



EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE TO TAKE ON THE WORLD

# **Exam Contingency Plan**

<b>Revised By:</b>	<b>Habiba Tasmin</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>November 2021</b>
<b>Review Date:</b>	<b>November 2022</b>

## Key staff involved in contingency planning

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name(s)</b>
<b>Head of Centre</b>	Nicola Mason
<b>Exam Officer Line Manager (SLT)</b>	Edmund Coogan
<b>Exams Officer</b>	Habiba Tasmin
<b>SENCO</b>	Hannah Coles

## **Contents**

Key staff involved in contingency planning	2
Contents	2
Purpose of the plan	3
Possible cause of disruption to the exam process	3
Exam officer extended absence at key points in the exam process (cycle)	3
SENCo extended absence at key points in the exam cycle	5
Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle	6
Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence	6
Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice	7
Failure of IT systems	7
Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lock down)	7
Disruption of teaching time – centre closed for an extended period	8
Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open	8
Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period	8
Disruption in the distribution of examination papers	8
Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts	9
Assessment evidence is not available to be marked	9
Centre unable to distribute results as normal	9
Further guidance to inform and implement contingency planning	10
Ofqual	10
JCQ	11

## **Purpose of the plan**

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exams process at School 21. 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 the Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland which provides guidance in the publication What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted.

This plan also confirms School 21 is compliant with the JCQ regulations that the centre has in place a written examination contingency plan which covers all aspects of the examination administration. This will allow members of the senior leadership team to act immediately in the event of an emergency or staff absence.

## **Possible cause of disruption to the exam process**

### **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*
- *Confidential 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Head of centre to appoint a member of administrative staff to take over responsibilities should absence of the exams officer have potential to affect the meeting of deadline or hire in an experience exams officer to cover the tasks.

#### *Planning:*

- A shared drive document is provided where all exam details can be entered, this is shared with Heads of Departments, Assistant Head Teacher, for GCSE Achievement, and the Exams Officer. The information contained in this document is:
  - Exam Series
  - Subject
  - Specification Number
  - Awarding Body
  - QAN code
  - Unit codes
  - There are separate tabs for each subject to identify which students are taking each subject.
- A exams calendar is printed and shared with the Assistant Head Teacher, for GCSE Achievement, identifying key dates for external exams, internal exam details are then added to this.
- Invigilator agency on standby should the school fall short on internally appointed invigilators.

#### *Entries*

- Subjects requiring estimated entries are to be highlighted by the Heads of Department, and in the absence of the Exams Officer should be informed to the Assistant Head Teacher, for GCSE Achievement, to alert the awarding body – either by telephone or their individual portals.
- All Heads of Departments have access to the awarding bodies portals to be able to check the entries made for candidates.

- Heads of departments are informed ahead of deadlines when they will be expected to submit entries. Entries that are required to be made but are still late would be entered and the cost disseminated to the relevant department.

#### *Pre-exams*

- All invigilators will be trained in advance of exam periods this may be by an external agency/trainer. Any updates will be distributed to internally employed invigilators. Where agency invigilators are used they are updated by the agency.
- SLT have access to exams organiser application of SIMS and would be able to print any time tables. Rooming is decided with SLT and facilities and would be organised in advance of the exam season.
- All candidates will be provided with a candidate guide book which will provide them with all the relevant information. Individual time tables can be printed from Exams Organiser in SIMS.
- All exam documents and materials are logged by the reception team and reported to the exams officer immediately. The Assistant Head Teacher, for GCSE Achievement, is the only other member of staff to have access keys to the secure storage and would be able to ensure that the documents are logged and securely stored.
- Heads of departments are informed ahead of deadlines when they will be expected to submit controlled assessments/coursework marks and can do so through the Awarding Body Portals.
- Access to secure storage can be given to Assistant Head. The exam officer has a coded key cabinet which contains the keys to the storage area. This code would be provided to the Assistant Head and changed upon the return of the exam officer.

#### *Exam time*

- All invigilators, staff and candidates will be made aware of the conditions required to undertake exams and assessments in advance.
- Senior Leadership Team/ Head Teacher would be informed and action necessary paperwork required for VLA's, malpractice and special consideration.
- Invigilators will be trained in the packing and dispatch of scripts.

#### *Results and Post-results*

- Senior Leadership Team will have access to results. Envelopes will be prepared in advance of results day.

## **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 (facilitators) providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained*

#### *Exam time*

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

### Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- We employ a Head of Inclusion and Empowerment (4 – 18) and a SENCO as well as a number of Pupil Achievement Coaches (PACs) who are trained to provide Access Arrangements for students.
- Our Head of Inclusion and Empowerment (4 – 18) is qualified to Masters Level to be able to carry out all assessments in order for students to be considered for Access Arrangements.

#### *Planning*

- Our Head of Inclusion and Empowerment (4 – 18) applies for Access Arrangements using the correct channels such as JCQ for GCSE and A 'Levels.
- School 21 has a disability policy to ensure equality is maintained.
- The Inclusion Department have a folder containing all required documents for Access Arrangements within the different year groups. Prior to testing teachers are required to inform the Inclusion Department of individuals' requirements for testing and procedures in class for Normal Way of Working.

#### *Pre-Exams*

- The Inclusion department implement the applications and inform the Exams Officer to ensure all are required by the deadline.
- Shared documents are created so that all arrangements are accessible by all staff to ensure they are implemented.

- Any modified paper requirements that are late would be directed to the board and their support requested in ensuring the students' receive their adjusted papers.
- Access arrangements are assessed at the beginning of the academic year so that we can ensure sufficient numbers of staff are trained, to allow for any staff absences too.

*Exam time*

- The Inclusion department are given access to the exam information and of who is taking which exams. They are also informed which access arrangement rooms are being used for which students. Support is arranged in advance and staff have access to the Access Arrangement schedule.

**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*

*Candidates not being informed of centre assess marks before marks are submitted to the awarding body and therefore not being able to consider appealing the internal assessment decisions and requesting a review of the centre's marking.*

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

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- There are multiple checks throughout the year before the deadlines to ensure the entries are as up to date as possible, after this, subject teachers would be required to make the decisions on entries, which would be checked by the relevant senior leader.
- Any omissions to be referred to the Assistant Head Teacher.
- If NEA are required under the specification Head of Departments would have been informing teaching staff, Senior Leadership Team hold line management meetings regularly to ensure all elements of the specification are covered.
- Most departments have a team of staff, so colleagues will step into carry out the necessary duties.



- Assistant Head Teacher responsible for ensuring the priority for teaching is the examination cohort and staff will be covered in good time, by trained professionals, in all circumstances.
- All dates are provided to Heads of Departments in advance of the deadline, all marks are required in advance to ensure they entered either by teachers or the exams officer before the Awarding Body deadlines.
- All NEA marks will be passed on to students prior to the submission deadline, in line with our NEA policy, this will be done by a cover teacher/another of the subject teachers or Head of Department.

### **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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- In the absence of internally employed invigilators we work closes with an invigilating agency who are able to supply staff when required. This can be arranged at short notice, should there be lack of invigilators or last minute absence.
- School staff are aware of regulations and maybe be asked to step in when required.

### **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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The exams officer works closes with the Senior Leadership Team to ensure appropriate rooms are available, if last minute changes are required these would be arranged with the SLT to ensure adequate replacements rooms are used.
- Rooms are booked in advance of the exams to ensure classrooms are cleared and ready for exams. Rooms should be arranged after the Awarding Body amendment deadlines.

- We have other spaces available, the PE hall, to use in the event of the New Hall being out of action. We would in the event of an emergency be able to use a space at the London Academy of Excellence.
- In the event that the London Academy of Excellence is unavailable we would hire an emergency alternative venue.

### **Failure of IT systems**

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

*MIS system failure at final entry deadline*

*MIS system failure during exam preparation*

*MIS system failure at results release time*

#### Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Head of centre to be informed
- Our MIS is hosted and backed up daily, so essentially should not fail and is accessible through different devices.
- All awarding body details are available as well as printed mark sheet copies.
- Entries can be entered through portals and any issues directed to the Awarding Body for advice if required.
- During exams, mark sheets are printed and could be used to make manual seating plans / emailed to exam boards to make entries if required.
- Using the awarding body details we would contact them to request emailed results or use portals to retrieve result data.

### **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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Please see School 21 Emergency Evacuation Plan

### **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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Head of Centre responsible for finding alternative venues/methods of learning.
- Priority given to the exam cohort
- Exams officer to contact awarding bodies for advice regarding special consideration
- Parents/Carers and candidates to be informed.

**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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- We will alert the relevant awarding organisation at the outset and make them aware of the issue.
- Inform parents/carers and candidates of the situation causing candidates to be unable to attend to take their examinations.
- Arrange an alternative venue / advise on next opportunity to sit examination(s)
- Apply for special consideration as required

**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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Open for candidates only if possible
- Use alternative venue, in agreement with awarding body, London Academy of Excellence
- Offer candidates the opportunity to the exams in the next exam series.

**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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The awarding organisation would be informed and an alternative delivery of papers organised.

### **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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The scripts will be stored back in secure storage until the next collection slot.
- Parcelforce to be contacted to ensure next collection.
- The awarding body will be informed of the alternative arrangements

### **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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The head of centre is responsible for immediately informing the awarding organisation(s) and subsequently the candidates and their parents/carers.
- Student marks to be submitted based on appropriate evidence
- Candidates offered the opportunity to retake in subsequent series.

### **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

- Exam officer and Head of Centre to assess alternative arrangements for issuing results with the regulators
- Head of Centre to inform transition schools, students and parents about delay as soon as possible.

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

### **Ofqual**

What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted

#### **Contingency planning**

You should prepare for possible disruption to exams and other assessments as part of your emergency planning and make sure your staff are aware of these plans.

#### **Disruption to assessments or exams**

In the absence of any instructions from the relevant awarding organisation, the school or college should assume that any exam or timetabled assessment should take place if it is possible for it to do so. This may mean having to locate alternative premises.

If the exam or assessment cannot take place, or if a student misses an exam or loses their assessment due to an emergency or other event outside the control of the school or college, you should discuss alternative arrangements with your awarding organisation.

The school or college should consider the following steps:

#### **Exam planning**

1. Review your contingency plan well in advance of each exam series.
2. Ensure that copies of question papers are received and stored under secure conditions.

#### **In the event of disruption**

1. Contact the relevant awarding organisation and follow its instructions.
2. Take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether the school or college is able to open.
3. Identify whether the exam can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation.
4. Where accommodation is limited, prioritise students whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exams when planned.
5. Communicate with parents, carers and students regarding any changes to the exam timetable.
6. Advise students, where appropriate, to sit exams in the next available series.

#### **After the exam**

1. Consider whether students may be eligible for special consideration.
2. Ensure that scripts are stored under secure conditions.

3. Return scripts to awarding organisations in line with their instructions. Never make alternative arrangements for the transportation of completed exam scripts, unless told to do so by the awarding organisation.

The awarding organisation should take the following steps:

### **Exam planning**

1. Establish, maintain and at all times comply with an up to date written contingency plan.
2. Ensure that the arrangements that are in place with schools and colleges enable them to deliver and award qualifications in accordance with its conditions of recognition.

### **In the event of disruption**

1. Take all reasonable steps to mitigate any negative effect, in relation to its qualifications, arising from any disruption.
2. Provide effective guidance to any of its centres responsible for delivering qualifications on its behalf.
3. Ensure that where an assessment is required to be completed under specified conditions, students complete the assessment under those conditions (other than where any reasonable adjustments or special considerations require alternative conditions).
4. Promptly notify the relevant regulators about any event which could have a negative effect on students, standards or public confidence.

### **After the exam**

Consider any requests for special consideration for affected students. For example, those who may have lost their internally assessed work or whose performance in assessments or exams could have been affected by the disruption.

### **When a student misses an exam or is disadvantaged by the disruption**

If you feel that the performance of all or some of your students have been negatively affected by the disruption you should ask your awarding organisation about applying for special consideration. The decision about what special consideration is, or is not appropriate, is for awarding organisations to make. Their decisions might be different, for different qualifications and for different subjects. However, we encourage awarding organisations to adopt a consistent approach, including between learners, schools or colleges, and awarding organisations, when dealing with a number of similar cases.