

Approved by:
 Name: Chris Rice
 Title: Assistant Principal

Exam contingency plan

2015/16

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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 Cowes Enterprise College. By outlining actions/procedures to be followed 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 information contained in the *Joint contingency plan for the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* where it is stated that “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.”

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
- *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
- *Pre-exams*
 - exam timetabling, rooming allocation; and invigilation schedules not prepared
 - 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
- *Exam time*
 - exams/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:

- The Exams Officer is to meet weekly with their line Manager/SLT link so that in the event of the long term absence SLT are aware of where the plans are at for the Exams Season and Entries.
- The Exams Officer to liaise with the Exams Assistant weekly so that the Exams Assistant has an overview of Exam Entries and Planning.
- There are two additional key holders for the Secure Cupboard and they also know the secure key pad code. There is a spare set of safe keys in the main College safe.
- If the Exams Officer is able to then they will communicate directly with the College daily either via

email or telephone.

- In the event of the Exam Officer not being able to Communicate with the College then the member of the SLT will be the first line of contact for any Exam Queries, Entries and Exam Season planning.
- The Exams Officer publishes deadline dates in advance for Exam Entries, Coursework and Access Arrangements so that the SLT, DOL, DDOL and the SENCO can plan to these dates.
- If the Exams Officer is absent for Result Days then the Network Manager will download the results via A2C and inform SLT. The Exams Assistant will prepare the results for the Students.
- The Network Manager will have access to the Exams Officer passwords to be able to access the secure Exam Boards sites to be able to download results and moderator reports.

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:

- If the SENCO is on extended absence then the SEN admin assistant will inform the Exams Officer of any outstanding Access Arrangement applications. The Exams Officer will then source an alternative qualified assessor so that the applications can be submitted before the deadline date. The SEN teams will check that the evidence is collated for the application.
- On the SEN Register the SENCO includes all the information regarding modified papers and access arrangements for each qualifying student. The SENCO and Exams Officer meet weekly to discuss any additional changes or amendments in case of any extended SENCO absence.
- The SENCO and the Exams officer meet regularly to check the Access Arrangements are correct within the Examinations data base for students that require readers, extra time, scribes etc.
- The Exams Officer liaises with the Exams Assistant and Senior Invigilator in advance of the Exam Season to allocate rooms, scribes, readers and invigilators for Students with Access Arrangement. The information is communicated to Students and Parents in advance of the Exam Season.

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:

- Deadlines dates for the submission of estimated entries, pre-release information, exam entries and coursework are circulated to SLT, DOL, DDOL and SENCO in advance. If a DOL is absent for entries or assessment submission then the DDOL will be able to assist the Exams Officer in completion of these tasks.

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:

- The Exams Officer reviews the bank of invigilators continually throughout the year. If recruitment is needed we advertise in the IWCP. Before each Exam Season the invigilators are invited in to College for any training and information with regard to any changes with the JCQ Examination Guidelines.
- The Exams Officer with the Exams Assistant and Senior Invigilators plan in advance for the number of invigilators needed per exam and room. On peak days staff within College are also used or asked to be on standby in case of any emergencies either with rooming, students or invigilators.
- If an invigilator is absent then we have other invigilators on standby or College staff will be used as Exams are priority.

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 expected incident at exam time*

Centre actions:

- The Exams Officer plans months ahead for rooming for the Exam Seasons as we hold exams in halls across a large site and also have a large amount of students that have Access Arrangements and require separate accommodation. Room closures are published in advance to all staff by the Exams Officer. The Exams Officer also has access to additional rooms within College in case of any emergencies with students.
- We follow the JCQ regulations for inclement weather or an unexpected incident during the Exam Season. We also have this information on our website. The Exams Officer will contact all the relevant Exam Boards.

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 Exams Officer will contact all the relevant Exam Boards if there is a MIS failure at the time of exam entries, preparation or on result days. The Exams Officer takes all the Exam Board's contact and secure password information home during Exam Seasons and Results time in case of emergencies.

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:

- The Exams Officer will contact all the relevant Exam Boards and will apply for Special Consideration for all the students affected.

8. *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

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.

Centre actions:

- The Exams Officer will contact all the relevant Exam Boards and inform them of the situation. The Exams office will follow the advice given. If necessary we will provide secure overnight accommodation for students either with a member of SLT or with the Exams Officer. JCQ forms will be submitted. Completed and uncompleted exam papers will be looked away in secure storage. Special Consideration will also be applied for if needed.

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:

- The Exams Officer will contact the relevant Exam Boards and JCQ and ask for guidance. This guidance will be inherently followed. If needed, students will be kept in secure overnight accommodation either with a member of SLT or the exams officer. JCQ forms will be submitted. The Exam Paper will remain in the secure storage. Special Consideration will also be applied for if needed.

10. *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 Exams Officer will contact Parcelforce if completed exam papers are not collected on the day specified. The papers will remain in secure storage. If Parcelforce fail to collect on the next working day then the Exams Officer will take the exam papers to the Parcelforce depot and gain receipt of postage.

11. *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:

- The Exams Officer will contact the relevant exam boards and inform them of the situation and follow the guidance given. All the relevant documentation will be completed and Special Consideration submitted for all the students involved. The Exams Officer will also inform SLT and follow any additional instruction given. All evidence will be locked away securely until the exam boards have completed their investigations.

12. *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:

- The Exams Officer will have a contingency plan for a different venue on results day if results are not able to be distributed from CEC. Any changes to venue will be published on our website and a text message sent to students. The Exams Officer will have all the exam boards contact details and secure logins at home in case of any emergency in relation to accessing and distributing results or the post results services.

*information taken from the *Joint contingency plan for the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*

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 <http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/16235/1/2012-12-11-joint-contingency-plan-november-2012.pdf>

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 - Contingency planning <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-yellow-label-service/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-guide>

JCQ

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>

Guidance on *access arrangements and special consideration* <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>