

# THE TELFORD PRIORY SCHOOL



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| <b>Member of Leadership Team with Responsibility for Update of Policy</b> | Chris Byrne   |
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## EXAMINATION CONTINGENCY PLAN

# The Telford Priory School Examination Contingency Plan

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- **Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts**
- **Assessment evidence is not available to be marked**
- **Centre unable to distribute results as normal or facilitate post results services**
- **Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning**

## **Purpose of the Examination Contingency Plan**

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exams process at The Telford Priory 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 process, 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 for the Examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

This plan also confirms The Telford Priory School complies with the JCQ publication *“General Regulations for Approved Centres (section 5.3) 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 examination contingency plan should reinforce procedures in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations, or on results day, owing to an unforeseen emergency. The potential impact of a cyber- attack should also be considered.

# The Telford Priory School Examination Contingency Plan

## Possible Causes of Disruption to the Exam Process

### 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 / assessments;
- Awarding body entry deadlines missed or late or other penalty fees incurred;
- Candidates not entered for vocational qualifications at the start of the course

#### *Pre-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;
- Invigilators not trained or updated on changes to the JCQ document *Instructions for Conducting Examinations*;
- School website and calendar not up to date with exam dates

#### *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 the 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*

- In the event of the Exam Officer extended absence, the Deputy Head to appoint an acting Exam Officer as soon as possible, ensuring the key tasks as listed above are understood;
- IT Manager to provide assistance in tasks which involve awarding body software, website access and A2C;
- Awarding bodies to be kept informed of developments;
- The Exam Officer to ensure essential information is available to the Assistant Headteacher responsible for exams;
- Annual membership to the Exams Office <https://www.theexamsoffice.org>

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- The Exam Officer and the Assistant Headteacher responsible for exams ensure the exam policies and procedures are up to date at all times;
- Invigilation training for new invigilators is carried out immediately
- Support is requested from other schools within the trust and the Telford & Wrekin MIS team.

## 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*

- The assistant SENCO is asked to deputise for the SENCO supported by other experienced members of the SEND team;
- The assistant SENCO ensures testing, assessments and Access Arrangements applications continue to be carried out and that applications for Access Arrangements are submitted for approval;
- Members of the SEND team keep fully up to date with the JCQ Regulations *Adjustments for Candidates with Disabilities and Learning Difficulties Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*;
- Support is requested from other schools within the trust and outside professional help is considered, to assist with testing

## Subject Lead 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 Exam Officer on time; resulting in pre-release information not being received;
- Final entry information not provided to the Exam Officer on time, resulting in candidates not being entered for exams / assessments or being entered late resulting in late or other penalty fees being charged by awarding bodies;
- Non-examination assessments tasks not set / not taken by candidates as scheduled;

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- 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*

- The Deputy Headteacher to appoint an acting Subject Lead as soon as possible;
- The Exam Officer to liaise with the acting Subject Lead to ensure that all the above key tasks are carried out on time.

## **Invisilators - lack of appropriately trained invisilators or invisilator absence**

### **Criteria for implementation of the plan**

- Failure to recruit and train sufficient invisilators to conduct exams;
- Invisilator shortage on peak exam days;
- Invisilator absence on the day of an exam.

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

- Regular recruitment of new exam invisilators takes place throughout the year;
- Teaching assistants and academic coaches are trained and used as invisilators;
- Invisilation is planned well in advance with reserve staff allocated if possible;
- A pool of experienced staff are trained as lead invisilators.

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

### **Criteria for implementation of the plan**

- The Exam 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*

- Pre-planning is essential, exam rooms are identified / allocated well in advance of the examinations window
- If one of the two large exam venues (hall / studio), becomes unavailable at short notice the feasibility of classrooms is considered and in exceptional circumstances alternative site arrangements are sought;
- The Senior Leadership Team and lead invisilators will assist the Exam Officer in maintaining the security of exam papers should a venue be changed at very short notice;
- The Exam Officer will ensure that any late-notice rooms comply with regulations as set out in the JCQ *Instructions for Conducting Examinations* booklet.

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## Cyber-attack

### Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Where a cyber attack may comprise any aspect of delivery

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

- Computer systems are backed up daily
- T&W protect the internet access and support
- In the event of a system failure at the point of contact – for example download of a paper or file the awarding body would be contacted for instructions
- The exams officer has external remote access to awarding bodies

## 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 on results download day.

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

- Entries are made well in advance of the entry deadline to reduce the risk of late entries due to system failure;
- Entries are processed through the awarding body websites;
- The Exam Officer informs the awarding body of the ongoing situation and asks for guidance if necessary;
- The Exam Officer is in school the day before results are released to check for system updates / issues;
- Failure on results download day – the Assistant Headteacher responsible for exams liaises with the IT Manager and the Exams Officer to enable a swift resolution to any issues. The Exams Officer contacts the awarding bodies as quickly as possible to identify an alternative method for receiving results;
- Results are obtained through the awarding body websites;
- IT technicians are available on results day for technical support.

## Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lockdown)

### Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Whole centre evacuation 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*

- Lead invigilators, invigilators, Assistant Headteacher responsible for exams and the Exam Officer ensure the emergency evacuation plan is followed and the integrity of the exam is maintained;
- A practice emergency evacuation is conducted every year;

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- The Exam Officer contacts the awarding body for advice and guidance and if applicable applies for Special Consideration;
- An alternative room is sought if numbers are small enough.

## *Lockdown*

- Please see the separate Lockdown Policy, available on the school website.

## **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, interrupting the provision of normal teaching and learning.*

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

- Consideration is given to remote home learning via Teams;
- The Assistant Headteacher responsible for exams prioritises teaching venues for students in exam years if possible;
- The Exam Officer to inform awarding bodies of developments;
- For modular courses consideration is given to entering candidates in a different series;
- Consideration is given to using an alternative venue.

## **Candidates at risk of being unable to take examinations– 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*

- The Exam Officer to inform the awarding bodies of the crisis and seek advice and guidance;
- Parents, carers and candidates are notified of possible solutions to the issue;
- Consideration is given to using an alternative venue.

## **Covid-19 Disruption**

- National / local guidelines (of the day) are followed;
- Students, parents and carers are kept informed of the situation;
- Consideration is given to applying for special consideration for students self-isolating

## **Centre at risk of being unable to open as normal during the examination period**

### **Criteria for implementation of the plan**

*Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations (including centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency).*

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*Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption*

- Consideration is given to solely opening for examination candidates;
- The Exam Officer to inform the awarding body of the examinations affected and seek advice and guidance;
- Consideration is given to using an alternative venue;
- Staff, candidates, parents and carers are kept informed of alternative arrangements.

## **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*

- The Exam Officer to contact the awarding body to organise receiving papers electronically via a secure network;
- The Exam Officer and the Assistant Headteacher responsible for exams implement a plan to ensure the exam scripts are received, made and stored under secure conditions.

## **Disruption to transporting 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*

- The Exam Officer to contact Parcelforce to discover the reason for the delay;
- The Exam Officer to communicate and seek advice and guidance from the relevant awarding bodies;
- Scripts / assessment evidence continue to be stored securely according to JCQ regulations until transport is confirmed;
- The Exam Officer to take the scripts / assessment evidence to the nearest Parcelforce collection point (Royal Mail main Post Office) if the delay continues.

## **Assessment evidence is not available to be marked**

### **Criteria for implementation of the plan**

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

*Completed examination scripts / assessment evidence does not reach awarding bodies.*

*Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption*



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- The Exam Officer to communicate and seek advice from the awarding bodies;
- Students, parents and carers are notified of the awarding bodies advice and guidance;
- Consideration is given to whether candidates marks for affected assessments can be based on other appropriate evidence and achievements as defined by the awarding bodies.

## **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*

- The Exam Officer to contact the awarding bodies regarding alternative arrangements to access results; (e.g. download results from awarding body secure websites);
- Details of alternative arrangements to distribute results (e.g. alternative venue) are communicated to staff, students, parents and carers;
- Details of alternative arrangements for post-results services are communicated to staff, students, parents and carers.

## **Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning can be obtained from Ofqual**

The following guidance should be considered

### **General contingency guidance**

- [Emergency planning and response](#) from the Department for Education in England
- [School organisation: local-authority-maintained schools](#) from the Department for Education in England
- [Bomb threats](#) procedures for handling bomb threats from the National Counter Terrorism Security Office

### **Disruption to assessments or exams**

In the absence of any instruction from the relevant awarding bodies, provision will be made to ensure that any exam or timetabled assessment takes place if it is possible to hold it. Alternative venues may be Oakengates Leisure Centre or another CAT school.

Alternative arrangements will be discussed with the awarding body if:

- the exam or assessment cannot take place;
- a student misses an exam or loses their assessment due to an emergency, or other event, outside of the student's control.

### **Exam planning**

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Contingency plans will be reviewed well in advance of each exam or assessment series and will comply with the awarding body's requirements.

## In the event of disruption

1. The relevant awarding bodies will be contacted, and their instructions followed.
2. Advice, or instructions will be followed from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether the centre is able to open.
3. Consideration will be given as to whether the exam or timetabled assessment can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding bodies, ensuring the secure transportation of questions papers or assessment materials to the alternative venue.
4. Where accommodation is limited, prioritisation will be given to students whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned.
5. In the event of an evacuation during an examination JCQ's Centre emergency evacuation procedure will be referred to.
6. Any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue will be communicated to parents / carers and students.
7. Any changes to the exam or assessment timetable will be communicated to any external assessors or relevant third parties.

## After the exam

1. Consideration will be given as to whether any students' ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, special consideration will be applied for.
2. Students will be advised where appropriate, of the opportunities to take their exam or assessment at a later date.
3. Exam scripts will always be stored under secure conditions.
4. Exam scripts will be return to awarding bodies in line with their instructions. Alternative arrangements for the transportation of completed exam scripts will not be made unless told to do so by the awarding bodies.