



Exam Contingency Policy 2020/2021

Policy Type:	Local
Approved By:	Principal
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Purpose of the Contingency Plan

This contingency plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exams process at Tomlinscote 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 the *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*.

This plan also confirms Tomlinscote School is compliant with the JCQ regulation (section 5.3, *General Regulations for Approved Centres 2019-2020*) that the centre *has in place a written examination contingency plan that 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.*

Possible causes of disruption to the exam process

Exam officer extended absence at key points in the exam process (cycle)

Criteria for implementation of 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

- Assistant Exams Officer able to cover priority tasks.

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*
- *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

- SLT to nominate a 'deputy' to cover a role/task

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

- SLT to nominate a 'deputy' to cover a role/task

Invisigilators - 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

- Review recruitment situation for invigilators resources to ensure enough cover will be available if shortfall.
- Put in place a contingency plan for invigilators to liaise with each other for cover.

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

- Identify if the exam can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation.
- Invoke actions as detailed in the Department of Education statutory guidance – Exceptional Closure Days document.
- Be prepared to split the exam cohort and quarantine those affected – this does not need exam board approval.

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

- See IT Departments plan or instructions from the relevant awarding organisation

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

- Invoke actions as detailed in the Gov.uk Emergency planning and response document
- Invoke School Lookdown procedure as detailed in Lockdown Policy

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

- Sourcing alternative venues/facilities
- Invoke action as detailed in Gov.uk Emergency planning and response document

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

- Seek advice or instructions from relevant awarding organisation. The School should assume that any exam or timetables 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, discuss alternative arrangements with the appropriate awarding organisation
- Communicate with parents/carers and students and keeping them informed regarding solutions to the disruption
- Posting information on the school website and updates on local radio stations
- Apply for special consideration for candidates
- Invoke actions as detailed in the Gov.uk Emergency planning and response document

Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period (including in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- *Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations.*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Seek advice or instructions from relevant awarding organisation. The School should assume that any exam or timetables 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 discuss alternative arrangements with the appropriate awarding organisation
- Communicate with parents/carers and students and keeping them informed regarding solutions to the disruption
- Posting information on the school website and updates on local radio stations
- Try to source alternative venue/facilities
- Apply for special consideration for candidates
- Invoke actions as detailed in the Gov.uk Emergency planning and response document

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

- See advice or instruction from the relevant awarding organisation

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

- See advice or instruction from the relevant awarding organisation
- Make alternative arrangements

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

- Keep question papers and exam materials secure
- Keep scripts secure
- See advice or instruction from the relevant awarding organisation

Centre unable to distribute results as normal (including in the event of the centre being unavailable on results day owing to an unforeseen emergency)

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

- See advice or instruction from the relevant awarding organisation
- Communication with parents/carers and students and keeping them informed regarding solutions to the disruption
- Posting information on the school website and updates on local radio station
- Email results to candidates if access to the school systems is still possible.