



Statement of Policy on Exam Contingency Plan 2017 to 2018

RATIONALE & AIMS

This plan is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

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.

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 centres5.3](#)]

PRACTICES

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

- Deputy Exams Officer would step into the role with an extension in hours required. The Deputy Head of Centre will oversee and manage the examinations process with further administrative assistance.

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

- Collaborative work to cover these duties and tasks between the Examinations Officer, the Deputy Exams Officer and the Associate Manager Access and Inclusion.

- WRAT testing can be carried out onsite by the Associate Manager Access and Inclusion. Cognitive ability testing to be carried out by a specialist assessor employed through Bury at certain points of the year – normally arranged by SENCO, but can be arranged by the Associate Manager Access and Inclusion if required.

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

- It is the responsibility of the Head of Faculty or in their absence, the Assistant Head of Faculty, to ensure the necessary information is passed to the Examinations Officer prior to exam board deadlines. Faculties are liable to pay late entry fees if submitting entries past the deadline without acceptable reason. CLL to send out key dates during Autumn half term, followed by regular prompts via email when nearing deadlines. Deputy Head of centre will intervene as necessary to ensure that children are not disadvantaged.

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

- Invigilating teams for external exams are set up in advance by rota and are made up of members of the associate staff at Prestwich Arts College. No external invigilators are employed. Each exam is allocated an extra invigilator to cover absence or shortage. All existing invigilators trained in house. New members of staff are given in house training and reference materials prior to exam time.

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

- Alternative large space: Paragon, Bracewell Studio, Room 12 seating 120 max
- Free Rooms timetable is available in staff drive – updated each term to account for changes on SIMS
- Plan rooming as early in the school year as possible to minimise potential issues
- Classroom spaces will be prioritised for examinations

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

- Contact Jade / Gary regarding internal SIMS issues
- Business and Resources department to contact IT support externally if necessary

- Access using remote log in if applicable
- Have a stand-alone system in case of system failure.
- Contact and work with the BSLC partnership schools to use their facilities e.g. *St Monica's High School*

7. 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

- Refer to emergency evacuation plan as per school policy. Evacuation to take place only if ordered by SLT on arrival to the exam room. Record all details on return to the room. Special Consideration to be requested if appropriate.

8. Disruption of teaching time – centre closed for an extended period

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

Centre actions

- Head of Centre communicate with parents, carers and students about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plans to address this. Head of Centre to use SLG to contact students and parents in the first instance and also the school web site.
- Refer to school's contingency plan in the event of interruption of teaching time the Local Authority will provide an alternative space.

9. 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

- Exams officer to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to make them aware of the issue. Head of centre to communicate with parents, carers and candidates regarding solutions to the issue. Special Consideration if appropriate.

10. 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

- Exams Officer to inform each awarding organisation with which examinations are due to be taken as soon as is possible. Special Consideration if appropriate.
- Head of Centre communicate with parents, carers and students about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plans to address this. Head of Centre to use SLG to contact students and parents in the first instance and also the school web site.
- Refer to school's contingency plan in the event of exam space being affected the Local Authority will provide an alternative space e.g. *Longfield Suite*.

11. 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

- Exams officer to communicate with awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of papers. Request access to e-copies via online interchange sites if appropriate.

12. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

<u>Criteria for implementation of the plan</u> Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts
<u>Centre actions</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exams officer to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to resolve the issue. Scripts to be locked away in exams storage facility until despatch. Integrity maintained as exams officer only to handle scripts.

13. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked

<u>Criteria for implementation of the plan</u> Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked
<u>Centre actions</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The head of centre to communicate this immediately to the relevant awarding organisation(s) and subsequently to students and their parents or carers.• Exams officer to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset.

14. Centre unable to distribute results as normal

<u>Criteria for implementation of the plan</u> Centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post-results services
<u>Centre actions</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Centres to contact awarding organisations about alternative options. [JCP scenario 11]• Access using remote log in if applicable• Have a stand-alone system in case of system failure.• Print in advance of results day when possible.• Contact and work with the BSLC partnership schools to use their facilities and IT systems e.g. <i>St Monica's High School</i>• Use SLG is necessary.

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-englandwales-and-northern-ireland>

[Taken directly from JCQ *Instructions for conducting examinations* <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>

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Date Reviewed:

November 2017

Next review:

November 2018

Signed:



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Signed:



Chair of Governors