

**HEATHFIELD
COMMUNITY
SCHOOL**



**EXAMINATION
CONTINGENCY PLAN**

Reviewed : March 2018

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The 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 Heathfield 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 information contained in the *Joint contingency plan for examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* where it is stated that “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.”

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/Options**
 - Consideration given to work shadowing.
 - Request help from another centre's exam officer.
 - Exams Officer to document all procedures throughout the year.
 - SLT nominate Deputy to cover a role or task.
 - Ask for help from exam boards and the Exams Officer.

2. SENCo 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.
 - Modified paper requirements not applied for to the awarding body.
 - Staff providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained.
- **Exam time**
 - Access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms.
- **Centre Actions/Options**
 - SENCo deputy to liaise with Exams Officer over SENCo absence.
 - SENCo deputy shadows SENCO throughout the year.
 - LSA nominated to arrange rooms and invigilator for access students.
 - Request SENCo assistant to take over until SENCo returns.
 - SENCo assistant to identify any candidates not yet approved by awarding bodies and complete.
 - Exams Officer to identify any shortfalls in invigilation requirements and ensure that gaps are filled.
 - Once gaps are filled, Exams Officer to arrange suitable rooms and SENCo assistant to provide training.

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

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.
- Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet submission deadlines.

- **Centre Actions/Options**
 - Subject Head of Department or SLT member to provide Exams Officer with details of Estimated Grades/Coursework Marks and that Coursework samples are transmitted to Moderators.

4. Lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence

- 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/Options**
 - Exams Officer to maintain a panel of suitable invigilators which can be called upon in the event of a shortfall.
 - Conduct a review of available invigilators and their availability for the next exams series.
 - Use provisional timetable and estimated entry information to determine invigilator numbers required.
 - Identify where invigilators may be short.
 - Request permission to recruit additional invigilators.
 - SLT member responsible for cover to provide additional invigilator resource in the event of a shortfall at short notice.
 - Staff agencies to be contacted if none of the above is successful.

5. Disruption to Public Transport preventing students from reaching Exams Centre

- Candidates unable to take examinations due to planned lack of public transport.
- Candidates unable to take examinations due to sudden disruption to public transport.
- Candidates arrive late due to public transport problems.
- **Centre Actions/Options**
 - Monitor news agencies on a regular basis to identify any potential transportation difficulties.
 - Centre to utilise own bus facilities to transport candidates to centre.
 - Centre to liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with the relevant awarding organisations.
 - Centres to offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series.
 - Centres to apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements.
 - Latecomers to be permitted to take their examinations providing they are within the JCQ regulations.

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

- Candidates are unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal.
- **Centre Actions/Options**
 - Centre to liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with the relevant awarding organisations.

- Centres to offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series.
- Centres to apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements. Candidates are only eligible for special consideration if they have a medical certificate or have been advised by their centre not to attend an examination.
- If a candidate chooses not to sit an examination they should be aware that special consideration rules will not apply.
- JCQ guidance on special consideration can be accessed through the JCQ website.

7. Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

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.
- Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet submission deadlines.
- **Centre Actions/Options**
 - Line Manager and Exams Officer to liaise with remaining teaching staff.
 - Subject Head of Department or SLT member to provide Exams Officer with details of Estimated Grades/Coursework Marks/final entries and that Coursework samples are transmitted to Moderators.
 - Head of Department to ensure Exams Officer provided with all information needed.

8. 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/Options**
 - Recruitment and training is done well in advance.
 - Exams Officer and Senior Invigilator to cover absences or shortages, although Heathfield School's policy is not to work to the minimum ratio requirements.
 - Exams Officer to implement a reserve list of invigilators.

9. 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 expected incident at exam time.

- **Centre Actions/Options**

- In an emergency the Small Hall could be utilised for examination purposes or rooms.
- Move students from normal classrooms for the duration of the exams – use English/Maths rooms.

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/Options**
 - Consideration would be given on an individual basis as to why they were unable to attend the examination centre. Special consideration may be applied for where they have met the minimum requirements and have fully prepared and have covered the whole course but are affected by circumstances beyond their control.

11. ‘Disruption’ in the distribution of exam papers to the school

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Exam papers not arrived at centre.
- **Centre Actions/Options**
 - Centre contact exam board who should be able to provide electronic access to papers via secure external network.
 - The exam board can also fax exam papers.
 - Exams Officer to ensure copies are received, made and stored under secure conditions.
 - Alternatively the exam board can source couriers for delivery of hard copies of exam 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/Options**
 - Scripts remain securely stored in Exams Office or Exams Officer transports them to the Post Office by collection by Parcelforce.
 - Seek advice from exam board if unable to be collected.

13. 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.

- **Centre Actions/Options**
 - Exams Officer and IT Manager to liaise with Examination Boards as to appropriate action.
 - Seek help from SIMS team at County Hall – remote link able to remotely link into our server.

14. 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/Options**
 - Head teacher, Governors, SLT to take the necessary action.
 - Seek exam boards advice.

15. 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.
- Bad weather affecting transport for students.

“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/Options**
 - Exams Officer to liaise with Head of Centre and to inform awarding bodies. Head teacher and Exams Officer to explore alternative local venues.
 - If possible the school will open for exams and exam candidates only.
 - For some candidates they may have the opportunity to sit any, exams missed at the next available series.
 - School may apply to awarding organisation for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements.

16. 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/Options**
 - Exams Officer to contact awarding bodies for advice.

17. 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/Options**

- Exams Officer to contact awarding bodies for advice.
- Make arrangements to collect at an alternative site.
- Contact SIMS team at County Hall who can remotely access results.

18. National incident

- **Centre Actions/Options**

- The school will take advice from JCQ and the awarding bodies concerned and act accordingly, keeping candidates informed. Candidates should check with the school and check the school website for up to date statements.

Further guidance to inform and implement contingency planning

Ofqual

Joint contingency plan in the event of widespread disruption to the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland/joint-contingency-plan-in-the-event-of-widespread-disruption-to-the-examination-system-in-england-wales-and-northern-ireland>

JCQ

General regulations

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

Guidance on alternative site arrangements

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

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

Emergencies and severe weather : schools and early years settings

<https://www.gov.uk/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/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/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-guide>