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Next Review: March 2019 or as regulations change

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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 JCoSS. 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 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) 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, minimising risk to examination administration, should the examinations officer be absent at a crucial stage of the examination cycle;”

Causes of potential disruption to the exam process

1. Exam officer extended absence at key points in the exam season

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:

- **Member of staff**, with support from SLT will take over full Examinations Responsibilities.
- **Member of staff** is fully conversant with Exams Office Calendar, JCQ Regulations and the SIMS MIS System.

Additional support will be gained from the Borough Network Group and Awarding Body Help Desks.

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 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:

- 2nd i/c SENCo will assume responsibility of the SENCo, with support from designated HLTA for Access Arrangements and support from the Exams Office.

No students will be allowed any access arrangement without prior testing and online approval, except in an individual emergency situation and only after Awarding Body approval via their Support Desk

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

Centre actions:

- Head of Faculty and their SLT lead will be used to gather necessary information to ensure that a teacher's absence does not disrupt any students' entries/examination submissions.

If appropriate Awarding Bodies will be approached to request extensions for submissions

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*
- *Lead Invigilator absence on the day of an exam*

Centre actions:

- Experienced Supply Agency Invigilators will be employed in advance and on the day if/when shortages occur.
- Pre-trained internal non-teaching staff will be used if necessary to the commencement of the exams period.
- At least one experienced Invigilator will be deployed in every venue in overall charge.

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:

- Public examinations will take priority over other activities in the school on the day of exams – if necessary lessons will be moved out of suitable classrooms to other venue to make way for exams and/or arrangements would be made to accommodate non-exam students to make way.

If the school is unable to open for a External Examination then alternative accommodation would be sought with emergency JCQ and Awarding Body approval.

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*

- *Access Arrangement*
- Failure of the laptop or exam login during an examination.

Centre actions:

- Should MIS systems' fail at any time SITTS Helpdesk should be informed of the issue and then direct access to Awarding Body secure websites will be used.
- Should exam equipment fail, the time of failure should be noted. Replacement equipment and/or login should be used and any time lost will be added to the end of the exam. Invigilators should then inform the Exam Office and incident logs completed in order to forward to Awarding Body. If the work is irretrievable due to this failure, the Awarding Body should be contacted immediately and advice will be given.

7. 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

The centre to communicate with parents, carers and students about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plans to address this. [Joint Contingency Plan (JCP) scenario 1]

Centre actions:

- **The bad weather contingency plan would be put into operation – whereby locally based Exams Office staff would come in with the support of locally based support staff to run exams.**
- If the Centre were unable to open for an extended period, then Alternative Site arrangements would be put into action for Exam Year students
- Exam Year students would be provided with home-based and online materials for study and revision

In either event parents and students would be communicated with as appropriate.

8. 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

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. [JCP scenario 2]

Centre actions:

- Exams Office to liaise with students to see if Alternative Site arrangements would be appropriate with approval
- The Exams Office would seek guidance from relevant members of SLT and where appropriate Special Consideration would be applied for where appropriate
- Students would be offered the opportunity to sit any exams at the next available series

If there were to be a disruption due to public transport, then the exam start time would be delayed as far as regulations allow and special consideration would be applied for.

9. 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

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 is possible. [JCP scenario 5]

Centre actions:

- If possible the Centre would open just for Exams Students where Health and Safety allows
- If the Centre were unable to open for an extended period, then Alternative Site arrangements would be put into action to support Exams Students with teaching/revision

Approval will be sought for Alternative Site arrangements for Exams as appropriate

10. 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:

- Exam paper delivery is logged against the Exams Timetable – if within a week Exam Papers had not arrived, Awarding Bodies would be contacted

Awarding Bodies would be asked to provide a secure electronic copy that could be downloaded and securely copied on site on the day

11. Disruption to 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 relevant awarding organisations at the outset to resolve the issue. [JCP scenario 4]

Centre actions:

- Awarding Bodies to be contacted to make them aware of the delay
- Courier to be contacted to establish the next earliest possible collection

Uncollected papers to be placed in Secure Store until collection is possible in line with JCQ requirements.

12. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/ controlled 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 students and their parents or carers. [JCP scenario 6]

Centre actions:

- Awarding bodies are contacted immediately and guidance is sought
- Appropriate evidence is supplied to Awarding Bodies as requested
- If necessary students retake the assessment at the next possible window

Parents and students are informed as soon as a resolution is agreed.

13. 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

Centres to contact awarding organisations about alternative options. [JCP scenario 11]

Centre actions:

- Arrangements are made to work from an alternative Centre if appropriate for Results
- Exams Results to be sent out via JCoSS secure email service to students
- Exams Officer to work via alternative means in the preparation of student results and Post Results Services

Students and Parents able to contact Exams Office via email and mobile for Results and Post Results Services

Causes 7-13 – all scenarios, criteria and specific communications have been taken directly from the *Joint contingency plan in the event of widespread disruption to the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*

Further guidance to inform and implement contingency planning

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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>