

# Examination contingency plan



Waingels College

**Written by:** Katherine Heaton

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## 1. Aims

This plan aims to:

- Examine potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the management and administration of exams
- Mitigate the impact of disruptions by providing actions or procedures to follow

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This plan complies with the [Joint Council for Qualifications \(JCQ\) General Regulations for Approved Centres](#), which requires all exam centres to have a written examination contingency plan/examinations policy.

It's also based on:

- Ofqual's [guidance on contingency planning](#)
- JCQ's [joint contingency plan](#)

## 3. Responsibilities

### 3.1 Head of centre

The head of centre is the Headteacher. They will ensure that a written examination contingency plan/examinations policy is in place and covers all aspects of examination administration.

### 3.2 Staff and invigilators

Staff and invigilators involved in the centre's exam process are responsible for reading, understanding and implementing the contingency plan.

## 4. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by Assistant Headteacher (Exams) every year in the autumn term. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

## 5. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our:

- Exams policy

## 6. Contingency plan

The table below sets out examples of scenarios where a contingency plan may be needed to minimise risk to examination administration. These are based on the [JCQ's joint contingency plan](#), and are consistent with [Ofqual's current contingency planning guidance](#).

SCENARIO	WHEN TO IMPLEMENT	ACTIONS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Disruption of teaching time in the weeks before an exam – centre is closed for an extended period	When the centre is closed and candidates are unable to attend for an extended period during normal teaching or supported study time, interrupting the provision of normal teaching and learning, e.g. if the centre is forced to close due to increasing rates of coronavirus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Seek advice from relevant awarding organisations and JCQ</li> <li>➤ Have a contingency plan to facilitate alternative methods of learning, alternative venues or both</li> <li>➤ Offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series</li> <li>➤ Communicate any changes to your plans with parents, carers and pupils</li> </ul>	Exams officer, AHT (Exams)
Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open	In the event that candidates are unable to attend examination centres to take examinations as normal, e.g. sickness bug, or if they are self-isolating due to coronavirus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to make them aware of the issue</li> <li>➤ Liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with relevant awarding organisations</li> <li>➤ Communicate any changes to your plans with parents and pupils</li> <li>➤ Offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series</li> <li>➤ Apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements</li> </ul>	Exams officer, AHT (exams)

SCENARIO	WHEN TO IMPLEMENT	ACTIONS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Centre is unable to open as normal during the examination period	In the event that the centre is unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations, e.g. a fire at the centre, or increasing rates of coronavirus forces it to close	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Inform relevant awarding organisations as soon as possible</li> <li>➤ Refer to emergency plans and/or health and safety policy, where appropriate</li> <li>➤ Head of centre will decide whether the centre is safe to open, based on advice or instructions from relevant local or national agencies</li> <li>➤ Use alternative venues in agreement with relevant awarding organisations</li> <li>➤ Communicate any changes to your plans with parents, carers and pupils</li> <li>➤ Apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements</li> <li>➤ Offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series, if possible</li> </ul>	Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher (Exams), Exams Officer
Disruption in the distribution of examination papers	In the event that there is disruption to the distribution of examination papers to centres in advance of examinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Contact awarding organisation if they're able to organise an alternative courier and time to deliver hard copies</li> <li>➤ If the above isn't possible, we will receive electronic access to papers via a secure external network</li> <li>➤ Plans in place to ensure you can receive, make and store papers under secure conditions</li> <li>➤ As a last resort, the awarding organisation may consider rescheduling the examination</li> </ul>	Exams officer

SCENARIO	WHEN TO IMPLEMENT	ACTIONS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts	In the event that there is a delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ If the examinations are part of the national 'yellow label service' or where the awarding organisation arranges collections, seek advice from awarding organisations and their normal collection agency regarding collection</li> <li>➤ Only make alternative arrangements after approval from the awarding organisation and make sure papers are securely stored until collection</li> <li>➤ Ensure secure storage of completed examination papers until collection</li> <li>➤ If your centre makes its own transportation arrangements, investigate alternative arrangements that comply with the <a href="#">JCQ's instructions for conducting examinations</a></li> </ul>	Exams officer
Assessment evidence is not available to be marked	In the event of large-scale damage to, or destruction of, completed examination scripts or assessment evidence before it can be marked, e.g. a fire at the centre destroys completed examination scripts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Communicate this immediately to the relevant awarding organisation(s), candidates and their parents or carers</li> <li>➤ Where possible, the awarding organisation will generate candidate marks based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement</li> <li>➤ Where marks cannot be generated by awarding organisations, candidates may need to retake affected assessment in a subsequent assessment series</li> </ul>	Exams officer, AHT (Exams)

SCENARIO	WHEN TO IMPLEMENT	ACTIONS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Centre is unable to distribute results as normal or facilitate post results services	In the event that the centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post results services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Contact awarding organisations about alternative options</li> <li>➤ Make arrangements to access results at an alternative site</li> <li>➤ Share facilities with other schools/colleges if possible</li> <li>➤ Co-ordinate access to post results services from an alternative site</li> <li>➤ Contact the relevant awarding organisation if electronic post results requests are not possible</li> </ul>	Exams officer, Assistant Headteacher (exams)
Examinations officer is absent from school for a long duration	Centre examinations officer is not able to attend on site to administer examinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ An Exams Assistant is identified and trained to deal with routine examination administration activities</li> <li>➤ Senior leader trained to administer and apply examination protocols in line with JCQ guidelines</li> </ul>	AHT (exams)
Emergency arises during an exam session	Disruption of exam venue during an exam, i.e. fire alarm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Centre follows exam procedures for dealing with crisis events during an exam, e.g. during a fire alarm, invigilators take the attendance sheets, leave the exam papers on the desks, candidates are marshalled to safety point and kept isolated from main school populations and if safe to do so and necessary, candidates are reseated in new accommodation on same site in similar seating arrangement where possible</li> </ul>	Examinations officer Invigilators, AHT (exams), Headteacher
Sole invigilator in exam venue/room	There is only one invigilator available for the exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ All invigilators have mobile numbers of exams officer and can call from their emergency mobile in the case of emergency.</li> <li>➤ Always have a bank of invigilators to use</li> </ul>	Exams officer

SCENARIO	WHEN TO IMPLEMENT	ACTIONS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Absence of invigilators/ Lack of appropriately trained invigilators	Failure to recruit and train sufficient invigilators to conduct exams; Invigilator shortage on peak exam days; Invigilator absence on the day of an exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Exams Officer to maintain a short list of suitable candidates</li> <li>➤ Exams Officer to ensure that capacity is never exceeded on any one day.</li> <li>➤ Exams Officer to review training procedures regularly and put in place additional training as required.</li> </ul>	Exams officer
Failure of IT systems	MIS system failure at final entry deadline; MIS system failure during exams preparation; MIS system failure at results release time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Exams Officer to contact in-house IT department.</li> <li>➤ Exams Officer to contact all Examination Boards for alternative route for dissemination of results.</li> </ul>	Exams officer
Lack of appropriate exam rooms	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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Pre-planning at all stages is essential.</li> <li>➤ AHT (Exams) and Exams Officer to continually review all stages of the process.</li> <li>➤ Main hall and gym to be the first option as an alternative venue for emergency accommodation..</li> </ul>	Exams officer, AHT (Exams)



SCENARIO	WHEN TO IMPLEMENT	ACTIONS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lock down)	Unreasonable noise disruption; Fire/Bomb/Flood Alert during an Examination; Major incident inside the examination	Follow evacuation procedures (Appendix 1)	Exams officer, invigilators, AHT (Exams)

## Possible Causes

### 1. Unreasonable noise disruption or serious incident inside the examination

In the event of a severe disruption in an externally set examination, invigilators are advised to stop the examination, tell the candidates to close their answer books, make a note of the time and summon help (Exams Officer/AHT (Exams) to sort out the problem. Exam room conditions must be maintained.

When the disruption has been resolved the candidates can resume their examination and the time taken to resolve the issue added on at the end of the examinations. The candidates must be supervised at all times and thus the break in the examination can be regarded as 'a supervised rest break'.

An incident log must be completed with the times of the disruptions noted. The Exams Officer to make Examining Bodies aware of the disruption if necessary.

### 2. Fire / Bomb/Flood Alert during an Examination

In the event of a fire alarm or bomb alert sounding (or any other emergency situation arising) during an examination, the first priority of the invigilators is to preserve life. The next priority is to ensure the security of the examination.

The invigilator should summon assistance, if there is time and it is appropriate, via the Exams officer who will confirm if immediate evacuation is necessary and the School Office who will notify the AHT (Exams). A decision will be made as to whether a full evacuation is necessary. If the emergency is over quickly, the candidates should resume the examination. A careful note of the time of resumption must be made and the full time allocated for the examination given to complete the examination, ignoring the interruption. An incident log must be completed with the times of the disruptions noted. A special consideration form will be filled in so as not to disadvantage the candidates.

## Procedure for Emergency Evacuation from an Examination

If it is necessary to evacuate the building, the lead invigilator should then stop the examination taking a note of the time and evacuate the building by row and in silence. The candidates must leave all examination papers, scripts and writing equipment behind, and in accordance with the school emergency evacuation procedures. The candidates should remain supervised and in silence throughout the emergency. Several other members of staff will be needed to help police this.

In the event of an emergency, requiring candidates to evacuate buildings during an examination the following areas should be used but the candidates must be kept at a distance and in silence from the main body of pupils who will be mustering at other emergency evacuation points.

Sports Hall: Leave via doors at the back and side and congregate on the playing field next to the cricket nets.

Small rooms: Leave via the nearest exit and congregate on the playing field next to the cricket nets.

At all times invigilators must act in accordance with the JCQ 'Instructions for Conducting Examinations' booklet 2022-2023. They should also summon assistance immediately an emergency arises. Silence should be maintained during the time the candidates are outside the examination room.

Section 25 of the JCQ 'Instructions for Conducting Examinations' (ICE) booklet 2022-23 states: In an emergency such as a fire alarm or a bomb alert, the invigilator must take the following action:

- Stop the candidates from writing;
- Collect the attendance register (in order to ensure all candidates are present) and evacuate the examination room in line with the instructions given by the appropriate authority;

- Advise candidates to leave all question papers and scripts in the examination room;
- Ensure candidates leave the room in silence;
- Ensure candidates are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room to make sure there is no discussion about the examination;
- Make a note of the time of the interruption and how long it lasted;
- Allow the candidates the full working time set for the examination once it resumes;
- If there are only a few candidates, consider the possibility of taking the candidates (with question papers and scripts) to another place to finish the examination;
- Make a full report of the incident and the action taken, and send to the relevant awarding body

<b>Date of Updated Policy</b>	October 2022
<b>Author of Policy</b>	Katherine Heaton
<b>Ratified by Full Governors</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> October 2022

## **Policy: Examination Contingency Plan**

**Author: Katherine Heaton**

**Date: 10<sup>th</sup> October 2022**

**Reviewer: Katherine Heaton**

### **Policy checklist**

Protected characteristics as outlined in 2010 Equalities Act

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Does the policy has any positive or negative implications for people with protected characteristics? No

Comment:

Are there any inequality implications of this policy?

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and gender identity
- whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background
- whatever their sexual identity

No

Comment:

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school. (See Initial Equality Impact Assessment)