



Exam contingency plan

2016/17

This plan is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

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| Approved/reviewed by | |
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| Date of next review | September 2017 |

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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.

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 and trained*

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

- *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

SLT to nominate a deputy to cover the exams roles.

Planning

- Planning tasks as listed above would be completed by the nominated Deputy.
- All tasks completed must be logged for ease of return of the exams officer.

Entries

- Nominated Deputy to liaise with exam boards on behalf of the Exams Officer.
- Seek guidance from the exam boards.
- Seek guidance from other exams officers in the Ark Hastings Hub.
- Keep a record of all actions taken to aid the return of the Exams Officer.

Pre-Exams

- Nominated Deputy to make the necessary arrangements with help from SLT and the sixth form administrator.
- Keep a record of all tasks completed for the return of the Exams Officer.

Exam Time

- Data Manager is the secondary key holder, and will be able to administer exams.
- The Instructions for conducting examinations books are available in the exams office
- Experienced invigilators will be able to assist with administration.

Results and Post-Results Services

- Data Team to liaise with Civica IT Support and the Exams Officer (if they can be contacted) about accessing results via A2C.
- Follow Bromcom instructions on how to import results to the MIS.
- Use templates for forms for Reviews of marking and submit these with assistance from the exam boards.

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*
- *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

- Planning –
- All students deemed necessary to be access arrangement tested have been completed as of 21/10/2016. Should any further need testing due to a dramatic change in individual circumstance, in my absence, please contact BOTH OF the following: B.Elliott@arkwilliamparker.org, Candida.Dearing@arkonline.org.
- The centre has recognised it's duties as defined under the equalities Act. Should in situation arise where this changes in my absence, please contact B.Elliott@arkwilliamparker.org, Candida.Dearing@arkonline.org.
- All evidence of need has been collated as of 21/10/2016. Should any further evidence be needed in my absence, please contact ALL of the following: B.Elliott@arkwilliamparker.org, Candida.Dearing@arkonline.org, C.Bessa@arkwilliamparker.org
- Pre Exams – If approval has not been applied, modified papers not identified or staff not trained, in my absence please contact the following B.Elliott@arkwilliamparker.org, Candida.Dearing@arkonline.org, C.Bessa@arkwilliamparker.org
- **Exam Time • access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms**
- If this is the case, in my absence please contact S.Vince@arkwilliamparker.org, B.Elliott@arkwilliamparker.org and Jane.Fletcher@arkwilliamparker.org as a matter of urgency.

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 assessments tasks not set/not taken by candidates as scheduled

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

Centre actions

- Head of department will take responsibility for providing information to the exams officer.
- Planning for controlled assessments will be conducted by the Head of Department who should plan for classes who are missing a regular teacher.

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

- Hire agency invigilators to fill spots where there is a shortage of regular invigilators.
- Make sure support staff are invigilation trained for emergency back-up invigilators
- Plan to have at least 1 invigilator over the minimum required amount so that an absence does not disrupt the exams process.

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

- In an emergency the new and old sports halls could be used.
- In absolute desperation the Rugby club upstairs could be used.
- Liaise with premises about getting enough desks to the emergency location.

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

- Plan all entries to be made at least 2 days prior to the deadline.
- Contact Civica immediately with any issues and get them solved at the greatest priority.
- Contact exam boards and seek assistance.

7. Emergency evacuation of the exam room

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Whole centre evacuation during exam time due to serious incident resulting in exam candidates being unable to return to exam rooms to start, proceed with or complete their exams

Centre actions

- Follow centre evacuation plan.

Should the students not be able to return to the exam

- Make a full report of the time the exam was abandoned and the reasons why; report this to the exam boards as soon as possible.
- Student grade calculated using forecast grades.

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

The centre to communicate with parents, carers and students about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plans to address this. [Joint Contingency Plan (JCP) scenario 1]

Centre actions

- It remains to responsibility of the centre to prepare the candidates for exams as normal.
- Evoke the school contingency for alternative methods of learning, or alternative venues.
- Prioritise candidates who will be sitting examinations shortly, Years 11, 12 and 13.
- Delay any other entries for candidates taking exams early.

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

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. [JCP scenario 2]

Centre actions

- Exams officer to communicate the issue with the exam boards.
- Inclusion Manager to assist Exams Officer in communicating with the student and parents to find a solution.
- These solutions can include: home visitation, alternative venue (with permission from the exam boards)
- Apply for special considerations for these candidates, if they meet the minimum criteria.

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*)

A centre which is unable to open as normal for examinations must inform each awarding organisation with which examinations are due to be taken as soon as is possible. [JCP scenario 5]

Centre actions

- Open for examinations only, if this is a possibility (Snow days etc.)
- Use alternative venues in agreement with the exam boards (emergency alternative venue). These can be other centres or public buildings.
- Apply for special considerations for all students who meet the minimum requirements.
- Offer candidates an opportunity to sit in the next series if exams are missed.

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

The centre to communicate with awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of papers. [JCP scenario 3]

Centre actions

- Inform the exam boards immediately upon becoming aware of a disruption.
- Arrange for the papers to be re-sent if there is time.
- Arrange for a secure download from exam board websites if there is not enough time to receive new papers.

12. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts

The centre to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to resolve the issue. [JCP scenario 4]

Centre actions

- Call to inform exam boards as soon as the issue can be determined.
- Send with the next available collection.
- OR arrange alternative collection ASAP.
- Follow the gov.uk checklist for dispatch of exam scripts (yellow label service)

13. 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

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. [JCP scenario 6]

Centre actions

- Head of centre to communicate with exam boards immediately.
- Head of centre to inform parents and the students involved in the incident.
- Exams Officer to investigate how the incident occurred and create a report into how it may be prevented in the future.

14. 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

Centres to contact awarding organisations about alternative options. [JCP scenario 11]

Centre actions

- Contact EO at Helenswood Academy.
- Contact all students collecting results (by post)
- Hold a joint results day at Helenswood Academy.

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>, page iii]