



Exam Contingency Plan

Contents

Purpose of the plan	2
Further guidance to inform and implement contingency planning.....	3
Possible causes of disruption to the exam process	4
1. Exam officer extended absence at key points in the exam process (cycle).....	4
2. SENCo extended absence at key points in the exam cycle	5
3. Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle	5
4. Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence	6
5. Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice	6
6. Failure of IT systems	7
7. Disruption of teaching time – centre closed for an extended period	7
8. Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open	7
9. Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period	7
10. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers	8
11. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts	8
12. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked	8
13. Centre unable to distribute results as normal or facilitate post results services	8
14. Contingency Day.....	9
Key Contacts and further sources of information.....	9

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 Tor Bridge High. 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 in a consistent and effective manner.

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*.

This plan also confirms Tor Bridge High is compliant with the JCQ general regulations (section 5.3, *General Regulations for Approved Centres 2019-2020*) that the centre *has in place a written examination contingency plan which covers all aspects of examination administration. This will allow members of the Senior Leadership Team to act immediately in the event of an emergency or staff absence.*

This plan would be triggered in the event of a major disruption to the examinations system affecting significant numbers of candidates in the school.

Key Exam Personnel

Headteacher

Deputy Headteacher for Exams

Exam Officer:

Invigilation Co-ordinator:

Chief Invigilators:

All exam entries will be supplied to the Exam Officer by the Curriculum Leader or by the second in department in their absence.

Further guidance to inform and implement contingency planning Ofqual

What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted

1. Contingency planning

Schools should prepare for possible disruption to exams and other assessments as part of our emergency planning and make sure our staff are aware of these plans...

2. Disruption to assessments or exams

In the absence of any instruction from the relevant awarding organisation, the school should assume that any exam or timetabled assessment should take place if it is possible for it to do so. This may mean having to locate alternative premises.

If the exam or assessment cannot take place, or if a student misses an exam or loses their assessment due to an emergency or other event outside the control of the school, we should discuss alternative arrangements with your awarding organisation.

2.1 The school should consider the following steps as part of best practice

Exam planning

1. Review our contingency plan well in advance of each exam series.
2. Ensure that copies of question papers are received and stored under secure conditions.

In the event of disruption

1. Contact the relevant awarding organisation and follow its instructions.
2. Take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether the school is able to open.
3. Identify whether the exam can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation.
4. Where accommodation is limited, prioritise students whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exams when planned.
5. Communicate with parents, carers and students regarding any changes to the exam timetable.
6. Advise students, where appropriate, to sit exams in the next available series.

After the exam

1. Consider whether students may be eligible for special consideration.
2. Ensure that scripts are stored under secure conditions.
3. Return scripts to awarding organisations in line with their instructions. Never make alternative arrangements for the transportation of completed exam scripts, unless told to do so by the awarding organisation.

2.2 When a student misses an exam or is disadvantaged by the disruption

If we feel that the performance of all or some of our students has been negatively affected by the disruption we would ask our awarding organisation about applying for special consideration. The decision about what special consideration is, or is not appropriate, is for awarding organisations to make. Their decisions might be different, for different qualifications and for different subjects.

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 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- Exam Officer operates with a line manager and within a wider exams team.
- Use of PLE expertise
- Deputy Headteacher for Exams to nominate a 'deputy' to cover a role/task
- Source alternative venues/facilities e.g. Elm Centre, Marjon Hall, Central Hall in Tor Bridge Primary School

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 (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:

- SENCo and Assistant SENCo to cover role/task
- Commission Educational Psychologist to undertake access arrangement testing

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 submission deadlines

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- Exam Officer to make all requests for estimated entries via email to curriculum leader (or 2nd in Department in the event of the above) with HOS cc'd in. In the event of no return correspondence by deadline, Exam Officer will liaise with HOS regarding assigning deputy to provide information.

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:

- Invigilation Co-ordinator to coordinate sufficient cover in advance of exam series and communicate this with the team
- In the event of lead invigilator absence/sickness then Exam Officer/Invigilation Co-ordinator would co-ordinate invigilator team for afternoon session exams and Deputy Headteacher for Exams/Invigilation Co-ordinator for morning session exams.
- In the event of wider absence from invigilator team senior staff would be deployed and assigned as to avoid subject conflict. Wider support staff would be deployed as needed and in extreme events the wider teaching staff would be deployed again according to subject affiliations.

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:

- Source alternative venues/facilities as required
- Internal and mock exams are used to test capacity of exam venues prior to external exam series.
- Campus wide sharing of facilities removes need for sports hall use which can act as a reserve venue for large cohort entries.
- Classrooms with moveable partition walls allow for reconfiguration as exam venues in the event of loss of main venues.

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- SIMS is backed up daily and all data is held on a backup server. Access to this information will be provided to the exams officer.

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- SALT to communicate with parents, carers and students through school website/SIMS Intouch/MyEd about the disruption to teaching time and provide appropriate work via FROG (the school VLE)/school website.

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- Exam Officer will communicate with relevant awarding organisation to make them aware of the issue.
- Exam Officer/Deputy Headteacher for Exams will then communicate solutions to parents/carers and candidates

9. 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 due to severe weather, widespread illness, travel disruption, fire, logistical problems or system failures

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- If necessary take advice from relevant official agency, e.g. Police, Environment Agency, Health Protection etc
- Exam Officer to inform awarding organisation of examinations to be affected
- Deputy Headteacher for Exams/Exam Officer to look where possible to provide alternative provision eg local schools

10. 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

The centre to communicate with awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of papers. [JCP scenario 3]

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- Exam Officer to discuss alternative delivery of papers to the centre

11. 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- Exam Officer will communicate and organise alternative arrangements for delivery of scripts with awarding organisations.

12. 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- Immediate communication to be made with relevant awarding body by Exam Officer
- Students, parents and carers to be informed by Deputy Headteacher for Exams/Exam Officer
- Curriculum areas have records of internally assessed work for all learners regularly tracked and monitored by Heads of School.

13. 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

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

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- Deputy Headteacher for Exams/Exam Officer to contact awarding bodies and discuss alternative means of distribution

14. Contingency Day

The awarding bodies have designated **Wednesday 24 June 2020** as a 'contingency day' for examinations. This is consistent with the qualification regulators' document Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/examsystem-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland>

The designation of a 'contingency day' within the common examination timetable is in the event of national or local disruption to examinations. It is part of the awarding bodies' standard contingency planning for examinations.

In the highly unlikely event that there is national disruption to a day of examinations in summer 2020, the awarding bodies will liaise with the qualification regulators and the DfE to agree the most appropriate option for managing the impact. As a last resort the affected examinations will be rescheduled. Although every effort would be taken to keep the impact to a minimum, it is possible that there could be more than one timetable date affected following the disruption, up to and including the contingency day on 24 June 2020. Centres will be alerted if it was agreed to reschedule the examinations and the affected candidates will be expected to make themselves available in such circumstances. The decision regarding the re-scheduling of examinations will always rest with the awarding body. The centre must conduct the examination on the scheduled date unless instructed to do otherwise by the awarding body.

Where candidates choose not to be available for the rescheduled examination(s) for reasons other than those traditionally covered by special consideration, they will not be eligible for enhanced grading arrangements. Centres must therefore ensure candidates and parents are aware of this contingency arrangement so that they may take it into account when making their plans for the summer. However, the awarding bodies will not insist upon candidates being available throughout the entire timetable period as a matter of course.

Key Contacts and further sources of information

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>,
page iv]

General regulations for approved centres

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>

Guidance on *alternative site* arrangements

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/forms>

Guidance on *transferred candidate* arrangements

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/entries>

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

Emergency planning and response: Severe weather; Exam disruption

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/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>

Statutory guidance on school closures

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools>

Wales

School closures – opening schools in extreme bad weather

<http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/publications/guidance/schoolclosuresfaq/?lang=en>

Northern Ireland

Exceptional closure days

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/exceptional-closure-days>

Checklist for Headteachers when considering Opening or Closure of School

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/checklist-exceptional-closure-schools>

School closures

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/school-closures>

Owner: Exams Officer
Review Date: January 2020
New Review Date: January 2021