

# EXAMINATION CONTINGENCY PLAN

The Examination Contingency Plan is designed to ensure a consistent and effective response in the event of major disruption to the examination system at The Catholic High School, Chester affecting candidates across several awarding organisations.

All awarding organisations are required to have their own well-established contingency plans in place to respond to such disruptions. This Examination Contingency Plan takes into account these processes and procedures and is designed to complement them, not replace them.

The plan will be implemented in the event of major disruption to the system, such as widespread illness, travel disruption, bad weather or power failures. Any actions taken will be subject to the advice of the official agencies dealing with the specific circumstances being faced, for example the police, Environment Agency or Health Protection Agency.

Implementing the plan will safeguard the interests of candidates while maintaining the integrity of the examination system and safeguarding qualification standards.

The priority when implementing contingencies will be to maintain three principles:

- delivering assessments to published timetables
- delivering results to published timetables
- complying with regulatory requirements in relation to assessment, marking and standards.

If the situation cannot be resolved, the Senior Leadership Team will meet to agree further actions outside the scope of this policy in collaboration with the Awarding Bodies.

## Communications

In the event of local disruption communication to teachers and students will take place through the Examination officer following agreement with the Headteacher.

In the event of major disruption, details of specific contingencies agreed across organisations involved in the examinations process will be confirmed on the Ofqual website and proactively communicated to relevant stakeholders. This includes communications between the organisations involved in the response and communications to stakeholders such as centres, candidates, parents or carers and the public.

## Contingency Plan

| Contingency  | Criteria for implementing the plan   | Recommended actions   |
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| Disruption of teaching time school closed for an extended period | School is closed for an extended period of time interrupting the provision of normal teaching and learning | Where possible exams to be sat at the next available series.<br>Facilitate teaching and learning by using an alternative location   |
| Disruption in the distribution of examination papers             | Disruption in advance of the examination series where exam papers cannot be distributed                    | Awarding bodies to use alternative methods such as alternative couriers for hardcopies, secure electronic access to papers or fax of papers.<br><br>Examination officer to ensure copies made and stored under secure conditions. |

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| <p>Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis at school – other centres remain open</p> | <p>Candidates are unable to sit exams in school due to an issue e.g. fire</p>   | <p>Headteacher to make the decision about whether the school can operate or not.</p> <p>Examination officer to liaise with awarding bodies to identify other local centres for students to sit the exams.</p> <p>Examinations officer to apply for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements</p>  |
| <p>School is unable to open as normal during the examination period</p>                                 | <p>The school is unable to open during the examination season</p>   | <p>Headteacher to make the decision about whether the school can operate or not.</p> <p>Examination officer to liaise with awarding bodies to identify other local centres for students to sit the exams.</p> <p>Examinations officer to apply for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements.</p> |
| <p>Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts</p>                                | <p>Delay in normal collection/sending of exam scripts e.g. postal strike</p>  | <p>Examination Officer to seek advice from awarding organisations and normal collection agency regarding collection. The school must ensure secure storage of completed examination scripts until collection.</p>   |
| <p>Assessment evidence is not available to be marked</p>  | <p>Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked</p>      | <p>The awarding organisations will generate candidate marks for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement as defined by the awarding organisations in consultation with the regulators. (school to provide this information)</p>  |
| <p>Centres are unable to distribute results as normal</p>   | <p>School is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post results services</p> | <p>Examinations officer to contact the awarding organisations about alternative options e.g. access results at an alternative site or coordinate postal results.</p>  |

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| Exam, once in session, has to be stopped prematurely                             | Emergency alert where an evacuation of the building is necessary e.g. fire alarm, bomb scare, flooding.   | Remove candidates to defined evacuation area reminding them that they are still under examination conditions. Headteacher to be satisfied that there has been no communication if candidates are to be allowed back into the exam.  |
| Examination Officer is absent  | Unexpectedly the Examination Officer is not in school e.g. due to illness   | School Data Officer will ensure that the team know the plans and procedures so that examinations can carry on as planned under the required regulations.  |
| SENCO extended absence at key points in the exam cycle                           | Key tasks required in the management and administration of the access arrangements process within the exam cycle not undertaken. Includes: Planning for testing, duties towards Equality Act 2010, evidence of NWO collated, approval and implementation of all access arrangements, allocation of TA's & training to support students with access arrangements.                                  | Intervention Teacher will ensure all testing is complete, evidence collated and applications made via AAO for access arrangements.<br><br>SENCO will ensure all paperwork is filed correctly and available for inspection purposes.<br><br>Exams Officer will ensure TA's are fully trained to support the students with their access arrangements. |
| Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle                  | Key tasks not undertaken. Includes: Early/estimated/Final entries not provided to Exams Officer, pre-release material not received by candidates, NEA tasks not set/issued/taken by candidates as scheduled, NEA marks not given to students before being submitted to awarding body leading to insufficient time to appeal the decision, failure to submit NEA work by awarding body's deadline. | A teacher within the department will accommodate the absence and cover the necessary tasks to ensure the procedures and deadlines are adhered to for all candidates.<br><br>If there are no other teacher's within the department, we will provide a fully qualified teacher from an external source.   |
| Invigilators – lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence | Failure to recruit and train sufficient invigilators to conduct exams.<br><br>Invigilator shortage on peak exam days.<br><br>Invigilator absence on the day of an exam.<br><br>Invigilator unexpectedly falls in during an exam.  | Insufficient? - Plan in advance of exam season (advertise & recruit Sept – Dec) to ensure we have sufficient invigilators<br><br>Shortage/absent on the day? - Have a 'bank' of invigilators who can be called on at short notice (identified through their availability forms given to the Exams Officer)  |

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|   |  | Ill during exam? – Schedule at least 1 more invigilator than needed.   |
| Exam rooms – lack of appropriate rooms or main venues | <p>Exams Officer unable to identify sufficient/appropriate rooms during exams timetable planning.</p> <p>Insufficient rooms available on peak exam days.</p>   | <p>General Regs state the centre has to provide appropriate accommodation to support the size of the cohorts being taught, including appropriate accommodation for candidates requiring access arrangements.</p> <p>Therefore, the Exams Officer will liaise with the person responsible for booking rooms to ensure there are always sufficient rooms for the size of the cohort, including students who require access arrangements and peak days.</p> |
| Contingency Date 2020                                 | <p>The awarding bodies have designated Wednesday 24 June 2020 as a 'contingency day' for examinations. <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland</a></p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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 24 June 2020.</p> | <p>HOC &amp; Exams Officer to take advice and direction from the awarding bodies if there is widespread local or national disruption to the scheduled examinations.</p>  |

## Summary of school responsibilities in the event of disruption to examinations.

- Preparing plans for any disruption to exams as part of centres' general emergency planning.
- Preparing candidates for examinations.
- Ensuring examinations and assessments are taken under the conditions prescribed by awarding organisations.
- Ensuring, where relevant, that assessment materials and candidate work are stored under secure conditions.
- Deciding whether the centre can open for examinations as scheduled and informing relevant awarding organisations if the centre is unable to open.
- Exploring the opportunities for alternative arrangements if the centre cannot open for examinations and agreeing such arrangements with the awarding organisations.
- Judging whether candidates meet the requirements for special consideration as a result of any disruption and submitting these requests to the relevant awarding organisations
- Assessing and liaising with awarding organisations in the event of disruption to the transportation of papers.

## Appendix - Useful information

AQA <http://www.aqa.org.uk/>

JCQ [www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk)

CCEA [www.rewardinglearning.org.uk](http://www.rewardinglearning.org.uk)

Ofqual [www.ofqual.gov.uk](http://www.ofqual.gov.uk)

City & Guilds [www.cityandguilds.com](http://www.cityandguilds.com)

DfE [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk)

Edexcel [www.edexcel.com](http://www.edexcel.com)

EDI [www.ediplc.com](http://www.ediplc.com)

DENI [www.deni.gov.uk](http://www.deni.gov.uk)

OCR [www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)

UCAS [www.ucas.ac.uk](http://www.ucas.ac.uk)

VTCT [www.vtct.org.uk](http://www.vtct.org.uk)

Welsh Government <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/?lang=en>

WJEC [www.wjec.co.uk](http://www.wjec.co.uk)

Delivery Support <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/qualifications/examsadmin/a00197093/edsu>

JCQ A guide to the special consideration process <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-specialconsideration/regulations-and-guidance/a-guide-to-the-special-considerationprocess>

JCQ Instructions for conducting examinations [www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations)

DfE guidance on dealing with disruption to teaching and learning  
<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/emergencyplanning/a0069425/advice-on-severe-weather>

DENI guidance on dealing with disruption to teaching and learning [http://www.deni.gov.uk/exceptional\\_closures\\_checklist.pdf](http://www.deni.gov.uk/exceptional_closures_checklist.pdf)  
[www.deni.gov.uk/index/85-schools/5-school-management/exceptional-closure-ofschools-due-to-adverse-weather.htm](http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/85-schools/5-school-management/exceptional-closure-ofschools-due-to-adverse-weather.htm)  
<http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/school-closures>

JCQ guidance on alternative site arrangements can be accessed through the JCQ website - <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-forconducting-examinations/instructions-for-conducting-examinations-2013-2014>

JCQ guidance on special consideration can be accessed through the JCQ website: [www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-specialconsideration/regulations-and-guidance](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-specialconsideration/regulations-and-guidance)

## Guidance from Pearson

### Emergencies affecting examinations - guidance for centres

#### Contingency Planning

We are aware that there is a potential risk of emergency or other unforeseen situations arising which may affect the delivery of examinations. Forward planning is essential in being able to cope with such events.

For this reason, awarding organisations joined with government bodies to develop a [Joint Contingency Plan](#) which has established set procedures to be followed in the event of widespread disruption to the examination system in the UK.

On a more local level it is a new requirement under JCQ regulations, and good practice, for centres to develop their own contingency plans for situations where an evacuation of the centre may be necessary, or where the centre becomes inaccessible for any reason during an examination period. Centres should ensure all staff are familiar with the steps to be followed. Consideration should be given as to how these arrangements will be communicated to candidates, parents and staff should disruption to examinations occur.

In developing a contingency plan, reference can be made to the above Joint Contingency Plan above and to the relevant procedures contained in Section 18 of the [JCO Instructions for Conducting Examinations](#).

Some centres have asked what to do when an evacuation becomes more protracted than usual. In these circumstances your centre will need to make a decision regarding the point at which the examination should be abandoned, and the candidates sent home. This would be a matter for your own centre to decide, as the circumstances will vary from centre to centre.

If you anticipate that candidates may need to be sent home, or if, after such an event, candidates have had to be sent home, Pearson should be contacted for advice regarding what to do next. An application for special consideration may be possible, depending on the nature of the examination and whether the necessary proportion of the examination has been completed.

In relation to this, you should contact us at [uk.special.requirements@pearson.com](mailto:uk.special.requirements@pearson.com)

#### Decision Making

Below are the factors you may wish to consider in the event that an examination being delivered at your centre is affected in this way.

##### Issue

Emergency alert where an evacuation of the building is necessary e.g. fire alarm, bomb scare, flooding.

##### Actions

Remove candidates to defined evacuation area reminding them that they are still under examination conditions.

##### Criteria

In assessing whether to continue the examination, the following factors need to be taken into consideration:

- the length of time that has passed since the official start time
- whether the minimum time for remaining in the examination has passed to maintain the integrity of the examination
- the amount of time left to complete the examination(s)
- whether there is sufficient time to complete the examinations before another session starts



- whether continuing the examination take candidates over the session limit of 3 hours, taking particular care to consider candidates with access arrangements which include extra time.

The Head of Centre, or their nominated deputy, should decide whether it is appropriate to continue the session using the criteria set out above. In making this decision, the Head of Centre, or their nominated deputy, must be satisfied that communication between candidates has not taken place outside of the examination room. Only if completely satisfied that no communication whatsoever has taken place must candidates be allowed to continue the examination.

If the session is to be abandoned, this will be either:

- because of consideration of the criteria above;
- because re-entry to the premises cannot be secured; or
- because the risk of communication between candidates, which would invalidate the examination, cannot be eliminated.

If the examination has to be abandoned:

- The Examinations Officer should take the first opportunity to contact Pearson and then seek to apply for Special Consideration for all the candidates affected.
- Partially completed papers should be sent to Pearson as usual, unless Pearson has specifically requested that papers should not be submitted.

**Approved by the governors 12 December 2019**