



KIRKHAM GRAMMAR SCHOOL

EXAMINATIONS CONTINGENCY PLAN

YEAR: 2022-23

CHECKED BY: GW/DCP

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*

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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 Kirkham Grammar 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:

1. 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

2. 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

3. 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

4. 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, eg very late arrival, suspected malpractice, special consideration
- candidates' scripts not dispatched as required to awarding bodies

5. *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. SLT to ensure data collection undertaken. Exams plan completed well in advance and covered by Deputy Exam Officer if required. Invigilators recruited in good time for DBS checks, etc ahead of exams
2. The Deputy Exam Officer would complete tasks required. Penalty fees to be borne by individual departments, should such an event occur
3. Deputy to liaise between departments and the exam board as required
4. Deputy to contact exam board(s)
5. Deputy Exam Officer in conjunction with the Deputy Head (Operations) to organise. Post results services to be administered by office staff

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:

1. Planning

- candidates not tested/assessed to identify potential access arrangement requirements
- evidence of need and evidence to support normal way of working not collated

2. 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

3. Exam time

- access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms

Centre actions:

1. Exam Officer would be aware of required access arrangements and contact the preferred external assessor. Evidence of need/support is a continual process undertaken by teaching staff across the school
2. Exam Officer would contact the awarding organisation. Any modified papers required would be produced (in case of enlargement, pdf, etc) or an alternative centre contacted
3. Relocation considered if required for enabling access

3. Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Key tasks not undertaken including:

1. *Early/estimated entry information not provided to the exams officer on time; resulting in pre-release information not being received*
2. *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*

3. *Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet submission deadlines*

Centre actions:

1. Exam Officer has arrangements in place to receive entry information well ahead of schedule. Flagged up with SLT if a problem forecast
2. SLT informed, necessary arrangements put in place
3. If not received from HoD, Deputy Head (Academic) to meet with department and collate information

4. Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence

Criteria for implementation of the plan

1. *Failure to recruit and train sufficient invigilators to conduct exams*
2. *Invigilator shortage on peak exam days*
3. *Invigilator absence on the day of an exam*

Centre actions:

- 1-3 Any invigilator shortages to be incorporated into the teaching staff daily cover board

5. Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice

Criteria for implementation of the plan

1. *Exams Officer unable to identify sufficient/appropriate rooms during exams timetable planning*
2. *Insufficient rooms available on peak exam days*
3. *Main exam venues unavailable due to an unexpected incident at exam time*

Centre actions:

1. Extra rooms to be identified within Sandhurst and BH
2. As above
3. Lodge staff to be mobilised to prepare Drama Studio and/or Recital Hall

6. Failure of IT systems

Criteria for implementation of the plan

1. *MIS system failure at final entry deadline*
2. *MIS system failure during exams preparation*
3. *MIS system failure at results release time*
4. *Power outage immediately prior to or during an on-screen test*
5. *Where a cyber-attack may compromise any aspect of delivery*

Centre actions:

1. Entries delayed until iSAMS working again
- 2-3. Alternatives used: eAQA, etc for direct download of materials and results. Personnel resort to own internet access if school facility not working
4. Move to another building
5. Look to have a second line available. Data backups created and sensitive information encrypted.

7. Cyber Attack

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Where a cyber-attack may compromise any aspect of delivery

Centre actions:

- Promptly reporting any incidents to the relevant awarding body/bodies which might compromise any aspect of assessment delivery such as a cyber-attack
- Where candidates produce work electronically, ensuring their work is backed-up regularly and stored securely on the centre's IT system / Ensuring protection of the candidates' work from corruption and considering the risks and implications of any cyber-attack
- Following and regularly reviewing National Cyber Security Centre advice for support in cyber security preparedness and mitigation work / Using the NCSC's free Web Check and Mail Check services to help protect from cyber-attacks

8. Disruption of teaching time – centre closed for an extended period

Criteria for implementation of the plan

1. 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:

- School to inform awarding organisations of situation. Alternative venues/facilities to be sourced for candidates to facilitate alternative methods of learning, alternative venues or both
- Prioritise candidates who will be facing examinations shortly
- Advise candidates, where appropriate, to sit examinations in the next available series

9. Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open

Criteria for implementation of the plan

1. Candidates are unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal

Centre actions:

1. - liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with the relevant awarding organisations
- offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series
- apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements

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

Criteria for implementation of the plan

1. Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations

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]

Centre actions:

1. - open for examinations and examination candidates only, if possible
- use alternative venues in agreement with relevant awarding organisations (eg share facilities with other centres or use other public buildings if possible)
- apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements
- offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series, if possible

11. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers

Criteria for implementation of the plan

1. Disruption to the distribution of examination papers to the centre in advance of examinations

The centre to communicate with awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of papers.

Centre actions:

1. - source alternative couriers for delivery of hard copies
- provide centres with electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network
- fax examination papers to centres if electronic transfer is not possible. The examinations officer is to ensure that copies are received, made and stored under secure conditions

12. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

Criteria for implementation of the plan

1. Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts

The centre to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to resolve the issue. [JCP scenario 4]

Centre actions:

1. - in the first instance, seek advice from awarding organisations and their normal collection agency regarding collection
- own arrangements for transportation would not be made without approval from awarding organisations - secure storage of completed examination scripts ensured until collection

13. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked

Criteria for implementation of the plan

1. Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked

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]

Centre actions:

1. Liaise with awarding organisations. They can 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

Candidates retake the assessment that has been affected at a subsequent assessment window, if possible

14. Centre unable to distribute results as normal

Criteria for implementation of the plan

1. Centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post-results services

Centres to contact awarding organisations about alternative options. [JCP scenario 11]

Centre actions:

1. Arrangements in place to access results at an alternative site, eg the junior school

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>

<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

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>

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>

Covid Specific Guidance:

- [Supporting resilience in the exam system 2023](#) from Ofqual

Exam Board emergency contact numbers:

AQA 0800 1977162

Edexcel 0344 4632535

OCR 01223 553998

WJEC 02920 265000

CIE 01223 553554

National Cyber Security Centre

The NCSC's free [Web Check](#) and [Mail Check](#) services can help protect schools from cyber-attacks. Two NCSC cyber security services, which are already helping thousands of organisations to protect their websites and email servers from cyber-attacks, are now available to **all UK schools**. Both tools are available free of charge, are quick to set up, and thereafter run automatically. More information is available from the [NCSC website](#).

The Department for Education has been asking centres to review **National Cyber Security Centre advice** following increasing number of cyber-attacks involving ransomware infections. The NCSC information supports centres in cyber security preparedness and mitigation work.

Ransomware attacks continue and the Department is reminding centres to review the NCSC advice and to take precautions. This includes ensuring that you have backups in place for your key services and data.

For ease of reference, the Department has highlighted key links relating to the NCSC cyber security guidance below:

1. [More ransomware attacks on UK education - NCSC.GOV.UK](#)
2. [Ransomware advice and guidance for your IT teams to implement](#)
3. [Offline backups in an online world](#)
4. [Backing up your data](#)
5. [Practical resources to help improve your cyber security](#)
6. [Building Resilience: Ransomware and the risks to schools and ways to prevent it](#)
7. [School staff offered training to help shore up cyber defences - NCSC.GOV.UK](#)