



Highcliffe School

Examinations Contingency Plan Applicable to JCQ Regulations

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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 Highcliffe School. 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 the 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 complies with JCQ general regulations for Approved Centres (section 5.3) in that: The centre agrees to have 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.'

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 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- **Assistant Examinations Officer (AEO) to undertake 'The Exams Office' PDP induction programme in conjunction with in office training with the Exams Officer (EO).**
- *AEO to assume responsibility for the above tasks with the support of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).*

2. SENDCo 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
 - 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- *Assistant SENDCO – to be trained in the above processes.*
- *SEN administrators take responsibility for the pre-exams processes.*
- *SEN T/A trained for access arrangement testing. An external agency would be used in the case of extended absence.*

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 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- *The entry process is led by the EO, who will follow up designated staff within the affected area.*
- *The AEO to assume responsibility for the above tasks following the PDP induction programme.*
- *Director of Learning (DOL) or Subject Leader (SL) to assume responsibility for providing estimated entry, final entry information, internal assessment marks and work for the EO.*
- *DOL/SL to ensure that, in their absence, the appropriate staff can provide entry information etc. as above.*

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- *Support staff (admin staff, pastoral leads and T/As) are trained annually with invigilators.*
- *Annual recruitment cycle is conducted in the autumn and/or spring terms accordingly.*
- *AEO to assume responsibility for the above in the absence of the EO.*

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- *Application for change of examination times by EO or AEO and alterations to the school day.*
- *Partial School Closure*
- *All free rooms used and re-allocation of classes to free up suitable rooms.*

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*
- *Internet failure at centre*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- *In the event of MIS failure at entry deadline EO to make exam entries online with individual awarding bodies (AB) using paper copies of entry details collected.*
- *In the event of MIS failure during exams prep internal system, SIS, to be used in conjunction with information from ABs. Revert to manual plans.*
- *In the event of MIS failure at results release time. Results information to be downloaded from AB.*
- *In the event of complete failure of internet in any of the above stages the procedures will be conducted off-site.*

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- *Inform each awarding organisation with which examinations are due to be taken as soon as is possible*
- *Communicate with AB regarding a move to an alternative venue.*
- *The centre to liaise with the school's insurance provider to identify an alternate venue without delay.*
- *Apply for special consideration as appropriate.*

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- *The centre to communicate with parents, carers and students about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plans to address this.*
- *Use of SIS to provide online learning, (short to medium-term.)*
- *Negotiate use of alternative site(s) e.g. year groups at different locations or negotiate leasing arrangements for temporary accommodation on-site as appropriate (long-term).*

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- *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.*
- *Communicate with AB regarding a move to an alternative venue*
- *Apply for special consideration as appropriate.*

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

Centre actions:

- *Inform each awarding organisation with which examinations are due to be taken as soon as is possible*
- *Communicate with AB regarding a move to an alternative venue.*
- *The centre to liaise with the school's insurance provider to identify an alternate venue without delay.*
- *Apply for special consideration as appropriate.*

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:

- *The centre to communicate with awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of papers.*

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- *The centre to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to resolve the issue.*
- *The Examinations Officer, or designated deputy, will take any unsorted packages to the nearest Express Post Office, which is at Sauflands, (0.2 miles) with the examination log for stamping. Parcels will be collected from there and sent under the Yellow Label System. If it is not possible to get to the Post Office an Ad Hoc collection from centre, or alternate agreed venue will be arranged on the next available working day.*

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- *Communicate immediately with the relevant awarding organisation(s) and subsequently to students and their parents or carers.*
- *ABs to generate candidate marks for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement as defined by the ABs in consultation with the regulators.*
- *Candidates to retake affected assessment at subsequent assessment window if applicable.*

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- *Centre to contact awarding organisations about alternative options.*
- *Centre to make arrangements to access its results at an alternative site.*
- *Centres to make arrangements to coordinate access to post results services from an alternative site.*
- *Centres to share facilities with other centres if this is possible.*

Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning

OFQUAL

The qualification regulators, JCQ and government departments responsible for education have prepared and agreed information for schools and colleges in the event of examinations being seriously disrupted. This jointly agreed information will ensure consistency of response in the event of major disruption to the examinations system affecting significant numbers of candidates.

Further information may be found at: <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>

JCQ

General regulations

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>

Guidance on alternative site arrangements

Accessed through secure login to the Centre Admin Portal (CAP) or through the JCQ training site <http://jqc.training.jcq.org.uk/CAP/Home/Training>

Instructions for conducting examinations

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations/> *Section 15, Contingency planning*

A guide to the special consideration process

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance>

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 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>