained within their specific Departmental plans. Reception and switchboard teams, those responsible for Facilities Management and staff nominated to perform a specific role in any plan should be particularly familiar with the local Departmental plan and this advice.

2.0 Options to be considered

2.1 When a notification of a potential bomb threat or explosive device on the premises is received there are a number of options that should be considered by the Domestic Bursar, the Finance & Estates Bursar or the most Senior Manager present at the time.

An assessment of the facts should be undertaken when deciding on the most appropriate option to be used. This should be done in conjunction with the advice and guidance of the Police and the OUSS. **If there is any doubt about the correct course of action the safety and security of staff and students should be the overriding factor.**

Option 1: Take no action

If, based on Police and OUSS advice, it appears there is nothing to indicate a genuine threat to the safety of staff or the integrity of the building then no immediate overt action is required. However; there may be a need for the College, OUSS or Police to investigate the original incident that gave rise to the assessment.

Option 2: Full or Partial Building Search

Where there is doubt as to the existence or not of a genuine threat and based on Police or OUSS advice, a search by locally nominated members of staff, familiar with the building, can be an effective way of negating any possible threat and maintaining staff safety.

Option 3: Full or Partial evacuation

If it is not possible to negate a threat or a clear threat exists then, with Police or OUSS advice a full or partial evacuation may be an appropriate option.

3.0 Advice on Full or Partial Building Search

3.1 Searches may be undertaken as a matter of routine or in response to a specific warning. It is not always necessary to evacuate the premises before carrying out a search. Best practice is to have in place as part of the College procedures a comprehensive, tested and exercised search plan with which nominated staff are familiar and competent.

It is Police and OUSS policy not to conduct a search as they are not familiar with the normal layout of the building and its contents. It is much more effective for staff that know specific areas to check them for suspicious items.

Detailed advice on how this should be conducted is contained at **Appendix 1**

Priority should be given to searching evacuation routes and public areas, the search must be very thorough. Those undertaking the search should seek to identify items that:

- *Should not be there.*
- *Cannot be accounted for.*
- *Are out of place.*

If a suspicious object is found:

- ***Do not touch the object***
- ***Clear people from the immediate area***
- ***Leave doors and windows open***
- ***Contact the Police (999) and OUSS via the emergency number 89999***

4.0 Suspicious Letter/Package in Mail

The suspicious letter/package should be placed on a sturdy flat surface in the Lodge area. The Lodge and adjacent rooms should be evacuated. Police and OUSS should be contacted and details of the letter/package given including the factors that make the letter/package suspicious. Detailed advice is contained at **Appendix 4**

5.0 Suspicious Package/Object Discovered in Unusual Location

Do not touch the suspicious object. Try to discover its owner. Remain calm. It may be necessary to partially evacuate the area around the suspect object in a controlled manner, (i.e. advising route to be taken) – activating the agreed Departmental bomb alert procedure may not be advisable at this stage as people may evacuate through a potentially dangerous area. Police and OUSS should be contacted and details of the suspicious package/object given. Detailed advice is contained in **Appendix 5**

6.0 Bomb Threat Warning and Evacuation Procedure

6.1 If a bomb threat is received by the Lodge switchboard, or any member of staff via telephone they should follow the advice contained in **Appendix 2** and record details of the call they received using the proforma at **Appendix 3**. They must notify the Police (999) and OUSS via the internal emergency telephone number **89999**.

It is possible that a threat or warning may be received by other means e.g. e-mail. In this case immediate contact should still be made with Police and OUSS and a copy forwarded to: security.control@admin.ox.ac.uk

If a decision to evacuate the building is made the following should be considered:

6.2 Unlike a fire evacuation, during bomb threat evacuations personnel should take their belongings with them, all windows and doors should be left open. Internal lifts may be used as normal. College should have in place a pre-determined bomb alert and evacuation notification procedures, for example the sounding of the fire alarm or other like device.

6.3 Evacuated personnel should proceed to the designated assembly points or retreat to a minimum of 100 metres away from any building and await further instructions. (The assembly point may be different to that used for fire evacuation).

6.4 In common with fire evacuations it is good practice to nominate Wardens or other persons to carry out a check to ensure everyone has vacated the premises and to direct personnel to a safe evacuation area. Evacuated personnel should wait there for further instructions. A control point will be located at or near to the main building entrance unless otherwise directed by the Police. Main entrance/exit doors should be locked, after the building is cleared.

6.5 A small team of nominated College representatives and other senior members of staff must remain, in a safe area, to liaise with the Police on their arrival, assist in any search of the building and provide security at the location.

6.6 Following any evacuation the Bursar or the most senior manager present at the time will remain in control and declare the building safe for re-occupation. It is recommended that a safe, orderly and staged re-occupation of the building is managed by the nominated wardens or other managers.

By College Order 24/009 this policy was approved by Governing Body on 7th February 2024 to take effect from 1st April 2024, to be published on the website and to be reviewed by 31st March 2027.

Appendix 5

GENERAL ADVICE FOR A BUILDING SEARCH

Searches may be undertaken as a matter of routine or in response to a specific warning. It is not always necessary to evacuate the premises before carrying out a search.

It is Police and OUSS policy not to search a building following receipt of a bomb threat. This is for two good reasons. Firstly, Police or OUSS are unlikely to know the layout of the premises and the various places in which a device could be concealed. Staff will know the layout of the premises, and be able to search more quickly and more thoroughly. Secondly, the Police or OUSS, unlike your staff, will not know what should be there. Consequently they will not so easily be able to spot anything which is out of place.

Search Plan

Best practice is to have in place as part of the College procedures a comprehensive, tested and exercised search plan with which nominated staff are familiar and competent. The geographical spread of a building or buildings may mean it is only considered practicable to conduct a search in the event that a particular area is identified as a target – say by a bomb threat call. Searches are, generally, only likely to be possible during daylight/office hours, when there are several staff on duty.

If a decision is made to conduct a search, Search Teams should be formed from staff nominated to search those areas with which they are most familiar. Numbers required will depend upon the size of the search task. The Domestic Bursar, the Finance & Estates Bursar or most senior manager present at the time will initiate a search by instructing members of staff – depending on who is on duty at any particular time – and allocating an area/rooms for each of them to search. OUSS may be able to assist in the formulation of search plans and the management of the search task and should be contacted for advice at an early stage.

Search Objectives

It is difficult to offer guidance to Search Teams about the appearance of bombs as they can be disguised in many ways. What the Search Teams are looking for is an unidentified object.

- *That should not be there*
- *That cannot be accounted for*
- *That is out of place*

How to Search

Although the way in which the teams conduct their searches will depend to some extent upon local circumstances and their local knowledge, they should conduct it in a logical and thorough manner. A search should begin at the entrance/threshold to the room/area. **Each searcher or team should first stand still and look around the room. They should note the contents of the room and make a quick assessment of those areas, which will need special attention. They should look for any unusual lights (including small light sources known as LED's which are often used in terrorist bombs). They should also listen carefully for any unusual noises, particularly ticking or whirring sounds. If nothing unusual is seen or heard, the search should begin.**

IF A SUSPICIOUS OBJECT IS FOUND

- *Do not touch or move*
- *If possible, leave a distinctive marker near (not touching) the device.*
- *Move away from the device to a designated control point, leaving lights on.*

The person finding the object should be immediately available for interview by the Police.

Appendix 6

GENERAL ADVICE FOR EXETER STAFF CONCERNING BOMB HOAXES AND BOMB THREATS

The guidance below should be considered when delivering advice and guidance to staff on dealing with bomb hoaxes and bomb threats. In the interests of the safety of staff and students all instances should be treated as threats and evacuation procedures should be considered.

Often bomb threats come in anonymous telephone calls, e-mails or other means. All such calls should be reported to the Police and OUSS immediately and be kept confidential. Bomb hoaxes or bomb threats can also be mailed or even surreptitiously delivered. Again these must be reported to the Police and OUSS immediately and kept confidential. The OUSS standard response to such a threat is to refer to the Police for assessment.

The following process should be followed as soon as it is clear the caller is making a bomb threat:

LET THEM FINISH THEIR MESSAGE WITHOUT INTERRUPTION. If any response is essential as to a statement such as 'this is about a bomb, are you listening?' keep it to one or two words. Whilst the caller talks, note the message **EXACTLY**. If you have a recording device then use it. Listen for clues to:-

- *Caller's sex and approximate age*
- *Noticeable condition affecting speech such as drunkenness, laughter, anger, excitement or incoherence*
- *Peculiarities of speech such as accent, mispronunciation, speech impediment, tone and pitch of voice*
- *Background noises audible during the call such as music, traffic, talking or machinery*
- *Use the University Bomb Hoax / Bomb Threat Checklist if it is available (**Appendix 3**)*

WHEN CALLER HAS GIVEN THEIR MESSAGE, TRY TO KEEP THEM IN CONVERSATION. NOTE THE FOLLOWING

- *Note whether the caller repeated the message or any part of it.*
- *Note the **exact time** of its receipt and the time when the call was completed.*
- *Write the message down **IMMEDIATELY** after the call as the exact wording is very important.*
- *Dial 1471 and make a note of the telephone number if it is available.*

IMMEDIATELY AFTER THAT NOTIFY THE POLICE (999), OUSS ON THE INTERNAL EMERGENCY NUMBER 89999, THE DOMESTIC BURSAR, THE FINANCE & ESTATES BURSAR OR THE MOST SENIOR MANAGER PRESENT AT THE TIME.

REPEAT THE MESSAGE **EXACTLY AS YOU RECEIVED IT**; THEN FILL IN THE OTHER DETAILS YOU WERE ABLE TO GET.

BE CALM, LISTEN CAREFULLY, REPORT EXACTLY – the more information you can get the easier it will be to decide whether the warning was genuine or not.

Appendix 3

**EXETER COLLEGE BOMB HOAX / BOMB THREAT CHECKLIST
ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN ON RECEIPT OF A BOMB THREAT**

Record time call begins:

Ask the following questions:
Where is the bomb right now? _____
When is it going to explode? _____
What does it look like? _____
What kind of bomb is it? _____
What will cause it to explode? _____
Did you place the bomb? _____
Why? _____
What is your name? _____
What is your address? _ _____

Inform the Police (999), OUSS giving full details, on emergency number 89999, the Domestic Bursar, the Finance & Estates Bursar or the most Senior Manager present at the time, The following part should be completed once the caller has hung up.

Time and date of call: _____
Length of call: _____
Number at which call was received (i.e. your extension number): _____

About the Caller (please tick)

Sex of caller: Male / Female / Not Sure
Nationality:
Age: Child / Young / Old /Not Sure

Threat Language (please tick) Caller's voice (please tick)

Well spoken?		Irrational?	
taped message?		Offensive	
Incoherent/Rambling			
Message Read by threat maker?			

Caller's Voice

Calm?	Crying?	Clearing throat?	Angry?
Nasal?	Slurred?	Excited?	Stutter?
Disguised?	Slow?	Lisp?	Rapid?
Deep?	Hoarse?	Soft?	Serious?
Laughter?		Rational?	
Accent If so what type?			
Familiar? If so, whose voice did it sound like?			

Background sounds (please tick)

Street noises?	House noises?	Animal noises?	Crockery?
Traffic?	Aircraft?	Railway?	Boats/Docks?
Voice / talk?	Children?	Static?	Clear?
PA system?	Booth?	Music?	Factory machinery?
Pubs?		Office machinery?	

Were there any interruptions to the call? Yes No

Give Details

Other remarks

Signature _____ Date _____

Print name _____

Appendix 9

GENERAL ADVICE FOR EXETER STAFF CONCERNING SUSPECT PACKAGES

SUSPECT PACKAGES

Suspect packages sent through the post are not likely to be in large parcels but rather in flat letters, or in packets the size of a book. However they can be of any shape or size and anything suspicious should be reported to the Domestic Bursar, the Finance & Estates Bursar or the most Senior Manager present at the time.

REMEMBER – You should not move them. They may explode on opening, so look out for:-

- **The postmark** and any name and address of sender.
 - **The writing**, which may be stencilled.
 - **The balance**, which, if uneven, is suspect.
 - **The weight**, if it seems excessive for the size treat as suspect.
 - **Any protruding wires**, (even the best-prepared devices can become undone in transit) treat as suspect.
 - **Any hole**, (like pinholes) in wrapping or envelope.
 - **Greasy marks**, on wrapping or envelope, which could be from 'sweating' explosives.
 - **The smell**, some explosives have an aroma of marzipan or almonds.
 - **The 'booby' trap**, could be one envelope tightly taped or tied with string inside
- another, examine both for indications
listed above.

You must remember the following:

- Keep calm.
- Don't move it.
- Don't open it.
- Don't let anyone else interfere with it.
- Don't place in a container.
- Don't place on the floor or in a corner.
- Do put it on a flat surface.
- Ensure that it is easily identifiable to Emergency services.
- Evacuate adjacent rooms.
- Call the Police (999) and OUSS on the Emergency number **89999**.

**IF IN DOUBT – CALL THE DOMESTIC BURSAR ON 79658,
OR THE FINANCE & ESTATES BURSAR ON 79649.**

**ALSO CALL OUSS TO PUT THEM IN THE PICTURE.
Emergency internal number 89999**

Appendix 5

GENERAL ADVICE FOR EXETER STAFF CONCERNING SUSPECT DEVICES

Suspect Devices

Bombs placed within sports bags, holdalls, rucksacks or litterbins are usually designed to cause personal injury and disruption. They can be of varying size and weight, but they all have the potential to be fatal.

On discovery of a possible suspect device notify **the Police (999), the Domestic Bursar on 79658, the Finance & Estates Bursar on 79649** and OUSS using the internal emergency number **89999**. You will need to give them as much information as possible on the container and the location (see below). OUSS will then liaise with the Police where required and dispatch an officer to the suspect device location.

You must remember the following:

- *DO NOT attempt to open the device.*
- *DO NOT move it.*
- *DO NOT place it within a vehicle or other container.*
- *DO NOT tamper with it in any way.*
- *DO NOT allow anyone else to interfere with it.*

You will need to give as much information as possible when reporting a suspect device. Make a note of the following (if it appears safe to do so) –

- *Type of container.*
- *Size of container.*
- *Does the container appear full/bulging?*
- *Identifying mark on container.*
- *Its exact location.*
- *Nearest property.*
- *Are there any similar items nearby?*
- *A description of the person placing the device.(If known)*

Personal Safety:

If you think you are dealing with an obvious bomb or a confirmed suspicious item, initially move yourself and anyone nearby to an area which is:

- **Not** in the direct line of sight of the item.
- **More than 100m away** from a small item
- Behind hard cover i.e. solid object.
- Further Police or OUSS advice on safe distances, cordons and assembly points will be given.

IF IN DOUBT – CALL OUSS
Emergency internal number 89999

Appendix 6

EVACUATION OF THE COLLEGE PREMISES

Action to be taken in the event that it is no longer safe to stay on the College Premises.

There are a number of scenarios which may require a full scale evacuation of the College premises and the decision to evacuate will always be taken by the Domestic Bursar, the Finance & Estates Bursar or other senior manager, who will be acting as the **Incident Controller** at the time.

1. In a case where a fire had broken-out in the Chapel (the assembly point), and the Fire Alarm was sounded escapees would be assembled on the grass of the front quad and moved into the Hall for roll-call if instructed to do so by the **Incident Controller**.
2. In a case where a fire had broken-out or an explosive device had been discovered, the Fire Alarm had been sounded, the escapees were assembled in the Chapel and it was no longer safe for them to remain there due to the seriousness of the situation. At this point the escapees would be led from the Chapel to one (or both) exits, **The Turl Street (Lodge) Gate** or **The Broad Street Gate**.
3. In a case where an explosive device had been discovered in a building facing the front quad and the Fire Alarm had been sounded. As escapees emerged from their staircases they would be directed to the **Broad Street Gate** by Marshals posted at the Chapel and Palmers Tower (as appropriate to the situation).
4. In a case where an explosive device had been discovered in a building facing the back quad and the Fire Alarm had been sounded. As escapees emerged from their staircases they would be directed to the **Turl Street (Lodge) Gate** by Marshals posted at the Broad Street Gate and Palmers Tower.
5. Any variation on the above scenarios can be used by an **Incident Controller** to evacuate the College buildings in the safest manor possible. Once out of the College Gates the evacuees would be led to a **Place of Safety** where the roll call could be carried out and the people could stay together.
There are three Colleges who would shelter the evacuees in an emergency situation:
 - **Jesus College** in the Turl when the evacuation is via the Turl Street (Lodge) Gate.
 - **Lincoln College** in the Turl as an alternative to Jesus if Turl Street needed to be cleared quickly for emergency reasons.
 - **Trinity College** in Broad Street when the evacuation is via the Broad Street Gate. **Marshals**, would be appointed to assist in personnel movement by the **Incident Controller** and would be drawn from Emergency Service personnel e.g. Firemen, Policemen or Bomb Squad troops. College employees would be used as a second choice and some Graduate or Undergraduate help would be appreciated.

Muster Sheets; are held at both Gates so that a Roll Call can be made after evacuees have left the College.