Examination Contingency Plan

Ellesmere Port Catholic High School

Approved by:	**PP Mrs L Henderson Deputy Headteacher** **Mrs C Vile Headteacher**
Lead of Review:	**Mr T Laing, Exams Officer**
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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 examination process at ELLESMERE PORT CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL. By outlining actions/procedures to be invoked in case of disruption, it is intended to mitigate the impact these disruptions have on our examination process.

Alongside internal processes, this plan is informed by scenarios contained in the *JCQ 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, minimizing risk to examination administration, should the examinations officer be absent at a crucial stage of the examination cycle;"*

Causes of potential disruption to the examination process

1. Examinations 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 examination cycle not undertaken including:

Planning

- annual data collection exercise not undertaken to collate information on qualifications and awarding body specifications being delivered
- annual examinations 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 examinations/assessments
- awarding body entry deadlines missed or late or other penalty fees incurred

Pre-exams

- extra timetabling, rooming allocation, and invigilation schedules not prepared
- candidates not briefed on examination 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

Examination time

- exam/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:

1. The Strategic Data Manager will process and plan all of the above.
2. Source alternative venues (If deemed necessary).

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 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 arrangements candidates not allocated and trained

Examination time
- access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms

Centre actions:

1. ALT support would be offered if necessary.

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:
  - 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:

1. Second in department to deputise for curriculum leader.

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 examinations
- Invigilator shortage on exam days
- Invigilator absence on the day of an examination

Centre actions:

1. Recruitment/training done to a high level/volume to ensure adequate numbers at all times.

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:

1. EPCHS has an agreement with the **Civic Hall in Ellesmere Port** to host exams if the main exam venue is not available due to unforeseen circumstance.

6. Failure of IT systems

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- MIS system failure at final entry deadline
- MIS system failure during exam preparation
- MIS system failure at results time release

Centre actions:

1. ICT back-up protocol in place daily.

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

Centre actions:

1. The school will communicate with relevant awarding organisation to make them aware of the issue.
2. The school will then communicate solutions to parents/carers and candidates.

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

Centre actions:

1. The School will communicate with relevant awarding organisation to make them aware of the issue.
2. The School will then communicate solutions to parents/carers and candidates.

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

Centre actions:

1. The School to inform awarding organisation of examinations to be affected.
2. Exams will take place in **Civic Hall in Ellesmere Port** (agreement has been sought)

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

Centre actions:

1. The school to discuss alternative delivery of the papers to the school.

11. Delay to the transportation of completed examination scripts

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Delay in normal collection arrangements for the completed examination scripts

Centre actions:

1. The School will communicate and organise alternative arrangements for delivery of scripts.

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/assessment evidence before they can be marked

Centre actions:

1. Immediate communication to be made with relevant awarding body.
2. Students, parents and carers to be informed by letter.

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

Centre actions:

1. The School to contact awarding bodies and discuss alternative means of distribution.

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/what-schools-and-colleges-should-do-if-exams-or-other-assessments-are-seriously-disrupted

JCQ

JCQ Joint Contingency Plan
https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/4-5-1-Joint-Contingency-Plan-April-2019.pdf

General regulations
https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Gen_regs_approved_centres_24-25_FINAL.pdf

Guidance on alternative site arrangements
https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Alternative_site_guidance_notes_2024_FINAL.pdf

Instructions for conducting examinations
https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/JCQ-Instructions-for-conducting-examinations_2024_Print.pdf

A guide to the special considerations process
https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/

GOV.UK

Emergencies and severe weather: schools and early years settings
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