



Trinity High School

& S I X T H F O R M C E N T R E

Part of Bordesley Multi Academy Trust

EXAM CONTINGENCY POLICY 2020/21

Also to be read in conjunction with:

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Reviewed:

Approved by Governing Body:

Interim review:

Review date:

Policy Responsibility:

Oct 2018

9 April 2019

Oct 2020

Sept 2021

Mr Thomas

School Policy: available on website

Staff Policy: available on r-drive

Key staff involved in contingency planning

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	Adrian Ward
Exams officer line manager (Senior Leader)	Tim Thomas
Exams officer	Emma Casey
SENCo	Lucy Chinn MAT SEND Lead Rachel Walford, SENCo David Lawrence, Assistant SENCo
Access Arrangements	Carol Rock
SLT member(s)	, Lucy Chinn
Data Manager	Rebecca Morris

This plan is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations.

*This template is provided for members of The Exams Office **only** and must not be shared beyond use in your centre*

Exam contingency plan template (2019/20)

Hyperlinks provided in this document were correct as at October 2018

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Purpose of the plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exams process at Trinity High School & Sixth Form Centre. 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 the Ofqual *Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland* which provides guidance in the publication *What schools and colleges and other Centre's should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted* and the JCQ Joint Contingency Plan in the event of widespread disruption to the Examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

This plan also confirms Trinity High School & Sixth Form Centre is compliant with the JCQ regulation (section 5.3, *General Regulations for Approved Centre's 2020-2021*) 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.*

Possible causes of 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 and MIS System not updated accordingly*
- ▶ *annual exams plan not produced identifying essential key tasks, key dates and deadlines*
- ▶ *sufficient invigilators not recruited*

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*
- ▶ *Candidates not entered for vocational qualifications at the start of the course*

Pre-exams

- ▶ *invigilators not trained or updated on changes to instructions for conducting exams*
- ▶ *SLT not supplied with up to date copy of the JCQ General Regs or ICE Manual*
- ▶ *Senco & Access Administrator not provided with up to date copy of JCQ Access Arrangements and reasonable adjustments manual*
- ▶ *exam timetabling, rooming allocation; and invigilation schedules not prepared*
- ▶ *candidates not briefed on exam timetables and awarding body information for candidates*
- ▶ *website and school assessment calendar not up to date with exam dates*
- ▶ *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 venues not set up correctly for exams with Warning to Candidates, Mobile phone notices, exam packs and all necessary items needed to run the exams*

Exam time

- ▶ *exams/assessments not taken under the conditions prescribed by awarding bodies*
- ▶ *Seating plans/Access Arrangements/Attendance registers not in place in the venues*
- ▶ *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 for marking 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

- ▶ All documents relating to Exams are stored on the school R drive and accessible only to Exam Officer, Data Manager and Deputy Headteacher
- ▶ Paper files are stored in lockable cabinet in office shared by Exam Officer and Data Manager
- ▶ In the absence of the Exam Officer, the Data Manager with support from the Deputy Headteacher will take over the key roles
- ▶ Data Manager is second key holder for secure storage office and cabinets
- ▶ Planning for exam seasons carried out in advance to reduce disruption

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*
- ▶ *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 (facilitators) providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained*

Exam time

- ▶ *access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ In the Absence of SENCo, any requests or enquires will be directed to Mrs Chinn in the first instance

- ▶ Mrs Chinn is responsible for requests for access arrangements with the Exam Boards and the filing of the testing documents/evidence
- ▶ In the absence of both the SENCo and Access Administrator, the responsibility for managing the process would fall to the Assistant Headteacher, Mrs Chinn

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

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

- ▶ Head of Faculty will ensure that all key roles and responsibilities are covered during the absence
- ▶ Head of Centre will ensure adequate cover with experience/qualified staff
- ▶ Exam Officer to manage the Estimate Entries in discussion with the Head of Faculty

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

Invigilator absence on the day of an exam

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ Regular recruitment drives throughout the year to increase the bank of invigilators
- ▶ Administration and apprentice staff trained as invigilators to cover if needed
- ▶ Available local invigilators identified ahead of time for short notice absences
- ▶ Where possible, extra invigilator booked to cover emergencies

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ Planning and booking of venues takes place at the beginning of the academic year
- ▶ Head of Centre advised immediately if an issue arises with exam venues
- ▶ Exam officer with HOC identifies additional venues/seek alternative site arrangements if necessary
- ▶ Exam boards notified if change of venue required

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

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ Head of Centre informed immediately of any IT Issues effecting exams
- ▶ Entries done ahead of the deadline to reduce risk of late entries due to system failure
- ▶ Exam Officer to contact Exam boards to find alternative method of supplying entries (if required)
- ▶ IT Technicians available on results day
- ▶ Exam Officer in the day before results to check for system updates/issues

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

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

- ▶ Invigilators to follow school procedure for emergency evacuation (copy in every venue)
- ▶ Exam Officer to inform exam boards as soon as possible and apply for Special Considerations where necessary

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

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ Head of Centre responsible for finding alternative venue/methods of learning
- ▶ Priority given to exam cohort students
- ▶ Communication made with Parents/Carers and students
- ▶ For modular qualifications, candidate will be advised to sit examinations in an alternative series

9. 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ Exam Boards are notified immediately of the situation
- ▶ The school will communicate a solution to the Parents/Carers and students as soon as possible
- ▶ Special considerations applied for by the Exam Officer
- ▶ Centre to look at alternative site arrangements for Exam Cohort

10. Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period (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

- ▶ If possible, the centre will remain open to exam candidates only
- ▶ Use of alternative venue in agreement with the Exam Boards
- ▶ Candidates offered the opportunity to sit the exam in the next season if possible

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

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ Exam officer will liaise with Exam Boards and Parcelforce and take advice from the Exam Boards
- ▶ Any disruption to exam timetables will be communicated to Parents/Carers and students
- ▶ Where possible, examination scripts will be downloaded from the Exam Board Secure site and copied under secure conditions

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ Exam parcels to remain in secure storage until collection is possible
- ▶ Exam Officer will contact Parcelforce to find out the reason for the delay
- ▶ Exam Officer will contact the Exam Boards to advise of a delay in dispatch and the reason
- ▶ If there is a continued delay in collection, exam script parcels will be taken to the nearest Parcelforce collection point (Royal Mail main Post Office)

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

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ Exam Boards informed immediately of the issue
- ▶ Parents/Carers and students advised of the issue in writing
- ▶ Other evidence to be provided to the Exam Boards at their request for the purpose of generating marks

14. Centre unable to distribute results as normal (including in the event of the centre being unavailable on results day owing to an unforeseen emergency)

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ Exam Officer will contact the Exam Boards to discuss alternative arrangements
- ▶ Head of Centre will inform staff, Parents/Carers and Students as soon as possible
- ▶ Exam Officer has reciprocal arrangement with another local High School (RSA Arrowvale) to be able to download/print results and arrange post results if required

Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning

Ofqual

What schools and colleges and other centre's should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted

1. 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...

2. Disruption to assessments or exams

In the absence of any instruction from the relevant awarding organization, 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

3. Steps you should take

3.1 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.

3.2 In the event of disruption

1. Contact the relevant awarding organisation and follow its instructions.
2. Take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether your centre is able to open.
3. 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.
4. Where accommodation is limited, prioritise students whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned.
5. In the event of an evacuation during an examination please refer to JCQ's '[Centre emergency evacuation procedure](#)'.
6. Communicate with parents, carers and students any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue.
7. Communicate with any external assessors or relevant third parties regarding any changes to the exam or assessment timetable.

3.3 After the exam

1. 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.
2. Advise students, where appropriate, of the opportunities to take their exam or assessment at a later date.
3. Ensure that scripts are stored under secure conditions.
4. Return scripts to awarding organizations in line with their instructions. Never make alternative arrangements for the transportation of completed exam scripts, unless told to do so by the awarding organization.

4. Steps the awarding organization should take

4.1 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.

4.2 In the event of disruption

1. Take all reasonable steps to mitigate any adverse effect, in relation to their qualifications, arising from any disruption.
2. Provide effective guidance to any of their Centre's delivering qualifications.

3. 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).
4. Promptly notify the relevant regulators about any event which could have an adverse effect on students, standards or public confidence.
5. Coordinate its communications with the relevant regulators where the disruption has an impact on multiple Centre's or a wide range of learners.

4.3 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.

5. 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](#)

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 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.

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 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

15.1 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>

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 Tuesday 29th June 2021 as a 'contingency day' for examinations. This may change due to the current Pandemic and Exam Dates have been moved to later in the Summer Term. 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.

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 29th June 2021. 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**]

JCQ Joint Contingency Plan <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/other-documents>

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

Guidance notes on *Alternative Site* arrangements <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms>

Guidance notes concerning transferred candidates <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms>

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>