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# Harrogate High School Exams Contingency Plan

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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 Harrogate High School. By outlining actions/procedures to be invoked in case of disruption it is intended to mitigate the impact these disruptions have on the 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 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
  - annual exams plan not produced identifying essential key tasks, key dates and deadlines
  - sufficient invigilators not recruited and trained
  - staff not trained in implementation of access arrangements
- *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
  - amendments and/or withdrawals not being actioned
- *Pre-exams*
  - exam timetabling, rooming allocation; and invigilation schedules not prepared / communicated
  - 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
  - labels, registers and seating plans not produced
  - room changes not arranged and alternative rooms not booked
- *Exam time*
  - exams/assessments not taken under the conditions prescribed by awarding bodies
  - access arrangements not put in place for students entitled to them
  - 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:

- Data Manager to ensure necessary examination activities/tasks are delivered and Data & Exams team to support. Deputy Head – Curriculum to oversee and update SLT at operational meetings.
- Data & Exams Managers to ensure that there is an exam checklist in place at the start of each academic year to ensure that the risk is minimised.
- Data & Exams Assistant – to attend Exams Officer training to upskill and build knowledge.

## 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:

- Nominated person to take over with support from SLT and Achievement team.
- Head of Centre to appoint a deputy SENCo if required.
- Liaise with Trust Leaders (particularly Director of Inclusion and Wellbeing) to support.

## 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:

- Learning Director/Head of Subject to take ownership of role/ cover role/tasks. Escalate to SLT lead if necessary.

## 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:

- Internal (trained) invigilators to be utilised alongside the external team of trained staff in case of emergency.
- Commence planning of exam season in February to identify resource required and to identify number of invigilators required, including communication with existing team of invigilators to ascertain availability by early March. Examinations Officer to flag with SLT Examination Lead if there are any concerns about invigilator availability.
- Liaise with SENCo to ascertain access arrangement requirements (especially in relation to readers, separate rooms where additional resource is required and any other arrangements)
- Data & Exams Manager to ensure Exams Contingency Plan is in place and has been communicated to relevant stakeholders.

### **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:

- Data & Exams Manager / Examinations Officer to commence detailed planning of examinations as soon as entries have been finalised (end of February).
- Detailed plan to be signed off by SLT Examination Lead and SENCo for access arrangements.
- Alternative venues to be sourced from the free rooms timetable and Data & Exams team to ensure rooms are closed if necessary, to ensure an appropriate exam environment is maintained.
- Approach neighbouring schools for available rooms in an emergency (ensuring correct JCQ and exam board protocols are followed)
- Data & Exams Manager / Examinations Officer to ensure Emergency Evacuation Plan is in place.

### **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:

- The centre to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to resolve the issue.
- Data & Exams Manager to seek support from internal ICT Team and Capita for any SIMS support.

## 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:

- 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*]
- Data & Exams Manager/Examinations officer to communicate with exam boards.
- Data & Exams Manager/Examinations officer to apply for special consideration after the event if student examinations affected by the situation. This should be communicated to students and parents.

## 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:

- 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. [*Joint Contingency Plan (JCP) scenario 2*] Also refer to the centre's *Lockdown Policy*
- Examinations Officer to communicate with the relevant exam awarding bodies.
- If a large number of students are affected, e.g. because of illness, see exam contingency plan, for alternative emergency venues. Ensure this is supported as necessary by additional staff (e.g. first aiders)
- Data & Exams Manager/Examinations Officer to apply for special consideration to examination boards after the event (if appropriate and relevant). Ensure that this is communicated to SLT, staff and parents.

## 9. Major disruption in an examination room

### Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Major disruption occurs in an examination room at the time of an examination, such as major medical incident in the examination room and room is required to be evacuated

### Centre actions:

- Centre to evacuate candidates from the room whilst maintaining exam conditions, collect the attendance register and advise candidates to leave all question papers and scripts in the examination room
- Candidates are supervised to ensure no discussion happens about the examination.
- Invigilator to make a note of the time interruption and how long it lasted.
- If possible, students re-commence the examination (allowing the full working time set for the examination).
- Exams officer to liaise with the awarding body if it is not possible to re-commence the examination.
- Report the incident to the awarding body/bodies and make application for special consideration (if relevant)

## 10. 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:

- 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]*
- See the Emergency evacuation plan

## 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:

- The centre to communicate with awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of papers. *[JCP scenario 3]*
- Data & Exams Manager/Examinations officer to arrange for an alternative means of delivery for examination papers (e.g. electronically). Examinations officer will ensure that the security of the papers is maintained in accordance with JCQ regulations.

## 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:

- The centre to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to resolve the issue. *[JCP scenario 4]*
- Alternative transport should only be used with the agreement of the relevant Exam Boards.
- Data & Exams Manager/Examinations officer will ensure that scripts must be stored securely until such time transport is confirmed.

## 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:

- 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]*
- The Exam Boards may generate candidate marks for the affected assessments based on other evidence, as defined by the Exam Boards and the regulators.
- It may be necessary for the candidates to retake the assessment at the next available opportunity.

## 14. 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:

- Centres to contact awarding organisations about alternative options. *[JCP scenario 11]*
- Arrange to access results remotely or at an alternative site.
- Inform staff, students and parents of any disruption or alternative arrangements as soon as possible.

**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 (details of which can be found on next page)*

## 15. 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/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>

### GOV.UK

*Emergencies and severe weather: schools and early years settings* - <https://www.gov.uk/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/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/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-guide>

## **Addendum due to Covid-19 September 2020**

In addition to the measures above which cover most eventualities in the event of candidate, invigilator, key personnel or centre disruption due to events linked to Covid-19 the centre will also adhere to all guidance in "Public Health Guidance to support Autumn Exams series: September 2020" and any subsequent updates.