Whitburn Church of England Academy

Examination Contingency Plan

Preface

The Academy Vision and Values can be found here:
https://www.whitburncofeacademy.org/about-us/academy-ethos.html

This policy and its associated procedures are based on these key principles and values.

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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 Whitburn Church of England 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:

- Communication between Examinations Officer, AHT (Assessment, Reporting and Examinations) and the Principal to ensure that more than one person is aware of processes throughout the year and of changes to procedure set out by JCQ.
- Identification of the member of staff who has previously carried out the role of Examinations Officer who could take over if necessary.
- Exam plan produced by Exams Officer and shared with SMT, identifying key procedures at key dates throughout the year for reference in the case of unexpected absence.
- Contact Diocesan network and draw on expertise from other Exams Officers within the diocesan schools to support acting Exams Officer.

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:

- Clear liaison and communication between Exams Officer, SENCO, AHT (Assessment, Reporting and Examinations) and the Principal throughout the year, so that all parties are aware of procedures and updates as and when they occur, and can ensure that management and administration of access

arrangements takes place in the event of the absence of the SENCO.

- Draw on support from Diocesan network for guidance and training in the case of unexpected absence

- Exams Officer/SMT oversee the access arrangement support for exam rooms in case of SENCO absence.

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:

- Subject teacher/Head of Subject/Head of Faculty liaison throughout the year in order to ensure more than one person is aware of entry requirements and administration for each subject.

- Exams Officer/AHT (Assessment, Reporting and Examinations)/Principal to retain overview of all examination administration to ensure that all deadlines are met and procedures carried out.

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 scheduled for all invigilators, carried out by Exams Officer but in Liaison with AHT (Assessment, Reporting and Examinations) so more than one person is aware of the need and can ensure that it is carried out.

- Level of pay for invigilators at a level to ensure that a suitable number of invigilators are available.

- SMT and admin staff trained in invigilation so that they can invigilate if necessary in the case of last minute invigilator absence, and so that they can

	provide additional support should it be required on peak days.
•	Examination timetable produced well in advance of examinations by exams officer and staffed to ensure that adequate numbers of invigilators are available, and that invigilators are aware of the dates that they are required.

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 exam timetable planning*

- *Insufficient rooms available on peak exam days*

- *Main exam venues unavailable due to an expected incident at exam time*

Centre actions:

- Timetable produced as early as possible in order to identify any key issues well in advance so that measures can be put in place.

- Re-locate other activities/lessons from major spaces across the building in the event of an unexpected incident

- Identification of other major spaces in the local area that could be used in the event of a major incident e.g. other schools, leisure centres, etc.

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:

- Entries processed in advance of deadline so that MIS failure is known about in advance of deadline, allowing action to be taken to address issues.

- AHT (Assessment, Reporting and Examinations) /Principal informed and updated throughout the incident by Exams Officer

- Support from ITSS/Dataspire in terms of ICT provision to address MIS system failure

- Results downloaded early morning the day before they are released to the students, allowing the maximum time possible to address the system failure and make alternative provision.

- Access results from an alternative site, drawing on ITSS to support.

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:

- Prioritise exam classes in the case of the school running reduced timetable due to bad weather, strike action etc.

- Use of Whitburn online and Office 365 by staff to support exam students from home if they are unable to attend school

- Programme of extra lessons, once normal service is resumed, in order to ensure candidates are completely up to date, and any time missed has been compensated for as far as possible.

- Make alternative arrangements for curriculum to be delivered at a different venue, prioritising exam classes.

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:

- Where possible, the centre will open for examinations, even if closed to the rest of the school, with staff living locally within walking distance in the case of bad weather, providing invigilation.

- SMT consulted and updated throughout incident

- Examinations held elsewhere if possible, in potential major venues identified in section 5 above, with the exam board informed as a matter of urgency and advice taken from them in terms of the legitimacy of the venue and the examination.

- Advice taken from the relevant exam board in the case of candidates being unable to take the examination at all, and SMT informed. Candidates offered opportunity to sit examination at next available series.

- Apply for special consideration where minimum requirements have been met.

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:

- Exam board consulted urgently for advice.

- SMT informed and updated throughout incident by exams officer

- Centre to liaise with candidates to see whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with the awarding body.

- Offer candidates opportunity to sit exam at next available series

- Apply for special consideration where minimum requirements have been met.

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:

- Scripts to remain secure within exam safe in school and wait for instructions from the awarding body; SMT to be informed.

- Examinations officer to make daily contact with the examination board to request further instruction.

- SMT informed once scripts have been despatched in accordance with awarding body instructions.

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:

- Assessment information collected throughout the course and stored on Go4Schools – as evidence of student attainment and predicted outcomes throughout the course.

- Key assessments carried out regularly during exam conditions throughout course and results retained by centre as evidence.

- Centre to re-take affected assessment at subsequent assessment window.

12. *Centre unable to distribute results as normal

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*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:

- Make arrangements to access results at alternative site, with Diocesan support. Venues identified in section 5.

- Access results services via VPN from Laptop.

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*Information taken from the *Joint contingency plan for the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*

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 Joint Contingency Plan (jcq.org.uk)

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

Examinations Contingency Plan

Linked to

- Examinations and Internal Appeals
- Controlled Assessment
- Non-Examination Assessment Policy
- Fire Procedures
- Incident Management and Business Continuity

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