



Exam Contingency Plan

This plan is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with JCQ
current regulations

Reviewed Nov 17

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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

- Headteacher to appoint an acting Exams Officer as soon as possible, ensuring the Key tasks as listed above are understood
- Head of IT to assist in tasks which involve SIMS and/or A2C
- Exam Boards to be kept informed of developments (contact numbers at the end of this document and in the Exams Officer's room)
- Exams Officer to ensure essential information is available to the Assistant Head and Headteacher
- Exams Officer to ensure the Exams policies and procedures are up to date at all times

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

- Headteacher to appoint an experienced member of the SEN team as acting SENCo as soon as possible.
- Testing and Assessments continue to be carried out by qualified members of the SEN team. Applications for Access Arrangements to be made in conjunction with the Exams Officer.
- Senior members of the SEN team to be fully up to date with JCQ Regulations (Orange Book)

3. Head of Department 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

- Headteacher to appoint an acting HoD as soon as possible.

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

- All teaching staff are used as invigilators – absence and resulting gaps in invigilation are managed by the Cover Manager in consultation with the Deputy Head
- All teaching staff are trained in invigilation
- Invigilation is planned well in advance and always with reserve staff allocated
- A pool of senior, experienced staff are used as Senior Invigilators - absence of Senior Invigilators can therefore be covered

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

- Pre-planning is essential. Exam rooms are allocated well in advance of the examinations window by the Facilities Manager in consultation with the Deputy Head and the Exams Officer.
- The exam venues are mobile classrooms and bungalow. Should one become unavailable it will be possible to rearrange venues and seating plans at short notice in order to accommodate candidates. In this case the centre will communicate with parents, carers, Head of Boarding, candidates and staff with up-to-date information.
- A very large Sports Hall is available at short notice if necessary.
- Senior Invigilators will assist the Exams Officer in maintaining the security of exam papers should a venue be changed a very short notice.
- Exams Officer to ensure that any late-notice rooms comply with regulations as set out in the JCQ ICE book.

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

Centre actions

- Failure at Entry Deadline – Headteacher to liaise with Head of IT and Exams Officer to enable a swift resolution to any issues. Exams Officer to contact exam boards as quickly as possible to identify alternative route for processing entries (e.g. via exam board secure websites).
- Failure during exams preparation – Headteacher to liaise with the Head of IT as above. Exams Officer to inform exam boards of ongoing situation.

- Failure at results release time - Headteacher liaise with Head of IT and Exams Officer to enable a swift resolution to any issues. Exams Officer to contact exam boards as quickly as possible to identify alternative route for receiving results (e.g. via exam board secure sites).

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

- Senior Invigilators, Invigilators, Headteacher, and Exams Officer to ensure emergency evacuation plan is followed, maintaining the integrity of the exam.
- Candidates to be held separately, avoiding contact with other pupils, and ensuring that candidates do not talk to one another until they have been relocated to another of our principal venues wherever possible

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 actions

- The centre to communicate with parents, carers, students and staff about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plans to address this.
- Headteacher to prioritise teaching venues for students.
- Exams Officer to inform exam boards of developments.
- Consider use of alternative venues.

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

- 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
- Consider use of alternative venues.

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

- School will always be open for examination candidates unless a situation means that it is unsafe for anyone to enter the building.

- In this instance, Exams Officer to inform each awarding organisation which examinations are affected as soon as possible
- Consider use of alternative venues
- Centre to communicate with parents, carers, candidates and staff regarding alternative arrangements

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.
- Exams Officer to inform Headteacher of new arrangements.

12. 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

- Exams Officer to communicate with relevant awarding organisations as soon as possible to resolve the issue.
- Scripts to be stored securely according to JCQ regulations until transport is confirmed.

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.

Centre actions

- Head of Centre to communicate this immediately to the relevant awarding organisation(s) and subsequently to students and their parents or carers.
- Candidates to re-take the affected assessment at a subsequent assessment window if possible.

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

Centre actions

- Unable to access results - Exams Officer will contact awarding bodies regarding alternative options (e.g. download results from awarding body secure websites)
- Unable to distribute results - the centre will communicate with parents, carers, students and HoDs with details of alternative arrangements (e.g. alternative site). Information also to be posted on the school website and communicated to school office.
- Alternative arrangements for post-results services to be communicated to parents, carers, students, HoDs, school office.

15. Contact Numbers for Awarding Bodies:

AQA	0800 197 7162
WJEC	0292 0265000
Edexcel	0344 463 2535
OCR	01223 553998
NCFE	0191 2398014 – Centre No: 8466929

CENTRE NUMBER – 27119

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]