

Saint John Houghton Catholic Academy



Examinations Contingency Plan 2015/2016

To be read in conjunction with Business Continuity Management Plan

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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 Saint John Houghton Catholic Academy. By outlining actions /procedures to be followed 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 information contained in the *Joint contingency plan for the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* where it is stated that “Centres should prepare plans for any disruption to examinations as part of their general emergency planning. It is important to ensure that relevant centre staff are familiar with the plan. Consideration should be given as to how these arrangements will be communicated to candidates, parents and staff should disruption to examinations occur.”

Causes of potential 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:

- Documented Procedures Manual
- Ensure early Action Plan in place to meet deadlines
- Produce & publish approx. timescales of deadlines for information required
- Deputy Headteacher to direct actions (SD) and have access to electronic storage and secure areas
- Liaise with Kirk Hallam Academy if necessary
- Awarding bodies to provide centre with electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network if exam papers not received by timetabled exam day.
- Awarding bodies to fax exam papers to centre if electronic transfer is not possible.
- Exam’s Officer would need to ensure that faxes copies are received and stored under exam conditions

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 providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained
- *Exam time*
 - access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms

Centre actions:

- Early Action Plan to be in place by mid-October with all necessary documentation out to staff
- Regular meetings between SENCo & Exam's Officer to ensure deadlines are met
- SENCo to have a deputy / buddy
- LMT to arrange assessor if candidates not assessed prior to final dates for processing on-line Access Arrangements
- Exam's Officer to arrange all aspects of Access Arrangements from Pre exam time to end of exams

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
- Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet submission deadlines

Centre actions:

- Exam's Officer to ensure early requests from CL's for all information required
- Production of approx. timescales for all information required by Exam's Officer
- Late / Very Late fees from Curriculum Leaders budget to encourage accurate information prior to awarding bodies deadlines
- Log to be maintained and monitored of requests made for 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:

- Annual training session to be held November / December
- Promote recruitment through Friday letter & Academy website
- Encourage invigilators to phone early if unable to attend assigned exam – EO to contact agency for cover
- Use TA's if possible

5. Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short noticeCriteria 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 expected incident at exam time

Centre actions:

- Liaise with Cover Manager once timetable complete to book sufficient rooms
- Cover Manager to assign room changes etc.
- Liaise with LMT if insufficient rooms
- Use of hall / gym if an incident occurs
- Liaise with Kirk Hallam Academy & JCQ if need to change venue

6. Failure of IT systemsCriteria 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:

- Ensure all entries are inputted well before deadlines
- Have all necessary preparatory work completed well before start of exams
- Liaise with ICT well in advance re any possible upgrades or planned works
- Liaise with Kirk Hallam and awarding bodies

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:

- LMT to liaise with student and relevant departments
- Centre to have plans in place to facilitate alternative methods of learning – see Business Continuity Management Plan

8. *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

**In the event that the head of centre decides the centre cannot be opened for scheduled examinations, the relevant awarding body must be informed as soon as possible. Awarding bodies will be able to offer advice regarding the alternative arrangements for conducting examinations that may be available and the options for candidates who have not been able to take scheduled examinations.*

Centre actions:

- Head to liaise with LMT and Exam's Officer
- Centre to open for exam purposes only if possible
- Exam's Officer to liaise with awarding bodies and invigilators
- Try to use alternative venue if possible after consulting awarding bodies
- Head, LMT and Exam's Officer to liaise with parents and students
- Exam's Officer to apply for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements

9. *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:

- Candidate(s) must contact Exam's Officer as soon as crisis is known
- Exam's Officer will liaise with Head of Centre if reason unacceptable
- Liaise with candidate if exam can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with awarding bodies
- Exam's Officer to apply to awarding bodies for Special Consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements. Candidates are only eligible for special consideration if they have a medical certificate or have been advised by the centre not to attend the examination. If a candidate chooses not to sit an exam they must be made aware that the special consideration rules will not apply
- Liaise with parents if home visit for examination to take place would be possible
- Exam's Officer will liaise with awarding bodies to request candidate can take exam off site
- Exam's Officer to liaise with invigilator to attend home visit

10. *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:

- Seek advice from awarding bodies
- Ensure scripts are retained in secure storage until either collected or taken to nearest point
- Exam's Officer to take completed scripts to nearest receiving point
- Liaise with couriers as to reasons for delay and what their plans are to rectify
- Arrange collection next working day

11. *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:

- Exam's Officer to contact awarding body to ascertain procedure
- Awarding bodies to generate candidate marks for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement as defined by awarding bodies

12. *Centre unable to distribute results as normal*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:

- Liaise with awarding bodies to advise of issues
- Awarding bodies to assess level of disruption and consider options for issuing results in alternative format(s)
- Liaise with Kirk Hallam to access results and use of post results service if necessary
- Liaise with candidates

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 <http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/16235/1/2012-12-11-joint-contingency-plan-november-2012.pdf>

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 - Contingency planning <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-yellow-label-service/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-guide>

JCQ

Guidance on *alternative site arrangements* <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/forms>

Instructions for conducting examinations <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>

Guidance on *access arrangements and special consideration* <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>