



Pontypridd High School

Exam Contingency Plan

'Learning and achieving together'
'Dysgu a chyflawni gyda'n gilydd'

Exam Contingency Plan

Date of policy:	October 2022
Adopted:	Standards Committee Meeting, 25 th January 2023
To be reviewed:	Autumn 2023
Member of staff responsible:	Exams Officer
Committee Responsible:	Standards

Purpose of the plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exams process at Pontypridd High 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 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 also confirms Pontypridd High School is compliant with the JCQ regulation (section 5.3, General Regulations for Approved Centres 2021-22) that the centre *has 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.*

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
- Invigilators not trained or updated on changes to instructions for conducting exams
- 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, 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

Data collection and exam plan to be organised by EO's line manager, Mrs Kayleigh Oliver (KO)/Mr Rhys Ivins (RGI)

Invigilator training to be organised by KO/RGI or a delegate

Info to awarding bodies re estimated entries, entry info collection from departments and entries to awarding bodies will be organised by KO/RGI with the help of admin staff

The preparation of exam timetables, rooming and invigilation will be organised by KO/RGI with the help of admin staff

Running of examinations will be organised by KO/RGI including the submission of reports/requests to awarding bodies. Practical tasks such as setting up hall, dispatching scripts etc. will be organised by the senior invigilator, Jackie Jones with assistance from the Site Manager Chris Evans.

Results and post-results services will be organised by KO/RGI in conjunction with senior leaders and Heads of Faculty.

2. ALNCo 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
- 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

The qualified assessor carries out the testing and collates the evidence. If necessary SLT to nominate a deputy to cover the role.

The qualified assessor in conjunction with the EO, Claire Finney, will apply for approval of access arrangements with the awarding body and will inform the EO about modified paper requirements. SLT to outscore a replacement in CF's absence.

The senior ALN leader, Claire Finney, will arrange for support staff to be trained and allocated to candidates and she will arrange for staff to be in the exam room (in conjunction with EO)

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

Non-examination assessments tasks not set/not taken by candidates as schedule

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

Centre actions

EO to be informed of long term absences and she will collect entry information from Heads of Faculty

Heads of Faculty will ensure that non-examination and internal assessment tasks are set, taken and processed as per awarding body deadline

EO to inform the relevant AB if any work is missing, candidates have not been entered correctly or a procedure has not been adhered to due to absence

Entries to be made on time to avoid late fees, amendments to be made at a later date if required

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

More invigilators than needed will be recruited and trained

Unforeseen shortages, e.g. through absence, can be dealt with by the EO buying in trained supply staff from agencies

Check with SENCo for any LSA staff who may be available

Check to see if it is possible to amalgamate any access arrangement rooms to release invigilators

SLT to invigilate if possible – training given before first invigilation slot

Supervise candidates who are able to sit the exam later in the day with permission from AO

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

Room bookings to be made in advance to ensure there are sufficient rooms for exam students

update seating plans and inform students to avoid late candidates

ensure additional exam rooms have posters and signage

If no possible rooms, supervise candidates and remove devices. Plan to seat the candidates to take the exam later: contact the AO

Utilise any rooms in school that aren't affected as the main halls

Consider sending home lower school to make further rooms available

Refer to SLT for further advice if needed

Free up extra space in school by having rewards trips for non-exam year groups

6. 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 at results release time

Centre actions

All exams entries should be made well in advance of the deadline to avoid the issue. If the entries are left to the last minute and there is an IT failure, firstly ring the relevant AO to explain the situation: an extension may be given

Ensure paperwork is printed in advance i.e. seating plans and Access Arrangements

Try to access Sims through another computer i.e. from home

Inform IT support of the pre-release results days and results days to ensure no updates or changes to the system are planned and a member of IT is available

Ensure all AO passwords are kept non electronically

Keep IT managers phone number non electronically in case of emergency contact

EO informs exam boards of problem and negotiates extension to deadline

Seating plans and room allocation done manually

EO downloads results documents from exam boards and photocopies for candidates

7. Emergency evacuation of the exam room

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Whole centre evacuation during exam time due to serious incident resulting in exam candidates being unable to return to exam rooms to start, proceed with or complete their exams

Centre actions

Ensure invigilators are aware of the difference between the bells for a lock down and evacuation

Invigilators to follow the procedure in the exam room packs: this is communicated to them in the mock and external exam training sessions

Advise candidates to leave all papers and follow the invigilators to the relevant meeting points if they are to be evacuated

Candidates to be supervised throughout the evacuation and all timings to be recorded

Exams office to inform the relevant AO of the incident

Try to find alternative venue nearby

Apply to awarding bodies for special consideration

Offer candidates the opportunity to re-sit exam at next available date

8. 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 closed interrupting the of normal teaching and learning

The centre to communicate with parents, carers and students about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plans to address this. [Joint Contingency Plan (JCP) scenario 1]

Centre actions

Where there is disruption to teaching time and students miss teaching and learning, Pontypridd High School remains responsible in the preparation of students, as usual, for examinations.

In the case of modular courses, Pontypridd High School may advise candidates to sit examinations in an alternative series.

If the school was closed or a Year Group taking examinations was absent from school due to a lockdown, teachers would utilise online learning through Classcharts and Microsoft Teams meetings to deliver course content

Practical elements of qualifications would be managed in line with guidance from Awarding Organisations

Any students not completing tasks set on Classcharts or Teams meetings would be followed up by Standards Mana and the relevant Year team.

Senior leaders will facilitate learning by finding alternative methods or venues while prioritising students who will be facing examinations in the near future

EO will apply for special consideration for affected candidates

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

centre to liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with the relevant awarding organisations.

centre to offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series.

centre to apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements. Candidates are only eligible for special consideration if they have been fully prepared and have covered the whole course but are affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control. If a candidate chooses not to sit an examination for other reasons they should be aware that special consideration rules will not apply.

EO will liaise with candidates to see if they can sit the exam at an alternative venue – in agreement with awarding body

10. 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 (including centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency)

Centre actions

Centre to open for examinations and candidates only, if possible.

Supervise candidates until a decision can be made

Stager exams within the venue available

Centre to use alternative venues in agreement with relevant awarding organisations (e.g. share facilities with other centres or use other public building, if possible). Possible venues are: Hawthorn High School, Coleg Y Cymoedd, Abercynon Leisure Centre, Ty Trevithick

Centre may offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series.

Centre to apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements.

Awarding organisations to provide centres with electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network. Centres would need to ensure that copies are received, made and stored under secure conditions and should have plans in place to facilitate such an action. Awarding organisations would provide guidance on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances.

As a last resort, and in close collaboration with centres and regulators, awarding organisations to consider scheduling of the examination on an alternative date

11. 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

Contact the AO and request the paper electronically

Ensure reprographics are available to free up machines to print papers

Ensure no staff are in reprographics when the paper is being printed and ensure the security of all papers around the site – the papers should be in sealed envelopes

Make arrangements to supervise candidates if the exam cannot start on time

Enlist additional invigilators for support

12. 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

In the first instance centres to seek advice from awarding organisations and normal collection agency regarding collection. The School should not make their own arrangements for transportation without approval from awarding organisations.

Centre must ensure secure storage of completed examination papers until collection.

All exams scripts must be stored in the secure Exams Office.

13. 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 examinations scripts/assessment evidence does not reach awarding organisation

Centre actions

Notify awarding organisation immediately.

Awarding organisations to generate candidate marks for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement as defined by the awarding organisations

Candidates to retake affected assessment at subsequent assessment window.

Awarding organisations to generate candidate marks for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement as defined by the awarding organisations

where marks cannot be generated by awarding organisations candidates may need to retake affected assessment in a subsequent assessment series.

14. 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

centre to notify Awarding Organisation.

centre to make arrangements to access its results at an alternative site if any of the PHS site cannot be accessed: HHS/CNS/Ty Trevithick

centre to make arrangements to coordinate access to post result services from an alternative site as above.

centre to share facilities with other centres if this is possible – HHS/CNS

15. Internal Governance arrangements

As stated in the JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres 2021-22 (page 10: 5.3)

d) has in place a written escalation process should the head of centre, or member of the senior leadership team with oversight of examination administration, be absent;

e) has in place a member of the senior leadership team who will provide support and guidance to the examinations officer and ensure that the integrity and security of examinations and assessments is maintained throughout an examination series.

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Mrs K Oliver - Deputy Headteacher has senior leadership responsibility for overseeing all examination processes.

In the event of Mrs Oliver's absence the following escalation process will be implemented by the Exams department:

Centre actions

Miss N Pickens, Data Protection officer to be consulted if problems arise with any data or systems i.e. Exams organiser (Sims)

In Miss N Pickens's absence Mr Rhys Ivins – Assistant Headteacher to be consulted

Mrs K Oliver – Deputy Headteacher to be consulted in matters related to malpractice, candidates, invigilation and any other exam related matters which arise.

In Mrs Oliver's absence the Exams team will consult with Mr Huw Cripps - Head of Centre

Further guidance to inform and implement contingency planning

Qualifications Wales

Emergency Planning and response Severe Weather Exam Disruption

<https://www.qualificationswales.org/english/>

WJEC

Despatch of Exam Scripts, Pre-release information

<https://www.wjec.co.uk/home/administration/>

JCQ

General Regulations for approved Centres

https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Gen_regs_approved_centres_21-22.pdf

Instructions for conducting examinations

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

A guide to the special consideration process

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/>