HARROW INDEPENDENT COLLEGE
School of Mathematics, Science & Economics

EXAMINATIONS CONTINGENCY PLAN POLICY

2022-23

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Contents

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 HIC. 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 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;" The potential impact of a cyber-attack should also be considered.

Causes of potential disruption to the exam process

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

<u>Criteria for implementation of the plan</u>

Key tasks required in the management and administration of the exam cycle is not undertaken, these may include:

A. 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

B. 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

C. 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

D. 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

E. Results and post-results

• access to examination results affecting the distribution of results to candidates

• the facilitation of the post-results services

Centre actions:

a. Head (Academic) to appoint a suitable Examinations Officer as rapidly as possible, who will follow procedures and practices within the Examinations Officer remit,
b. Exams Officer to ensure essential information is available to all part of the exams team,
c. Exams Officer to ensure Exam Cycle, policies and procedures are up to date at all times.

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:

A. Planning

- candidates not tested/assessed to identify potential access arrangement requirements

- evidence of need and evidence to support normal way of working not collated

   B. Pre-exams

- approval for access arrangements not applied for to the awarding body within the deadline

- 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

   C. Exam time

- access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms

Centre actions:

a. Head of the centre to appoint a suitable representative for SENCo as rapidly as possible, who will follow procedures and practices within the SENCo remit.
b. Exams Officer to ensure essential information is available to Head of the centre.
c. Exams Officer to ensure Exam Cycle, policies and procedures are up to date at all times

Heads of Department 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:

- Head of the centre to ensure departmental continuity by requesting an alternative member takes responsibility for the actions above.

Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence

<u>Criteria for implementation of the plan</u>

•   Failure to recruit and train sufficient invigilators to conduct exams

•   Invigilator shortage on peak exam days

•   Invigilator absence on the day of an exam

<u>Centre actions:</u>

•   Examinations Officer to maintain a short list of suitable candidates.

•   Examinations Officer to ensure that capacity is never exceeded on any one day.

•   Head of the centre / Examinations Officer to review training procedures regularly and put in place additional training as required.

•   Examinations Officer to ensure a specific Exams Day Contingency Plan is in place (Appendix 1)

•   Examinations Officer to ensure a specific Emergency Evacuation Plan is in place (Appendix 2)

•   Examinations Officer to ensure an Incident Log is in place (Appendix 3)

⁜ Internal Exam Time-Table Spreadsheet created and shared to relevant invigilators. Discussed and identified the individual needs of every student by remarks for each student and the centre as a whole. Invigilators are being educated before the start of the exam.

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

<u>Criteria for implementation of the plan</u>

•   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

<u>Centre actions:</u>

•   Pre-planning at all stages is essential.

•   Head of the centre and Examinations Officer to continually review all stages of the process.

- Upstairs 2nd Room to be first option as alternative venue for emergency accommodation and ensuring it meets the exam room standards (ventilation, temperature etc.)

- Emergency Evacuation plan should be in place (Appendix 2)

Failure of IT systems

<u>Criteria for implementation of the plan</u>

- MIS system failure at final entry deadline

- MIS system failure during exams preparation

- MIS system failure at results release time

<u>Centre actions:</u>

- Head of the centre and examinations to contact in-house IT department.

- Examinations Officer to contact all Examination Boards (see Appendix 1 for telephone numbers) for alternative route for dissemination of results, receive exam updates and dispersal of papers electronically.

Disruption of teaching time – Centre closed for an extended period

<u>Criteria for implementation of the plan</u>

- 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

<u>Centre actions:</u>

- The Centre to communicate with parents, carers and students about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plans to address this.

- As the campus is quite disperse – alternative venues to prioritised for students with imminent exams.

- Examinations Officer to advise the Examination Boards as appropriate.

- In extreme circumstances advise candidates they may need to sit exams in the next available series.

Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – Centre remains open

<u>Criteria for implementation of the plan</u>

- Candidates are unable to attend the examination Centre to take examinations as normal.

<u>Centre actions:</u>

- The Centre to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to make them aware of the issue. The Centre to communicate with parents, carers, and candidates regarding solutions to the issue.
- Centre to liaise with Exam Boards to sit exams at a different venue in extremis.
- Should a significant number of candidates need to be isolated due to sickness, use the Auditorium and request a member of the Staff to be on hand.
- If a small number (<5) are affected, isolate students in the Auditorium with separate invigilation.
- Apply for Special Consideration for those affected to the appropriate Exam Boards.

Example: In a case of a Tube Strike. If the candidate/s is/are able to sit for the paper on the same day by arriving late, follow the late arrival procedure outlined in ICE ensuring the confidentiality of the paper. If the candidate/s is/are not able to sit the paper on the same day, Centre to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to make them aware of the issue. The Centre to communicate with parents, carers and candidates regarding solutions to the issue.

Disruption in the distribution of examination papers

<u>Criteria for implementation of the plan</u>

- Disruption to the distribution of examination papers to the centre in advance of examinations

<u>Centre actions:</u>

- The centre to communicate with awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of papers.
- Arrange with Exam Boards for alternative means of receiving papers either electronically or alternative courier.
- Examinations Officer to ensure papers are kept securely until needed. either electronically or alternative courier.
- Examinations Officer to ensure correct papers are handed over to the invigilators.

- Remarks added for every student requiring special note and invigilators are educated beforehand.
- College ensures the availability of exam papers by having an inventory log book and checking on day prior each exam on the availability of paper for the next day. If paper is unavailable for the next day, immediately call and inform the exam board on suitable alternative solution.

Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

<u>Criteria for implementation of the plan</u>

- Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts

<u>Centre actions:</u>

- The Centre to communicate with relevant Exam Boards at the outset to resolve the issue.

- Alternative transport should only be used with the agreement of the relevant Exam Boards.

- Scripts must be stored securely until such time transport is confirmed.

- Secondary person to post exam answer scripts in an emergency situation – Mrs Sivapriya Kandeepan (Contact No: +447984164977)

Assessment evidence is not available to be marked

<u>Criteria for implementation of the plan</u>

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

<u>Centre actions:</u>

- 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.

- The Exam Boards may generate candidate marks for the affected assessments based on other evidence, as defined by the Exam Boards and the regulators.

- It may be necessary for the candidates to retake the assessment at the next available opportunity.

Centre unable to distribute results as normal

<u>Criteria for implementation of the plan</u>

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

<u>Centre actions:</u>

•   Centres to contact awarding organisations about alternative options.

•   Arrange to access results at an alternative site.

•   Inform staff, students and parents as soon as possible of the change in distribution of results.

Appendix 1

Exams Day Contingency plan

Exam Item	Location/ Holders Name	Responsibility
Keys to Secure Storage Exam papers and exam stationery	AS and KK holds spare keys	KK/AS
Exams Office – Centre Timetable	Alarm code needed for entry. Timetable widely published	RT/AS/KK
Seating plans	In exam boxes.	Invigilators RT/AS/KK/MG/SS/TS /ES

Exam Item	Location/ Holders Name	Responsibility
Exam cards / setting out of exam rooms / notices etc.	On desk. Attendance sheets in paper drawers. Official ones in files on right of desk.	Cards produced by RT/AS Set up by invigilators
Invigilators	RT/AS/KK/MG/SS/TS/ES	
Access Arrangements (incl. Cover sheets)	Notification on attendance sheets.	RT/AS
Notification of all planning, arrangement, warning, remarks given to invigilators prior to the start of the Exam.	Cover Sheets	KK/RT/AS
Script envelopes / Examiner address labels	In drawers at the right of the desk	RT/AS
Exam clashes	Resolution notice on desk	RT/AS
Collection of scripts	Invigilators	Invigilators RT/AS/KK/MG/SS/TS /ES
Collation of scripts	Invigilators Checked off on official attendance registers Official attendance sheets completed before posting	Invigilators RT/AS/KK/MG/SS/TS /ES

Completion of proof of posting form/ posting scripts	Inside a blank pocket/folder (Labelled with Exam Series) in the Exam Attendance Folder.	RT/AS	
Awarding Bodies Tel no: WJEC AQA OCR Pearson CIE	02920 265 000 0800 197 7162 01223 553 998 08444 632 535 01223 553 554		

Appendix 2

Policy for Severe Disruption/Evacuation during External Examinations

Possible Causes:

- Unreasonable noise disruption

- Fire/Bomb/Flood Alert during an Examination

- Cyber Attack

1. Unreasonable noise disruption

In the event of a severe disruption in an externally set examination, invigilators are advised to stop the examination, tell the candidates to close their answer books, make a note of the time and summon help (Exams Officer/Head (Academic)/Second Master/Fire Officer/Main Office) to sort out the problem. Examination room conditions must be maintained.

When the disruption has been resolved the candidates can resume their examination and the time taken to resolve the issue added on at the end of the examinations. The candidates must be supervised at all times and thus the break in the examination can be regarded as 'a supervised rest break'.

An incident log (Appendix 3) must be completed with the times of the disruptions noted. The Exams Officer to make Examining Bodies aware of the disruption if necessary.

2. Fire/Bomb/Flood Alert during an Examination

In the event of a fire alarm or bomb alert sounding (or any other emergency situation arising) during an examination, the first priority of the invigilators is to preserve life. The next priority is to ensure the security of the examination.

The invigilator should summon assistance, if there is time and it is appropriate, via the Exams officer who will confirm if immediate evacuation is necessary and the School Office who will call the reserve invigilator and notify the Second Master/Fire officer/Head (Academic). A decision will be made as to whether a full evacuation is necessary.

If the emergency is over quickly, the candidates should resume the examination. A careful note of the time of resumption must be noted and the full time allocated for the examination given to complete the examination, ignoring the interruption.

An incident log (Appendix 3) must be completed with the times of the disruptions noted. and a special consideration form will be filled in so as not to disadvantage the candidates.

3.   Cyber Attack

In the event of a cyber attack may compromise any aspect of delivery, the college will immediately report 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, the college will ensure their work is backed-up 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.

Harrow Independent College will follow and regularly review 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.

Procedure for Emergency Evacuation from an Examination

If it is necessary to evacuate the building, the lead invigilator should then stop the examination taking a note of the time and evacuate the building by row and in silence. The candidates must leave all examination papers, scripts and writing equipment behind, and in accordance with the school emergency evacuation procedures. The candidates should remain supervised and in silence throughout the emergency. Several other members of staff will be needed to help police this.

In the event of an emergency requiring candidates to evacuate buildings during an examination the following area should be used but the candidates must be kept at a distance and in silence from the main body of pupils who will be mustering at the same emergency evacuation point.

For HIC the emergency evacuation point assembly area is the Corner Parade (towards the right of the college)

At all times invigilators must act in accordance with section 16 of the 'Instructions for conducting examination' booklet. They should also summon assistance immediately an emergency arises. Silence should be maintained during the time the candidates are outside the examination room.

Section 16 of 'Instructions for conducting examination' booklet states:

The invigilator must take the following action in an emergency such as a fire alarm or a bomb alert.

•   Stop the candidates from writing.

•   Collect the attendance register and evacuate the examination room in line with the instructions given by the appropriate authority.

•   Advise candidates to leave all question papers and scripts in the examination room

•   Candidates should leave the room in silence.

- Make sure that the candidates are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room to make sure there is no discussion about the examination. Make a note of the time of the interruption and how long it lasted.

- Allow the candidates the full working time set for the examination.

- If there are only a few candidates, consider the possibility of taking the candidates (with question papers and scripts) to another place to finish the examination.

- Make a full report of the incident and the action taken (Appendix 3), and send to the relevant awarding   body.

Exams Officer/Head of the centre)/September 2022

Appendix 3

Exam Room Incident Log

This incident log is for the exams officer or invigilator(s) to use to record any irregularities[1] that may have in the exam room at the point of occurrence.

All irregularities **must** *be recorded.*

An exam room incident log should be used to record any irregularities. [JCQ ICE 20.2]

Exam date/session:	Exam room:	Exam(s):
AM/PM		

In order to avoid potential breaches of security, care <u>must</u> be taken to ensure the correct question paper packets are opened. An additional member of centre staff must check the time, date and any other paper details <u>before</u> a packet is opened and ensuring Second Pair of eyes form is completed. [JCQ ICE]

Prior to opening the above exam paper packets provided by the exams officer, I confirm that I have checked against the timetable that the date, session and paper details are correct.

Signature of member of centre staff to confirm the above statement: ……………………………………

Time	Incident description
	Recorded by:
	Recorded by:

After the exam(s) in this room have concluded, incidents recorded here will inform required follow-up reports to awarding bodies. The incident log will be affixed to the seating plan, copy of the attendance and exam room checklist for this exam room session. [1]Irregularities are unplanned incidents that could impact on the security of the examination, breach the rules and ~~regulations~~ or affect the conditions that enable candidates to achieve their potential. Examples include: candidate late/very late arrival; suspected malpractice (candidate, centre staff); emergency evacuation; candidate illness/distress; disturbance inside/ outside the exam room; unauthorised persons entering the exam room etc.

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 - https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/

Guidance on *alternative site arrangements - https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/forms/*

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

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

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