



# Exam contingency plan

2017/18

This plan is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

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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*

#### *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

- Refer to the Exam Planner on the schools O drive system for key dates and tasks to be completed, date specific
- Refer to the Exam manual detailing all steps to be taking in any specific scenario or exam process.
- Use of other members of support staff to help with exam admin tasks

**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

- A designated Assessor will be sought to undertake the assessment and potential access arrangement requirements.
- The Examination Manager will process the applications to the awarding bodies
- SLT (BS) and the Examination Manager will assign staff support to access arrangement candidates

**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

- SLT/Head of Department to seek to cover timetable and complete tasks set with supply staff or other internal teaching staff.

- SLT to seek to change teaching staff department timetables if necessary.

#### 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

- Pair an untrained invigilator with an appropriately trained invigilator
- Cover Supervisor to act as another supporting body in the exam room in conjunction with an appropriately trained invigilator
- Examination Manager to act as an invigilator

#### 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

- SLT to reassign a class to provide an appropriate room to hold the exam
- Keep students supervised in isolation with no access to media equipment or phones until a room becomes available
- Liaise with a neighbouring school for alternative facilities.

#### 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 the exam board and advise accordingly taking the lead from them on how to proceed.
- Contact the Technical department for a solution

#### 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

- Contact the exam board and advise accordingly taking the lead from them on how to proceed.
- Keep students supervised in isolation with no access to media equipment or phones until a room

becomes available

- Liaise with a neighbouring school for alternative facilities.

## 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

- Contact the exam board and advise accordingly taking the lead from them on how to proceed.
- Liaise with a neighbouring school for alternative facilities.

## 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

- Contact the exam board and advise of the situation
- Complete all necessary forms for absent student
- Apply for Special Consideration, if applicable.

## 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

### Centre actions

- Contact the exam board and advise of the situation
- Liaise with a neighbouring school for alternative facilities.

## 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

- Contact the exam board and advice of situation; follow their advice.

## 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

- Contact the exam board and explain the situation
- Store all papers securely, locked in the filing cabinet in the secure exam room
- Arrange collection asap

## 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

- Contact the exam board and advice of situation; follow their advice.

## 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 the exam board and advice of situation; follow their advice.
- Liaise with a neighbouring school for alternative facilities.

**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]