

## EXAM CONTINGENCY PLAN

<b>Date of Latest Review:</b>	April 2024
<b>Next Review Date:</b>	April 2025
<b>Policy Available for Staff at:</b>	Website /TEAMS
<b>Policy Available for Parents at:</b>	Website
<b>Headteacher:</b>	Mrs C Slattery
<b>Exams officer line manager (Senior Leader):</b>	Mrs C Cirino
<b>Exams officer:</b>	Mrs S Harrison
<b>SENDCo:</b>	Mrs A Pearson

## Purpose of the plan

**This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exams process at St Joseph's College. 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 the **Ofqual** Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland which provides guidance in the publication What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted and the **JCQ** Joint Contingency Plan in the event of widespread disruption to the Examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

## Possible causes of 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

#### 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

- invigilators not trained or updated on changes to instructions for conducting exams
- exam timetabling, rooming allocation; and invigilation schedules not prepared
- candidates not briefed on exam timetables and awarding body information for candidates
- confidential 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, for example very late arrival, suspected malpractice, special consideration
- candidates' scripts not dispatched as required for marking 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The Exams Officer's SLT line manager would take on the running of the exams office. There are exams policies and documents that lists in more detail the cover which would be put into place if the Exams officer was unwell or away for an extended period of time
- Exams support staff play a role in the management of a situation like this
- Continual up-skilling of exams support staff

## **2. SENDCo 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
- centre fails to recognise its duties towards disabled candidates as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010
- 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
- centre-delegated arrangements not put in place
- modified paper requirements not identified in a timely manner to enable ordering to meet external deadline
- staff (facilitators) providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained

#### Exam time

- access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms

### Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The SENDCo has highly trained LSPs and they would be able to take on part of the role
- The Deputy head is the former SENDCo this would ensure that cover would be available

## **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

Non-examination assessment tasks not set/issued/taken by candidates as scheduled

Candidates not being informed of centre assessed marks before marks are submitted to the awarding body and therefore not being able to consider appealing internal assessment decisions and requesting a review of the centre's marking

Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet awarding body submission deadlines

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Coordinate with second in department if applicable
- Line managers to work with teaching staff
- All tasks are given a long lead up time to ensure deadlines are not missed
- Internal submission deadlines are NOT the same as national deadlines

**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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- We have a many members of exams staff who have been employed for over 10 years, we recruit and train retiring staff and ex-students on a regular basis to ensure the adequate cover for exams.
- We also include heads of year and support staff in our plans and we regularly train support staff to ensure that they are up to date and can step in if necessary.
- Exams office material and online courses available for staff if additional training required

**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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The College is fortunate that it has multiple buildings and there is a separate sixth form buildings that have more rooms available
- We have added the exams portacabin to assist with the demands at peak times (access arrangements or small groups)

**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

IT failure on the day of University tests/ CAT tests

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The Exams Officer would use the Exam board websites directly and ensure entries/results and preparation could still go ahead
- The Exams Officer would contact the relevant exam board/University where necessary

## **7. Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lock down)**

### Criteria for implementation of the plan

Whole-centre evacuation (or lock down) during exam time, due to serious incident resulting in exam candidates being unable to start, proceed with or complete their exams

### Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The school has an emergency evacuation procedure for exams, and the school test this once a year during mocks

## **8. Whole-school disruption of teaching time in the weeks before an exam – 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- St Josephs' College has trained all staff to work remotely and a reimplementation of that teaching method would be instructed when and where appropriate

## **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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Alternative arrangements have been made in the past to carry out exams in candidates' homes, or hospital or centres whichever is necessary to ensure students can take the exam as usual
- Special consideration will be applied for where appropriate
- Possible consideration and facilitation of resit options where necessary/appropriate

## **10. Centre unable to open as normal during the examination period**

### Criteria for implementation of the plan

Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations

### Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The centre would seek an alternative site locally and ensure candidates are given adequate notice
- The school website/Teams/parent text would be used as a primary means for communication

### **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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- AQA, Pearson, WJEC and OCR awarding organisations to provide centres with electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network. Centres would need to ensure that copies are received, made and stored under secure conditions and should have plans in place to facilitate such an action.
- Awarding organisations would provide guidance on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances. As a last resort, and in close collaboration with centres and regulators, awarding organisations to consider scheduling of the examination on an alternative date

### **12. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts**

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts/assessment evidence

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Where examinations are part of the national 'yellow label' service or where awarding organisations arrange collections, centres should seek advice from awarding organisations and should not make their own arrangements for transportation unless told to do so by the awarding organisation.

### **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

Completed examination scripts/assessment evidence does not reach awarding organisations

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Awarding organisations to generate candidate marks for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement as defined by the awarding organisations
- Where marks cannot be generated by awarding organisations candidates may need to retake affected assessment in a subsequent assessment series.

#### **14. Centre unable to distribute results as normal or facilitate post results services**

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Distribution of results: Centre to plan to access it's results at an alternative site, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation
- Centres to share facilities with other centres if this is possible, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation.
- Facilitation of post results services: centre to make arrangements to make post results requests at an alternative location
- Centres to contact the relevant awarding organisation if electronic post results requests are not possible