



EXAMINATION CONTINGENCY POLICY

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Introduction

Purpose of the Plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exam process at Orion School. It outlines the actions/procedures to be invoked in the case of disruption, and 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 Orion School is compliant with the JCQ regulation (section 5.3, General Regulations for Approved Centres 2018-2019) 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.

The Leadership team involved in the examination process includes:

- Head of Centre (also Head of School) - Murett Mendez
- Exams Officer (also the Deputy Head) - Elizabeth Caldicott

Escalation Process - in the event of the absence of the HOC or the EO who has oversight of examinations administration and responsibility for implementing JCQ regulations and requirements relating to activity prior to examinations will be escalated to:

- Teaching Lead (who supports EO and has examination administration responsibilities and training) - Azim Kazi

Possible Causes of Disruption to the Exam Process

1. Exam officer extended absence at a critical stage of the exam cycle

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

- 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 Disruption

- Thorough sharing of practice by EO and HOC to appointed Teaching Lead (to support EO with examinations and administration)
- EO to produce an annual exam plan as soon as the assessment calendar is available, to incorporate all internal assessment key tasks, dates & deadlines alongside external exam information.
- Three staff trained in creating and submitting AB entries/registrations. HOC, EO and Teaching Lead.
- EO to incorporate invigilators in training/update meetings.
- EO to produce checklist to ensure all criteria for external exams is met, teaching staff to ensure they familiarise themselves with each relevant ABs conditions for assessments.
- Candidates' scripts to be despatched in the afternoon following a morning exam, and afternoon exams to be ready for despatch the following morning.
- Three staff trained on all aspects of post-results services to be able to facilitate - HOC, EO and Teaching Lead.

2. SENDCo extended absence at a critical stage of the exam cycle

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 Disruption

- All centre staff to be aware of the centre's Equality & Diversity Policy.
- EO able to access evidence of need and evidence to support normal way of working.
- EO able to request approval for access arrangements.
- EO to liaise with SENDCo to ensure that the MIS system is updated with all access arrangements once testing is complete.
- Additional Needs staff will be trained/have a review at the start of each academic year to update access arrangements procedures. The EO will provide a list of all candidates requiring support in a timely fashion before each exam series.

3. Teaching staff extended absence at a critical stage of the exam cycle

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 Disruption

- EO to liaise with teaching team and HOC to collect entry information early on in the academic year to ensure all information has been collated on time.
- The EO will ensure the deadlines for internal assessment marks and candidates' work submission is included in the annual quality cycle with a specific exams plan.
- The EO will request final entry information in a timely fashion; this will only be submitted once the HOC has confirmed it is correct.
- Entry information for each exam series will be part of the annual data collection exercise.
- HOC/EO to plan in all non-examination assessment key dates in the assessment plan for the academic year.

- EO to share pupils centre-assessed marks before they are submitted to the ABs as per the schools Appeals Policy.

4. Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence

- 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 Disruption

- HOC and EO to recruit staff at the beginning of the year and conduct and record invigilator training activities early.
- Plan in exam timetables in whole school calendar to ensure all invigilator slots are covered.

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

- 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 Disruption

- Additional rooms will be identified within the building (PE area)
- Use of upstairs dining area used as additional space if required

6. Cyber-attack

- Where a cyber-attack may compromise any aspect of the delivery of examinations

Centre Actions to Mitigate the Impact of Disruption

- EO will make contact with the relevant Awarding Body/s to seek further guidance.
- EO will request support from an outside agency to check IT systems are 'clean' in order for exams to continue and that we are safe from further attacks.

7. Failure of IT systems

- MIS system failure during exams requiring IT equipment
- 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 Disruption

- The EO will make contact with the relevant Awarding Body/s to seek further guidance.
- Ensure availability of technical support staff on day of exams

8. Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lockdown)

- Whole centre evacuation (or lockdown) 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 Disruption

- Candidates will be made aware of the schools emergency evacuation procedure and of the exam lockdown policy.

9. Disruption of teaching time – centre closed for an extended period

- 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 Disruption

- Liaise with local schools/external venues to check whether accommodation is available
- Priority given to exam classes/year 11 - building only open for examinations

10. Centre may not be able to open as normal during the exams period (including in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency)

- Centre may not be able to open as normal for scheduled examinations

Centre Actions to Mitigate the Impact of Disruption

- EO to inform awarding organisations as soon as possible
- Liaise with local schools/external venues to check whether accommodation is available.
- Priority given to exam classes/year 11 to open available parts of the building.

11. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers

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

Centre Actions to Mitigate the Impact of Disruption

- EO to download papers from AB secure websites, and arrange for adequate amounts of papers to be securely printed in a timely fashion for each exam.
- EO to create checklist to ensure all papers have been received/downloaded in preparation for each exam day.

12. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts

Centre Actions to Mitigate the Impact of Disruption

- EO to report any missed collections as soon as possible, as a last resort exam papers will be taken to the Post Office.

13. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked

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

Centre Actions to Mitigate the Impact of Disruption

- EO to communicate immediately to awarding organisation
- EO to submit claim for missing internal assessment, EO to arrange procedure to recover/recomplete work where relevant.

14. Centre unable to distribute results as normal or facilitate post results services (including in the event of the centre being unavailable on results day owing to an unforeseen emergency)

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

Centre Actions to Mitigate the Impact of Disruption

- EO to notify awarding organisation
- If necessary as a last resort, results can be emailed to parents of pupils.

15. Head of Centre or Member of SLT with Oversight of Examination Administration Absence

Centre Actions to Mitigate the Impact of Disruption

- HOC and EO trained to carry out both roles and deputise for each other in absence
- Proprietor will deputise in absence of both HOC and EC and will be supported by

Lead Teacher both who will have been trained in managing processes.