



# **Examinations Contingency Plan**

**Centre Number: 53628**

This plan is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

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## Key staff involved in the Exam Contingency Plan

Role	Name(s)
Head of Centre	Joanna Ware
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Exams officer	Joanna Starr

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## Purpose of the plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exams process at the centre. By outlining actions/procedures to be invoked in case of disruption it is intended to mitigate the impact these disruptions have on our exam process.

Internal Processes and the detailed contingency plan for Exams Officers absence can be found in the PACA Examinations and Qualifications Procedures and Policy Document along with detailed information about internal processes.

Alongside internal processes, this plan is informed by scenarios contained in the *Joint contingency plan in the event of widespread disruption to the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*.

*"It is the responsibility of the head of centre to ensure that his/her centre... has in place a written examination contingency plan/examinations policy which covers all aspects of examination administration. This will allow members of the senior leadership team to have a robust contingency plan in place, minimising risk to examination administration, should the examinations officer be absent at a crucial stage of the examination cycle.*

*(The examination contingency plan/examinations policy should also reinforce procedures in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency.)*

[JCQ [General regulations for approved centres](#) 5.3]

## Causes of potential disruption to the exam process

### 1. Exam officer extended absence at key points in the exam process (cycle)

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

*Key tasks required in the management and administration of the exam cycle not undertaken including:*

#### *Planning*

- *annual data collection exercise not undertaken to collate information on qualifications and awarding body specifications being delivered*
- *annual exams plan not produced identifying essential key tasks, key dates and deadlines*
- *sufficient invigilators not recruited*

#### *Entries*

- *awarding bodies not being informed of early/estimated entries which prompts release of early information required by teaching staff*
- *candidates not being entered with awarding bodies for external exams/assessment*
- *awarding body entry deadlines missed or late or other penalty fees being incurred*

#### *Pre-exams*

- *invigilators not trained or updated on changes to instructions for conducting exams*
- *exam timetabling, rooming allocation; and invigilation schedules not prepared*
- *candidates not briefed on exam timetables and awarding body information for candidates*
- *exam/assessment materials and candidates' work not stored under required secure conditions*

- *internal assessment marks and samples of candidates' work not submitted to awarding bodies/external moderators*

#### *Exam time*

- *exams/assessments not taken under the conditions prescribed by awarding bodies*
- *required reports/requests not submitted to awarding bodies during exam/assessment periods, for example very late arrival, suspected malpractice, special consideration*
- *candidates' scripts not dispatched as required for marking to awarding bodies*

#### *Results and post-results*

- *access to examination results affecting the distribution of results to candidates*
- *the facilitation of the post-results services*

#### Centre actions

- The Head of Centre and Leadership Team will allocate a member of staff to provide cover for this role. The BLC Team will work in such a way that the Exams Officer Role is not an isolated role and that there are other members of the team who have exams knowledge and experience. The Data Analyst has been trained in the Examinations Cycle and is the nominated member of staff to provide this support.

## **2. SENCo extended absence at key points in the exam cycle**

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

*Key tasks required in the management and administration of the access arrangements process within the exam cycle not undertaken including:*

#### *Planning*

- *candidates not tested/assessed to identify potential access arrangement requirements*
- *centre fails to recognise its duties towards disabled candidates as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010*
- *evidence of need and evidence to support normal way of working not collated*

#### *Pre-exams*

- *approval for access arrangements not applied for to the awarding body*
- *centre-delegated arrangements not put in place*
- *modified paper requirements not identified in a timely manner to enable ordering to meet external deadline*
- *staff providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained*

#### *Exam time*

- *access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms*

#### Centre actions

- The Head of Centre and Leadership Team will allocate a member of staff to provide cover for this role. The BLC Team will work in such a way that the Exams Officer Role is not an isolated role and that there are other members of the team who have exams knowledge and experience. There are plans to recruit a Deputy SENCO for academic year 2024-25 and the SENDCo Assistant is the nominated member of staff to provide this support under the direct supervision of the Senior Headteacher.

### **3. Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle**

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

*Key tasks not undertaken including:*

*Early/estimated entry information not provided to the exams officer on time; resulting in pre-release information not being received*

*Final entry information not provided to the exams officer on time; resulting in candidates not being entered for exams/assessments or being entered late/late or other penalty fees being charged by awarding bodies*

*Non-examination assessment tasks not set/issued/taken by candidates as scheduled*

*Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet awarding body submission deadlines*

#### Centre actions

- The Head of Centre and Leadership Team will re-assign these responsibilities to other colleagues within the same department or with the relevant experience.

### **4. Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence**

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

*Failure to recruit and train sufficient invigilators to conduct exams*

*Invigilator shortage on peak exam days*

*Invigilator absence on the day of an exam*

#### Centre actions

The centre plan to use both external and internal invigilators it will be the exams officers responsibility to ensure adequate planning is in place and any issues highlighted and discussed with the Head of Centre.

To make contact with other local schools and/or schools within the Trust to see if they have any available invigilators to cover any unplanned absence.

### **5. Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice**

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

*Exams officer unable to identify sufficient/appropriate rooms during exams timetable planning*

*Insufficient rooms available on peak exam days*

*Main exam venues unavailable due to an unexpected incident at exam time*

#### Centre actions

- We have a number of large venues available for exams: Sports Hall, Theatre, Drama Studio are all possibilities. Exams will take priority and the exams officer must work with colleagues to ensure that they are accommodated.

## 6. Failure of IT systems

### Criteria for implementation of the plan

*MIS system failure at final entry deadline*

*MIS system failure during exams preparation*

*MIS system failure at results release time*

### Centre actions

- Web-based MIS which means unless the system is unavailable from the software providers as long as the exams officer is able to establish an internet connection this should be okay. However, if the issue is with the Software Provider the exams officer will need to liaise with them and seek guidance from awarding bodies. Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lock down).

### Criteria for implementation of the plan

*Whole centre evacuation (or lock down) during exam time due to serious incident*

*resulting in exam candidates being unable to start, proceed with or complete their exams.*

### Centre actions

In the event of an emergency evacuation of an exam room/s for reasons such as Fire / Fire Alarm, Bomb Alert or any other emergency which requires evacuation of the room.

Invigilators should take the following action (in accordance with JCQ ICE Regulation 18 Emergencies)

## Emergency Evacuation

1. Stop the candidates writing
2. Make a note of the time
3. Collect the attendance register
4. Prepare to evacuate the examination room in line with the instructions given by the appropriate authority.
  - a. In the event of a fire alarm during an exam instructions:
    - i. Ask the students to stop writing and make a note of the time.
    - ii. The lead invigilator should then await instructions from the exams officer as to whether the room should be evacuated, if there are visible signs of smoke or a fire are detected then the room should be evacuated under the lead invigilators authority.
5. Advise candidates to leave all question papers and scripts in the exam room
6. Inform candidates that they must leave the room in silence and must remain silent at all times during the evacuation.
  - a. Candidates should be instructed to queue at the front of the building on the pavement.
7. Supervise candidates as closely as possible while they are out of the exam room to ensure there is no discussion about the exam.
8. When instructed, supervise the return of candidates to the exam room.
9. Make a note of the time and then length of the interruption.
10. Allow the candidates the full working time set for the examination.
11. Make notes of the incident to enable the exams officer to produce a full report of the incident and then action taken to forward to the relevant awarding body.

## **7. Disruption of teaching time – centre closed for an extended period**

### Centre actions

- The centre to communicate with parents, carers and students about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plans to address this.
- Support and guidance to be sought from Awarding Bodies

### Criteria for implementation of the plan

Centre closed or candidates are unable to attend for an extended period during normal teaching or study supported time, interrupting the provision of normal teaching and learning

Centre closed interrupting the of normal teaching and learning Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open

### Criteria for implementation of the plan

Candidates are unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal

### Centre actions

- The centre to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to make them aware of the issue. The centre to communicate with parents, carers and candidates regarding solutions to the issue.

## **8. Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period**

### Criteria for implementation of the plan

Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations (including *centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency*)

### Centre actions

- The centre will take appropriate action depending on the circumstances, guidance sought from ICE and Awarding Bodies. The Head of Centre has responsibility for two centres and the second centre would be offered an an alternative venue.

## **9. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers Criteria for implementation of the plan**

Disruption to the distribution of examination papers to the centre in advance of examinations

### Centre actions

- The centre to communicate with awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of papers.

## **10. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts**

### Criteria for implementation of the plan

Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts

### Centre actions



- The centre to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to resolve the issue

### **11. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked Criteria for implementation of the plan**

Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked

#### Centre actions

- It is the responsibility of the Head of Centre to communicate this immediately to the relevant awarding organisation(s) and subsequently to students and their parents or carers

### **12. Centre unable to distribute results as normal**

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

Centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post-results services

#### Centre actions

- Centres to contact awarding organisations about alternative options and to use another suitable other school within the vicinity and the same Trust.

**Causes 8-14** – all scenarios, criteria and specific communications have been taken directly from the *Joint contingency plan in the event of widespread disruption to the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*.

### **Further guidance to inform and implement contingency planning**

#### **GOV.UK**

*Emergency planning and response* Severe weather Exam disruption

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/emergencies-and-severe-weather-schools-and-early-years-settings>

*Teaching time lost due to severe weather conditions*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-time-lost-due-to-severe-weather-conditions>

*Dispatch of exam scripts: yellow label service*

Dispatch of exam scripts guide: Ensuring the service runs smoothly; Contingency planning  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-yellow-label-service>

Statutory guidance on school closures

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools>

#### **Ofqual**

*Joint contingency plan in the event of widespread disruption to the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland/joint-contingency-plan-in-the-event-of-widespread-disruption-to-the-examination-system-in-england-wales-and-northern-ireland>

## JCQ

*General regulations for approved centres*

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>

*Guidance on alternative site arrangements* <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/forms>

*Instructions for conducting examinations*

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>

*A guide to the special consideration process*

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance>

### **Contingency planning**

The qualifications regulators, awarding bodies and government departments responsible for education have prepared and agreed a Joint contingency plan for the examinations system in case of wide scale disruption as a result of a flu pandemic, adverse weather conditions or other event.

The joint contingency plan is designed to ensure consistency of response in the event of major disruption to the examinations system affecting significant numbers of candidates.

In addition, awarding bodies have their own well-established contingency plans in place to respond to disruptions. It is important that exams officers who are facing disruption liaise directly with the relevant awarding body/bodies.

Centres should prepare plans for any disruption to examinations as part of their general emergency planning. It is important to ensure that relevant centre staff are familiar with the plan. Consideration should be given as to how these arrangements will be communicated to candidates, parents and staff should disruption to examinations occur.

In the event that the head of centre decides the centre cannot be opened for scheduled examinations, the relevant awarding body must be informed as soon as possible. Awarding bodies will be able to offer advice regarding the alternative arrangements for conducting examinations that may be available and the options for candidates who have not been able to take scheduled examinations.

The Joint contingency plan for the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland may be downloaded from the Ofqual website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland>

[Taken directly from JCQ *Instructions for conducting examinations*, page iii]

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>