



Examination Contingency Plan Policy

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1. Introduction

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the management and administration of the exams process at Rugby Free Secondary School. By outlining actions/procedures to be invoked in case of disruption it is intended to mitigate the impact these disruptions have on our exams 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 also confirms that Rugby Free Secondary School is compliant with the JCQ regulation 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.

2. Causes of potential disruption to the exam process

The main disruption to the exam process would be if the Exam officer has an extended absence at key points during the exam season (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

- Exam timetabling, room allocation; and invigilation schedules not prepared
- Candidates not briefed on exam timetables and awarding body information for candidates
- Confidential 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:

- The School has two Exams Officers and an Assistant Headteacher with Exam administration experience, therefore should there be an extended absence there will be someone to complete the relevant tasks at the different stages of the examination process. This will be enhanced by good planning and entries and preparations made in a timely manner.

3. 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 exam 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

- 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 for candidate support is not arranged or put in place for all of the exam rooms



Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- In the event that the SENDCo has an extended absence, SLT will nominate a 'deputy' to cover the relevant planning and arrangements. Current TAs are trained in supporting candidates and new TAs will receive training by Exam Office staff prior to the exam season.

4. 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 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 awarding body submission deadlines

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- Other teachers in the team will be able to advise on entries needed. This may be the subject leader or other subject specialists. Other members of the subject team will be able to advise on NEAs and SLT will support as necessary.

5. Invigilators – lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- 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:

- Recruitment takes place to ensure that adequate number of invigilators are available. Invigilators are expected to be reasonably flexible so can often provide emergency cover on the day of an exam.
- SLT will provide support as required.



6. 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:

- Source alternative venues/facilities.

7. Failure of ICT 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- Bromcom is backed up regularly. Access to this information will be provided to the exams officer
- Internal exam entry deadlines are set by the exams office earlier than the external deadlines to allow for potential system failure
- All exam preparation tasks are scheduled to be carried out earlier than actually required to allow for issues
- Awarding Body secure websites have systems in place to communicate exam results to the centre and the Exams Officer is familiar with each AB and the relevant secure websites.
- ICT technician support to be available at results release time

8. Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lockdown)

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:

- Ensure that all staff involved with exams are aware of and follow academy procedures
- Special consideration action to the Awarding Body



9. 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:

- Centre to communicate with parents, carers and students about the disruption to teaching time and provide appropriate work via the school intranet.

10. 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:

- Centre will communicate with relevant awarding organisation to make them aware of the issue and complete any necessary documentation such as special considerations
- Centre will then communicate solutions to parents/carers and candidates

11. Centre unable to open as normal during the exam periods (including in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- Centre to inform awarding organisations of examinations to be affected
- Look where possible to provide alternative provision centre to communicate to students, parents and carers
- The planned alternative venue is Rugby Free Primary School, 1 Bailey Road, Rugby CV23 0PD.
- If for any reason the above site cannot be used, then there is a partnership between RFSS and Avon Valley School, which could be utilised if required.-

12. 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 action to mitigate the impact of the disruptions:

- Centre to discuss alternative delivery of papers to the centre

13. 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:

- In the event that Parcel Force are unable to carry out their normal collection and transportation of completed exam scripts the exam team will personally take the script packets and log documentation to the Post Office or the Parcel Force depot.
- The exam team will alert the relevant Awarding Body if the completed scripts are delayed by more than one day through the fault of the centre
- All completed scripts will be held securely until collected.

14. 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:

- Immediate communication to be made with relevant awarding bodies
- Students, parents and carers to be informed by letter

15. 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 actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- If unable to access results via A2C then the exam team would do so during the Awarding Body secure websites
- Centre to discuss alternative arrangements with the Awarding Bodies and inform students, parents, carers and staff as soon as possible
- the planned alternative venue is Rugby Free Primary School, 1 Bailey Road, Rugby CV23 0PD

16. Absence of the SLT Lead on exams and the Head of the Centre

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Centre does not have the lead senior leader who has responsibility for examinations on site



Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- If the Head of Centre and Exam lead are unable to be on site or contact made with them due to COVID-19, the lead for examinations will pass to another SLT member. The senior team will meet and delegate responsibilities that morning and seek support from Exam Officer.

17. Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning

Ofqual

What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted.

Contingency planning

You should prepare for possible disruption to exams and other assessments as part of your emergency planning and make sure your staff are aware of these plans.

When drafting contingency plans, you should consider the following guidance...

Disruption to assessments or exams

In the absence of any instruction from the relevant awarding organisation, you should make sure that any exam or timetabled assessment takes place if it is possible to hold it. This may mean relocating to alternative premises.

You should discuss alternative arrangements with your awarding organisation if:

- The exam or assessment cannot take place
- A student misses an exam or loses their assessment due to an emergency, or other event, outside of the student's control

Steps you should take

Exam planning

Review contingency plans well in advance of each exam or assessment series. Consider how, if the contingency plan is invoked, you will comply with the awarding organisation's requirements.

In the event of disruption

- Contact the relevant awarding organisation and follow its instructions.
- Take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether your centre is able to open.
- Identify whether the exam or timetabled assessment can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation, ensuring the secure transportation of questions papers or assessment materials to the alternative venue.
- Where accommodation is limited, prioritise students whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned.



- In the event of an evacuation during an examination please refer to JCQ's 'Centre emergency evacuation procedure'.
- Communicate with parents, carers and students any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue.
- Communicate with any external assessors or relevant third parties regarding any changes to the exam or assessment timetable.

After the exam

- Consider whether any students' ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration.
- Advise students, where appropriate, of the opportunities to take their exam or assessment at a later date.
- Ensure that 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 exam scripts, unless told to do so by the awarding organisation.
- Steps the awarding organisation should take

Exam planning

- Establish and maintain, and at all times comply with, an up-to-date, written contingency plan.
- Ensure that the arrangements in place with centres and other third parties enable them to deliver and award qualifications in accordance with their conditions of recognition.

In the event of disruption

- Take all reasonable steps to mitigate any adverse effect, in relation to their qualifications, arising from any disruption.
- Provide effective guidance to any of their centres delivering qualifications.
- Ensure that where an assessment must be completed under specified conditions, students 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 an adverse effect on students, 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.



After the exam

Consider any requests for special consideration for affected students. For example, those who may have lost their internally assessed work or whose performance in assessments or exams could have been affected by the disruption.

If any students miss an exam or are disadvantaged by the disruption

If some of the students 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 considerations
- FAB's guidance on special considerations

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 student progression to further and higher education.

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

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 exam 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

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>

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.

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.

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.

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/exam-system-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.

In the highly unlikely event that there is national disruption to a day of examinations in summer 2020, the awarding bodies will liaise with the qualification regulators and the DfE to agree the most appropriate option for managing the impact. As a last resort the affected examinations will be rescheduled. Although every effort would be taken to keep the impact to a minimum, it is possible that there could be more than one timetable date affected following the disruption, up to and including the contingency day on 24 June 2020. Centres will be alerted if it was agreed to reschedule the examinations and the affected candidates will be expected to make themselves available in such circumstances. The decision regarding the re-scheduling of examinations will always rest with the awarding body. The centre must conduct the examination on the scheduled date unless instructed to do otherwise by the awarding body.



Where candidates choose not to be available for the rescheduled examination(s) for reasons other than those traditionally covered by special consideration, they will not be eligible for enhanced grading arrangements. Centres must therefore ensure candidates and parents are aware of this contingency arrangement so that they may take it into account when making their plans for the summer. However, the awarding bodies will not insist upon candidates being available throughout the entire timetable period as a matter of course.

[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://jqc.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>



Rugby Free

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