



Examinations Contingency Plan

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Purpose of the plan

- 1 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.
- 2 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.](#)"
- 3 This plan also confirms Alderbrook School is compliant with the JCQ regulation (section 5.3 General Regulations for Approved Centres 2020-2021) 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.
- 4 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

Exam Officer absence

- 5 If the Exam officer (EO) is on 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:
- 6 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
- 7 Exam 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
- 8 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

9 Access arrangements

- candidate support not arranged for rooms

10 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
- very late arrival, suspected malpractice, special consideration
- candidates' scripts not dispatched as required to awarding bodies

11 Results and post-results

- access to examination results affecting the distribution of results to candidates
- the facilitation of the post-results services

Centre actions

12 The Head of Centre (HOC) should arrange for a member of the administrative staff to take over responsibilities should absence of EO have the potential to affect the meeting of deadlines

13 This will be done under the supervision of the Deputy Headteacher responsible for exams and Head of Centre

14 The Senior Leader responsible for exams should undertake 'The Exams Office' - Senior Leader/Line Manager Training and Assessment Module

15 Additional help may need to be called upon from Lead Invigilators

SENDCo absence

16 IF the SENDCo is on 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:

17 Planning

- Candidates not tested/assessed to identify potential access arrangement requirements
- Evidence of need and evidence to support normal way of working not collated

18 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

Centre actions

19 The HOC is responsible for ensuring that the position is filled should absence have the potential to disrupt exam preparation

20 The EO and Access Arrangements assessor should ensure access arrangements are in place by the Spring term of Year 10 for all students where possible

- 21 The EO should plan access arrangements for exam days in advance of the Summer series, in consultation with SENCo

Teaching staff absence

- 22 If certain teaching staff are on 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
- 23 Final entry information may not be 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

- 24 The EO is responsible for ensuring deadlines are met for estimated entries. Any omissions should be referred to HOC
- 25 The HOC is responsible for ensuring the priority for teaching in the examination cohort and any absent staff will be covered in good time, by trained professionals, in all circumstances

Lack of invigilators

- 26 In the event of a lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence, key tasks not undertaken or other issues might include:
- Invigilator shortage on peak exam days
 - ratios not within JCQ regulations

Centre actions

- 27 The EO is responsible for recruitment of invigilators in the Autumn term of the summer series. Advance planning required to ensure enough are available for the sittings
- 28 The HOC should be informed if recruitment is necessary
- 29 The Cover supervisor should receive updated exam invigilator training to ensure back up is available in case of invigilator absence

Exam rooms availability

- 30 If there is a lack of appropriate rooms or venues become unavailable at short notice, key tasks not undertaken or other issues might include:
- EO 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

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

Failure of IT systems including Cyber Attack

- 34 In the event of an IT failure, key tasks not undertaken or other issues in the event of a failure of IT systems might include:
 - MIS system failure at final entry deadline
 - MIS system failure during exams preparation
 - MIS system failure at results release time

Centre actions

- 35 The HOC should be informed
- 36 The Centre's Disaster Recovery Plan should be actioned
- 37 The EO should contact awarding bodies directly to arrange alternative methods of information exchange
- 38 Any tasks required would be dealt with by the IT department using alternative devices and HOT spots

Disruption of teaching time

- 39 Key tasks not undertaken or other issues if the centre is closed for an extended period might include the centre being closed, or candidates being unable to attend for an extended period during normal teaching or study supported time, interrupting the provision of normal teaching and learning

Centre actions

- 40 The HOC is responsible for finding alternative venues or methods of learning
- 41 Priority should be given to the exam cohort
- 42 The Centre should communicate with parents / carers and students

Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period

- 43 Key tasks not undertaken or other issues if the centre is unable to open might include the centre being unavailable for scheduled examinations

Centre actions

- 44 If the HOC 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

- 45 The centre should remain open for candidates only if possible
- 46 Alternative venues (eg Norman Green Leisure Centre) may be used, in agreement with awarding organisations
- 47 The centre should communicate with students/parents by email/ local media
- 48 As a last resort, students may be offered the opportunity to sit in the next series

Individual candidates' crises

- 49 Where individual candidates or groups of candidates are unable to take examinations because of a crisis, although the centre remains open, key tasks not undertaken or other issues might include some candidates being unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal

Centre actions

- 50 Procedures for absence are outlined to students in examination booklet information given each year
- 51 The EO should liaise with student and parents/carers to find alternative venues, advise on the next opportunity to sit the examination or apply for special consideration as required

Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

- 52 Key tasks not undertaken or other issues might include delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts

Centre actions

- 53 The EO should communicate with awarding bodies for approval of alternative delivery arrangements

Assessment evidence is not available to be marked

- 54 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

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

Centre unable to distribute results as normal

- 58 Key tasks not undertaken or other issues might include the Centre being unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post-results services

Centre actions

- 59 The EO and HOC should assess alternative arrangements for issuing results with the regulators, for example, Norman Green Leisure Centre
- 60 The HOC should inform transition schools, students and parents/carers about delay as soon as possible

Emergency evacuation

- 61 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

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

Disruption in the distribution of examination papers

- 65 Key tasks not undertaken or other issues might include any disruption to the distribution of examination papers to the centre in advance of examinations

Centre actions

- 66 The EO should inform Exam Board and HOC
- 67 The EO should download papers from secure site on day of exam if advised by Exam Board.
- 68 Information in this policy 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>

Internal Governance arrangements

- 69 In the absence of the HOC the Deputy Head Teacher will provide support to the EO to ensure integrity and security of examinations and assessments.
- 70 In the absence of the Senior Leader responsible for exams, the HOC will provide day to day support to the Examinations Officer.
- 71 All parties involved in exam administration should always be available remotely where possible.