



Exam Contingency Plan

School Name: Birch Wood School

Policy owner: Philip Leaney

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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 Birch Wood School. By outlining actions/procedures to be invoked 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 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 (SLT) to have a robust contingency plan in place, minimising risk to examination administration, should the exams 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 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

- Exams officer to have documented procedures manual(s) in place.
- SLT to identify a named person to cover role/task – Michelle Walker (Deputy Exams Officer)

See Appendix 1

2. Access Arrangements officer 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

- SLT to arrange for employment of an approved assessor for the period of assessment on the cohort
- Access Arrangement Officer to share expertise with at least one nominated person
- SLT to identify a named person to cover role/task
- Exams Officer to perform administration for pre-exams and exam time arrangements

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

- SLT to identify a named person to cover role/task at the earliest opportunity

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

- SLT to keep abreast of the planning and training of all invigilators at least 2 months prior to the exams. SLT to employ invigilators if necessary. On the day of the exams, if there is an invigilator shortage, SLT or current staff (not exam subject teachers) would be deployed to cover for absence

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

- Liaise with Birch Wood main site for appropriate rooms
- If Birch Wood main site is unavailable - liaise with Melton Vale Post 16 Centre for use of their rooms

6. 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

- SLT to communicate with parents, carers and students about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plans to address this. (Joint Contingency Plan (JCP)- see Appendix 1)

7. 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

- SLT to activate the school's JCP
- SLT/Exams Officer to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to make them aware of the issue. SLT to communicate with parents, carers and candidates regarding solutions to the issue

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

Centre Actions

- If the JCP has been activated, examination boards concerned would be contacted immediately and advice obtained and acted upon

9. 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 Action

- The centre to communicate with awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of papers (JCP scenario 3)
- Centre would act upon advice offered by JCQ

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

- Scripts to be stored in exam safe
- Exam safe keys stored securely (only 3 members of school staff have access to the safe code)
- The centre to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to resolve these issues

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 Action

- To reduce this risk, active scripts remain on site for the absolute minimum time
- It is the responsibility of the head of centre to communicate this immediately to the relevant awarding organisation(s) and subsequently to students, parents and carers (JCP scenario 6)

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 Action

- Contact to be made immediately to the awarding organisations about alternative options
- Use Birch Wood main site for distribution of results on the exam morning.

Causes 7-12 – 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*

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 exams <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>

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>

Appendix 1

Exam Contingency Plan Check List:

	Event /Occurrence	Action	Activities
	Exam Officer not in school on day of an exam or delayed in traffic	Exam Officer to ring/text and email SLT and other staff to make them aware. Michelle Walker as deputy to take over role of exam officer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure rooms set out as identified in timescale document. ▪ Exam posters on display outside each exam room. ▪ Start time of exam, length of exam, subject and subject codes available for each room to be on display. ▪ Designated packs to stay in exam room for duration of the exam.

		<p>If Michelle and Claire are both absent – then Anita Lees will take over the role as outlined here.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pencil cases with student ID cards and necessary equipment to be set out on tables. Bottles of water on each desk with no labels. If English exam, then answer booklets to be put on table ready for exam. ▪ Collect exam papers from GD site (whilst in secure room, the exam papers will be transferred to relevant popper wallets identified for each exam room and then placed in secure exam bag) and taken to BWV site. Exam papers need to be signed out of safe by Anita Lees or Jo Court. ▪ Students will be reminded of rules of the exam and will then be told which room they are in and exam papers will be handed to the lead invigilator for each room. <p>Staff to follow taught protocol – a copy of which is in the room booklet along with ICE and other JCQ documents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Once students have finished the exam, they may leave the room. Exam paper to be handed to invigilator. When all papers/exam has finished the invigilator will take the completed papers and spare question papers to the exams officer. ▪ Exams officer to complete register, put exam papers in designated envelope in correct order ensuring and signing off any cover sheets. Then parcel stored in secure room safe until collected by Parcelforce.
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