



Examinations Contingency Plan Policy

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Purpose of the plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the management and administration of the exam process at Alderbrook School. By outlining actions/procedures to be followed 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 Ofqual 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 Alderbrook School is compliant with the JCQ regulation (section 5.3, General Regulations for Approved Centres 2017-2018) that the centre has in place a written examination contingency plan which covers all aspects of examination administration. This will allow members of the senior leadership team to act immediately in the event of an emergency or staff absence.

For each cause of potential disruption to the exam process, key tasks that might not get undertaken, and any other issues are listed, followed by the actions that the Centre needs to take in order to maintain the integrity of the exam process.

Causes of potential disruption to the exam process

1 Exam officer extended absence at key points in the exam process (cycle)

Key tasks required in the management and administration of the exam cycle not undertaken or other issues might include:

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

- Head of Centre to appoint member of administrative staff to take over responsibilities should absence of EO have the potential to affect the meeting of deadlines
- Staff member to work closely with EO to ensure they are up to date with the exam cycle and responsibilities at each point in time. This will be done under the supervision of the Deputy Headteacher responsible for exams and Head of Centre

2 SENCo extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

Key tasks required in the management and administration of the access arrangements process within the exam cycle not undertaken, or other issues might include:

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

- Head of centre responsible for ensuring position is filled should absence have the potential to disrupt exam preparation
- EO and Access Arrangements assessor to ensure access arrangements are in place by the Spring term of Year 10 for all students where possible
- EO to plan access arrangements for exam days in advance of the Summer series, in consultation with SENCo

3 Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

Key tasks not undertaken or other issues might include:

Early/estimated entry information not provided to the exams officer on time

- pre-release information not being received

Final entry information not provided to the exams officer on time

- 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 assessed marks before marks are submitted to the awarding body and therefore not being able to consider appealing internal assessment decisions and requesting a review of the centre's marking
- Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet submission deadlines

Centre actions

- EO responsible for ensuring deadlines are met for estimated entries. Any omissions to be referred to Head of Centre
- Head of Centre 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

4 Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence

Key tasks not undertaken or other issues might include:

- 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

- EO responsible for recruitment of invigilators in the Autumn term of the summer series. Advance planning required to ensure enough are available for the sittings
- Head of Centre to be informed if recruitment necessary
- Cover supervisor and Examinations Administrator Staff to also receive updated exam invigilator training to ensure back up is available in case of invigilator absence

5 Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or venues unavailable at short notice

Key tasks not undertaken or other issues might include:

- 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 expected incident at exam time

Centre actions

- EO responsible for ensuring planning of rooms is completed by the end of the Spring term to identify potential rooming issues
- Alternative venues within the school to be made available by teaching staff in the event of an unexpected incident
- Head of Centre to liaise with EO to ensure no disruption due to room shortage

6 Failure of IT systems

Key tasks not undertaken or other issues might include:

- MIS system failure at final entry deadline
- MIS system failure during exams preparation
- MIS system failure at results release time

Centre actions

- EO to contact awarding bodies directly to arrange alternative methods of information exchange
- Head of Centre to be informed

7 Disruption of teaching time – centre closed for an extended period

Key tasks not undertaken or other issues might include:

- 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

- Head of Centre responsible for finding alternative venues/methods of learning
- Priority given to exam cohort
- Centre to communicate with parents / carers and students

8 Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period

Key tasks not undertaken or other issues might include:

- Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations
- *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

Centre actions

- Open for candidates only if possible
- Use alternative venue (eg Norman Green Leisure Centre), in agreement with awarding organisations
- Communicate with students/parents by email/ local media
- Offer students the opportunity to sit in the next series

9 Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis, although centre remains open

Key tasks not undertaken or other issues might include:

- Candidates are unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal

Centre actions

- Procedures for absence outlined to students in examination booklet information given each year
- EO to liaise with student and parents / carers to find alternative venue/advise on next opportunity to sit the examination/apply for special consideration as required

10 Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

Key tasks not undertaken or other issues might include:

- Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts

Centre actions

- EO to communicate with awarding bodies for approval of alternative delivery arrangements

11 Assessment evidence is not available to be marked

Key tasks not undertaken or other issues might include:

- Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked

Centre actions

- EO to communicate with awarding bodies immediately
- Student marks to be submitted based on appropriate evidence
- Candidates offered the opportunity to retake in subsequent series

12 Centre unable to distribute results as normal

Key tasks not undertaken or other issues might include:

- Centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post-results services

Centre actions

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

13 Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lock down)

Key tasks not undertaken or other issues might include:

- 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

- Invigilators to proceed with school 'Lock Down' or 'Evacuation' Procedure
- Head of Centre to make alternative site arrangements if needed (for example, Norman Green Leisure Centre)
- EO to inform Exam Boards of situation and possible special consideration.

14 Disruption in the distribution of examination papers

Key tasks not undertaken or other issues might include:

- Disruption to the distribution of examination papers to the centre in advance of examinations

Centre actions

- EO to inform Exam Board and Head of Centre
- EO to download papers from secure site on day of exam if advised by Exam Board.

Information in Sections 7 – 12 is taken from the Ofqual **Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland/what-schools-and-colleges-should-do-if-exams-or-other-assessments-are-seriously-disrupted>