



Exam Contingency Plan 2019/2020

Last Review Date: Summer 2019
Reviewed by Governors: 09/12/2019
Next Review Date: Summer 2020
Reviewer: Lynn Kennedy

Signed:.....

Purpose of the plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exam process at Selly Park Girls' School. By outlining actions/procedures to be involved in case of disruption it is intended to mitigate the impact these disruptions have on our exam process.

Alongside internal processes, this 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*.

This plan complies with JCQ general regulations (section 5 (e)) in that:

The centre agrees to 'have 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, minimizing risk to examination administration, should the examinations officer be absent at a crucial stage of the examination cycle.'

Causes of potential disruption to the examination process

1.Examinations officer extended absence at key points in the examination 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/assessments.
- Awarding body entry deadlines missed or late or other penalty fees being incurred.

Pre-exams:

- Invigilators not trained or updated on changes to instructions for conducting 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 to awarding bodies.

Results and post-results:

- Access to examination results affecting the disruption of results to candidates.
- The facilitation of the post-results service.

Centre action:

- Head of centre to appoint a member of staff to take over responsibility to take over responsibilities should Examination Officers absence affect meeting deadlines.
- Members of staff should shadow Examinations Officer to ensure they are up to date with the examination cycle, responsibility and procedures at each point in time.

2. SENCO extended absence at key points in the examination cycle

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Key tasks required in the management and administration of the access arrangements process within the examination 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:

- Approved 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 room.

Centre actions:

- Head of centre to appoint a member of staff to take over the responsibility, should absence disrupt examination preparation.
- Examinations officer to ensure access arrangements are in place well ahead of deadline where possible.
- Examinations officer to plan arrangements in advance of summer examinations with SENCo.

3. Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the examination cycle

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Key tasks not undertaken including:

- Early/estimated entry information not provided to the examinations officer on time. (Resulting in pre-release information not being received).
- Final entry information not provided to the examinations officer on time. (Resulting in: candidates not being entered for their examinations/assessments, entered late and 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:

- Examinations officer is responsible for ensuring deadlines are met for estimated entries, any omissions to be referred to the Head of Centre.
- All members of department staff to be briefed on entry guidelines.
- Head of Centre to ensure that teaching absences are suitably covered in good time with trained professionals.

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 examinations.

- Invigilator shortage on peak examinations days
- Invigilator absence on the day of an examination

Centre actions:

- Invigilation staffing to be arranged in advance of summer series with 'standby' invigilators included to cover any on the day shortage.
- SLT to be available to invigilate if required
- Head of centre to be informed if agency recruitment is needed.

5. Examinations rooms – lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Examinations officer is unable to identify sufficient/appropriate rooms during examination timetable planning.
- Insufficient rooms available on peak examinations days.
- Main examination venues unavailable due to an unexpected incident at the examination time.

Centre actions:

- Examinations officer to ensure planning of all rooms is completed by spring term to resolve any rooming issues, timetable clashes etc...
- Identify any venues, spare rooms within school for over spill and access arrangements.
- Liaise with Head of Centre if room shortages are identified.

6. Failure of IT systems

Criteria for implementation of the plan

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

Centre actions:

- Examinations officer to contact awarding bodies to arrange an alternative method of exchange.
- Inform the Head of centre.

7. Emergency evacuation of the examination room (or centre lock down)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Invigilators/Examinations officer to escort all candidates out the building.
- Candidates will be told and must remain in examination conditions.
- Examinations officer to contact the awarding body to explain the situation.
- Senior leadership team to make sure that all candidates are out safe and to help out.
- Head of Centre to make sure that everyone is safe.

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.

Employees at Selly Park Girls' School to communicate with parents, carers and pupils about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plan to address this. (Joint contingency plan (JCP) scenario 1)

Centre actions

- Head of centre responsible for sourcing alternative facilities and venues.
- Centre to communicate with parents, carers and pupils.
- The centre to communicate with parents, carers and pupils about the potential disruption to teaching time and plans to address the issues.

9. Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open

Criteria for implementation of plan

- Candidates are unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal. *Employees at Selly Park Girls' School to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to make them aware of the issue. They will also communicate with parents, carers and candidates regarding solutions to the issue. (JCP scenario 2)*

Centre actions

- Remain open for Examinations wherever possible.
- Alternative venues in agreement with the awarding bodies.
- Communicate with awarding bodies, parents, carers and pupils.

10. Centre unable to open as normal during the examination period

Criteria for implementation of the plan:

- Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations.
A centre which is unable to open as normal for examinations must inform each awarding organisation with which examinations are due to be taken as soon as possible. (JCP scenario 5)

Centre actions:

- Source alternative venue for examinations.
- Apply for special consideration.
- Inform awarding bodies immediately.

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.
The centre to communicate with awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of papers. (JCP scenario 3).

Centre actions:

- Examinations officer to communicate with awarding bodies to arrange alternative delivery of papers.

12. Disruption in the transportation of completed examination scripts

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts.
The centre to communicate with the relevant awarding organisation at the outset to resolve the issue. (JCP scenario 4)

Centre actions

- Examinations officer to communicate with awarding bodies to resolve any such issue.

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.

It is the responsibility of the head of centre to communicate this immediately to the relevant awarding organisation(s) and subsequently to pupils and their parents or carers. (JCP scenario 6)

Centre actions:

- Head of centre to communicate immediately with awarding bodies, parents, carers and pupils.

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 service.

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

Centre actions:

- Examinations officer and Head of centre to advise parents, carers and pupils of the delay as soon as possible.
- Examinations officer to contact awarding body to discuss alternative options.

Further guidance to inform and implement contingency planning

Ofqual

Selly Park Girls' School should consider the following steps, if examinations or other assessments are seriously disrupted

1. Contingency planning

Selly Park Girls' School prepares for a possible disruption to examinations and other assessments as part of our emergency planning and makes sure that all staff are aware of these plans.

2. Disruption to assessments or examinations

In the absence of any instructions from the relevant awarding organisation, the school should assume that any examination or timetabled assessment will/should take place if it is possible to do so. In this case this may mean having to locate alternative premises.

If the examination or assessment cannot take place, or if a pupil misses an examination or loses their assessment due to an emergency or other event outside the control of the school, we will discuss an alternative arrangement with our awarding organisation.

3. The school should consider the following steps

3.1 Examination planning

- Review our contingency plan well in advance of each examination series.
- Ensure that copies of question papers are received and stored under secure conditions.

3.2 In the event of disruption

- Contact the relevant awarding organisation and follow their instructions.
- Take advice or follow instructions from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether the school is able to open.
- Identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation.
- Where accommodation is limited, prioritise pupils whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their examinations when planned.
- Communicate with parents, cares and pupils regarding any changes to the examination timetable.
- Advise pupils, where appropriate, to sit examinations in the next available series.

3.3 After the examination

- Consider whether pupils may be eligible for special consideration.
- Ensure that scripts are stored under secure conditions.
- Return scripts are stored under secure conditions.
- Return scripts to awarding organisations in line with their instructions.
Never make alternative arrangements for the transportation of completed examinations scripts, unless told to do so by the awarding organisation.

4. The awarding organisation should take the following steps

4.1 Examination planning

- Establish, maintain and at all times comply with an up to date written contingency plan.
- Ensure that the arrangements that are in place with the schools enable them to deliver and award qualifications in accordance with its conditions recognition.

4.2 In the event of disruption

- Take all reasonable steps to mitigate any negative effect, in relation to its qualifications, arising from any disruption.
- Provide effective guidance to any of its centres responsible for delivering qualifications on its behalf.
- Ensure that where an assessment is required to be completed under specified conditions, pupils complete the assessment under those conditions (other than where any reasonable adjustments or special considerations require alternative conditions).
- Promptly notify the relevant regulators about any event which could have a negative effect on pupils, standards or public confidence.
- Coordinate its communications with the relevant regulators where the disruption has an impact on multiple centres or a wide range of learners.

4.3 After the examination

Consider any requests for special consideration for affected pupils. Such as: those who may have lost their internally assessed work or whose performance in assessments or examinations could have been affected by the disruption.

5. If any pupils miss an examination or are disadvantaged by the disruption

If some of the pupils have been adversely affected by the disruption, you should ask the awarding organisation about applying for special consideration.

Decisions about special consideration, when it is or is not appropriate, is for each awarding organisation to make. Their decisions might be different for different qualifications and for different subjects.

See also:

- JCQ's guidance on special consideration
- FAB's guidance on special consideration

6. Wider communications

The regulators, Ofqual in England, Qualifications Wales in Wales and CCEA in Northern Ireland, will share timely and accurate information, as required, with awarding organisations, government departments and other stakeholders. The Department for Education in England, the Department of Education in Northern Ireland and the Welsh Government will inform the relevant government ministers as soon as it becomes apparent that there will be significant local or national disruption; and ensure that they are kept updated until the matter is resolved.

Awarding organisations will alert the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) and the Central Applications Office (CAO) about any impact of the disruption on their deadlines and liaise regarding pupils' progression to further and higher education.

Awarding organisations will alert relevant professional bodies or employer groups if the impact of disruption particularly affects them.

7. Widespread national disruption

In the event of widespread sustained national disruption, the government departments will communicate with regulators, awarding organisations and centres prior to a public announcement. Regulators will provide advice to government departments on implications for examination timetables.

[Ofqual guidance extract taken directly from the ***Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland - What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted***, (updated 23 January 2018)

<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

15.1 The qualification regulators, JCQ and government departments responsible for education have prepared and agreed information for schools 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 systems 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](#)

15.2 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.

15.3 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.

15.4 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.

15.5 The awarding bodies have designated **Wednesday 24 June 2020** as a 'contingency day' for examinations. This is consistent with the qualification regulators' document Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/examsystem-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland>

The designation of a 'contingency day' within the common examination timetable is in the event of national or local disruption to examinations. It is part of the awarding bodies' standard contingency planning for examinations.

Centres must therefore remind candidates that they must remain available until Wednesday 24 June 2020 should an awarding body need to invoke its contingency plan.

[JCQ guidance taken directly from JCQ *Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2019-2020* <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>, section 15, Contingency planning].

General Regulations for Approved Centres <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>

Guidance on *Alternative Site* arrangements and *Transferred Candidate* arrangements

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

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>

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>

Wales

School closures – opening schools in extreme bad weather

<http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/publications/guidance/schoolclosure-sfaq/?lang=en>

Northern Ireland

Selly Park Girls' School

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Exceptional closure days <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/exceptional-closure-days>

Checklist for Principals when considering Opening or Closure of School
<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/checklist-exceptional-closure-schools>

School closures <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/school-closures>