



Proposed Policy:	Exam Contingency Plan	Responsibility Of:	Deputy Headteacher
Date of Ratification:	October 2023	Date of Review:	October 2024

Key staff involved in the plan

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	Mr Mike Stratford
Exams officer line manager (Senior leader)	Dr Sharron Cunningham
Exams officer	Mrs Sue Sellar
SENDCo	Miss Samantha Chinnock
Senior leader(s)	Mrs Kerala Cole Mr Ben Cheeseman Mr Michael Merriman Mr Steve White Mrs Demelza Barker

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Purpose of the plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exams process at Rednock 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 [Department for Education](#) (DfE) which provides guidance on what schools, colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted, and the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) document [Preparing for disruption to examinations](#).

This plan also confirms Rednock School's compliance with JCQ's **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 where the head of centre, examinations officer or SENDCo is absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle. 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.

National Centre Number Register and other information requirements

The head of centre will ensure that as a contingency to enable the prompt handling of urgent issues only, responds to the awarding bodies' request for information regarding the contact details of a senior member of staff (which might include a personal mobile number and/or email address). This will ensure that any urgent matters which might adversely affect candidates which arise outside of term time, and which potentially put qualification awards at risk, can be addressed by awarding bodies with the support of that member of staff. Heads of centre should ensure that this member of staff has the necessary authority to mobilise resources to provide this support, which might include resolving issues within the centre itself.

Possible causes of disruption to the exam process

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

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

- The SLT member in charge of examinations will liaise with the school's Data team and Senior Invigilator to ensure that the key tasks listed above are actioned by the appropriate team/person to ensure a smooth running of the examination session(s).

2. SENDCo extended absence at a critical stage of 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

- There are 2 qualified teachers in post that can assess and apply for access arrangements. In the absence of one, the other member of staff can pick up the actions related to access arrangements.

3. Teaching staff extended absence at a critical stage of 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 Line Managers and the Exams Officer will liaise with TLR post holders in the relevant subject area(s) and the remaining teaching staff as necessary.

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Recruitment and training of Invigilators is done well in advance of the examination session.
- Training of other members of staff e.g. Support staff - Cover Supervisors and administrative staff to provide additional capacity in the event of a shortage.

5. 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

- In an emergency the Sixth Form teaching rooms can be used for examinations.
- For larger examinations, the Sport's Hall can be utilised at short notice.
- Under exceptional circumstance, Kingshill House will be rented.
- Where accommodation is limited, prioritise students whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned.

6. Cyber-attack

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Where a cyber-attack may compromise any aspect of delivery

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Report any incidents to the relevant awarding bodies which might compromise any aspect of assessment delivery,
- Only if appropriate to do so, IT support set up local accounts on clean Windows computers which are isolated from the threat.
- Students save their work to the local accounts. The computers are secured after the exams and files retrieved only when it's safe to do so.

7. Failure of IT systems

Criteria for implementation of the plan

MIS system failure at final entry deadline

MIS system failure during exams preparation

Power outage immediately prior to or during an on-screen test

MIS system failure at results release time

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Exams Officer and IT Manager to liaise with the examination boards as to appropriate action.
- Liaise with local Secondary/Primary Schools to use their hardware to facilitate the Examination Process

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

Criteria for implementation of the plan

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 the disruption

- Follow Appendix 8 of the School's Emergency Evacuation Procedure
- Follow Appendix C of the School's Lockdown Procedures for examination rooms
- In the event that the school receives a bomb threat, invigilators will act on the instruction of SLT if the threat requires an emergency evacuation or lockdown.
- All invigilators and associated examination staff to be trained in Emergency Evacuation procedures and Lockdown procedures.

9. 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 or study supported time, interrupting the provision of normal teaching and learning

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Head of Centre, Governors and SLT to take the necessary action e.g. providing alternative venues etc.
- Activate the school's online learning provision

10. Candidates may not be able to take examinations - centre remains open

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Candidates may not be able to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Identify whether the student can sit the examination at an alternative venue in agreement with the relevant awarding organisations
- Apply to awarding organisations for special consideration

11. Centre may not be able to open as normal during the examination period

(Including in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

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

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Examinations Officer to liaise with Head of Centre and inform the awarding bodies
- If possible, open Rednock School for examinations and examination candidates only
- Examinations Officer and SLT to explore the use of alternative venues in agreement with relevant awarding organisations (e.g. share facilities with other centres or use other public buildings if possible)
- Apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for students where they have met the minimum requirements.

12. 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

- Examinations Officer to contact the awarding organisation to organise an alternative delivery method. This may include electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network
- Examinations Officer will communicate with the awarding body to confirm that copies are received, made and stored under secure conditions
- As a last resort, and in close collaboration with centres and regulators, awarding organisations to consider scheduling of the examination on an alternative date.

13. 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

- Scripts remain securely stored in the Examinations Cupboard until collection point.
- The Exams Officer seek advice from awarding organisations regarding collection of scripts
- When the awarding organisations have approved the mode of transportation then the Exams Officer can action the collection/delivery of scripts to the awarding bodies.

14. 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

Completed examination scripts/assessment evidence does not reach awarding organisations

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Exams Officer will contact the awarding bodies for advice.

15. 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)

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

- Rednock to make arrangements to access its results at an alternative site, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation
Possible alternative sites – Sports Hall, Sixth Form Centre or Kingshill House
- Make arrangements to coordinate access to post results services from an alternative site
- centres to share facilities with other centres if this is possible, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation.)

Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning

- [JCQ's notice to centres on exam contingency plans](#)
- [JCQ's notice on preparing for disruption to examinations](#)
- [JCQ's guidance on special consideration](#)
- [Cyber Security Standards for schools and colleges](#)
- [Cyber crime and cyber security: a guide for education providers](#)
- [DfE Cyber Security Guidance – March 2023](#)
- [Gov.uk - Exam system contingency plan](#)