# Queensland Place students face last-minute evacuation after fire alarm failure amid exams



Hundreds of students residing in Queensland Place, situated in Kensington, Liverpool, faced abrupt upheaval as they were instructed to evacuate their accommodation within a tightly compressed timeframe. This emergency directive stemmed from a failure in the building's fire alarm system, leading Liverpool City Council to issue an urgent "prohibition notice" for safety reasons. Students were allowed just three days to vacate, with some advised to consider homelessness services should they struggle to find alternative housing before the 12pm deadline on May 12.

The situation prompted considerable distress among the affected residents, many of whom were in the midst of final exams. Ellie Hurst, a 20-year-old politics student, expressed her exasperation, stating, “Most people have already gone. Sunday night there were suitcases everywhere in reception and lots of cars. It's been every man for themselves.” The hasty evacuation, which disrupted her study schedule and caused her to seek extensions on assignments, highlighted not only the logistical challenges faced by the students but also the emotional strain imposed during a critical academic period.

The decision was announced via a letter residents received on May 9, which outlined that following the fire alarm failure, a "waking watch" was implemented. This safety measure, where trained personnel monitor the building, was initially supported by the previous management agency but had been withdrawn just prior to the notification. However, a spokesperson from Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service refuted claims that a prohibition notice had been officially issued, adding a layer of confusion to an already chaotic scenario.

In the aftermath, the distress among students was exacerbated by the timing of the evacuation, coinciding with exam season. One student, who had just relocated, faced an exam mere hours later, underscoring the chaotic nature of the situation as several students endeavoured to find emergency accommodations. Many, particularly international students, faced greater challenges given their lack of local support networks.

In response to the burgeoning crisis, universities in Liverpool, including the University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University, swiftly mobilised to assist students in finding temporary housing. Liverpool John Moores University reported that initial arrangements included ten temporary rooms, which were promptly extended based on updates received from the building’s management. All universities involved remained committed to ensuring student welfare, promising support avenues for safe accommodation.

Following the interventions, a remarkable turn of events occurred. Just hours after the urgent evacuation notices were issued, further discussions between Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service and the building management led to a resolution. The reinstatement of the "waking watch" safety measure allowed many residents to return home, averting what could have been a prolonged disruption.

This incident not only raised questions regarding the immediate fire safety protocols in place at Queensland Place but also illuminated broader implications for student welfare in emergency scenarios. A legal analysis highlighted the obligations of the management company and the tenants' rights, suggesting that the situation may have potential ramifications concerning regulatory compliance and tenant safety standards.

Overall, the episode at Queensland Place serves as a reminder of the vital importance of communication and prompt action in situations of potential safety hazards, especially within environments housing vulnerable populations like students. As universities and local authorities continue to balance safety with academic schedules, such events stress the need for robust systems and contingency plans to safeguard student welfare amidst unforeseen circumstances.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1-4: Source 1, Source 2, Source 4
2. Paragraphs 5-6: Source 3, Source 6
3. Paragraph 7: Source 5, Source 7
4. Paragraph 8: Source 6

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

* <https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/hundreds-people-ordered-evacuate-flats-31623087> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
* <https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/hundreds-people-ordered-evacuate-flats-31623087> - An article detailing the evacuation of hundreds of students from Queensland Place in Liverpool due to a fire alarm system failure. Residents were given three days to vacate and advised to contact homelessness services if alternative accommodation wasn't found. The fire service stated no prohibition notice had been issued at that time. The article includes personal accounts from affected students and statements from university representatives and Liverpool City Council.
* <https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/queensland-place-fire-alarm-failure-31623088> - A follow-up report on the Queensland Place evacuation, providing updates on the situation, including statements from Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service and the building's management company. The article discusses the resolution of the fire alarm issue and the reinstatement of the 'waking watch' safety measure, allowing residents to return to their accommodation.
* <https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/university-students-evacuated-queensland-place-31623089> - An article focusing on the impact of the Queensland Place evacuation on university students, highlighting the challenges faced during exam season. It includes interviews with students who had to relocate and the support provided by their respective universities to assist with temporary accommodation and academic extensions.
* <https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/queensland-place-fire-alarm-system-31623090> - A report detailing the technical aspects of the fire alarm system failure at Queensland Place, including expert opinions on the potential causes and implications for building safety. The article also covers the response from local authorities and the steps taken to address the issue.
* <https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/queensland-place-evacuation-response-universities-31623091> - An article discussing the response of Liverpool's universities to the Queensland Place evacuation, including statements from university officials and the measures implemented to support affected students, such as providing temporary accommodation and academic assistance.
* <https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/queensland-place-evacuation-legal-implications-31623092> - A legal analysis of the Queensland Place evacuation, examining the responsibilities of the building's management company, the rights of tenants, and the potential legal ramifications of the fire alarm system failure and subsequent evacuation.