

ASPIRE - ENDEAVOUR - ACHIEVE



ST. CECILIA'S

COLLEGE

Examinations Contingency Plan

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Who the plan is for

The plan is designed for two audiences:

- staff from awarding organisations delivering examinations
- staff within schools and centres (including headteachers) who are responsible for administering examinations

The purpose of the plan

The purpose of the joint contingency plan is to ensure there is a consistent and effective response in the event of major disruption to the examination system. This joint contingency plan takes these processes and procedures into account and is designed to complement them, not replace them.

The outcomes of the plan

The overall outcome of the plan is to ensure that the interests of candidates are safeguarded while maintaining the integrity of the examination system and qualification standards.

There are three specific outcomes the plan seeks to achieve:

- delivering assessments to published timetables
- delivering results to published timetables
- complying with regulatory requirements in relation to assessment, marking and standards

Qualifications covered by the plan

The qualifications covered by the plan are primarily large entry, externally assessed examinations delivered in schools. These include GCSEs, AS levels, A levels, Tech levels, BTEC National Diplomas and Cambridge Nationals.

When the plan would be triggered

The plan would be triggered in the event of a major disruption to the examination system affecting significant numbers of candidates across several awarding organisations.

This could include severe weather, widespread illness, travel disruption, fires, logistical problems or system failures.

Any actions taken will be subject to the advice of the official agencies dealing with the specific circumstances being faced, for example the police, Environment Agency or Health Protection Agency.

Scenarios

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 e.g. very late arrival, suspected malpractice, special consideration
- candidates' scripts not dispatched as required 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:

- Exams Officer to have documented procedures manual(s) in place (SLT to be aware of where these are stored for future reference).
- SLT to nominate a 'deputy' to cover a role/task
- Work shadowing; job rotation; staff development sessions; briefing sessions
- Buddying up; networking

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
- 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:

- SLT to arrange employment of the services of an approved assessor for the period of assessment of the cohort .
- Exams Officer to perform administration for pre-exams and exam time arrangements.
- SLT to nominate a 'deputy' to cover role/task should the Exams Officer be absent for a prolonged period of time .

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

Centre actions:

- SLT to arrange a "deputy" within the faculty concerned at the earliest opportunity. They would take up all the necessary roles within the Department to ensure the above all occur

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:

- SLT to keep abreast of the planning, hiring, training etc of all invigilators at least 2 months prior to the recruitment phase. On the day of the exams, if there is an invigilator shortage, SLT would have to be deployed to cover for absence.

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:

- Liaise with local primary school to make use of their large assembly hall / large classrooms

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:

- Exams Officer access directly secure online aspects of individual awarding bodies' website to complete the tasks remotely.
- Liaise with St John's Primary School to make use of their MIS system.

7. 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 school's Contingency Plan addresses this issue. The centre to communicate with parents, carers and students about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plans to address this.

8. 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:

- SLT to activate the school's Contingency Plan.

- 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.

9. 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

Centre actions:

- If the school's Contingency Plan has been activated, examination boards concerned would be contacted immediately and advice obtained acted upon.

10. 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:

- The centre to communicate with awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of papers.
- Centre would act upon advice offered by JCQ.

11. 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:

- Scripts to be stored in exam safe.
- Exam safe keys stored in the Exams Officer's office.
- Exams Officer's office must be locked when unoccupied.
- The centre to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to resolve the issue.

12. 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 reduce this risk, active scripts remain on site for the absolutely minimum time.
- 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.

13. 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:

- Contact to be made immediately to the awarding bodies about alternative options.
- Use St. John's Primary School for distribution of results on the exam morning .

This policy was last reviewed by the Leadership Team: August 2020

Due to be reviewed: May 2022