

Appendix 1 - Exam contingency plan 2020/21

Contents

Key staff involved in contingency planning	1
Purpose of the plan.....	2
Possible causes of disruption to the exam process	2
1. Exam officer extended absence at key points in the exam process (cycle).....	2
2. SENCo extended absence at key points in the exam cycle	3
3. Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle	4
4. Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence	5
5. Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice	5
6. Failure of IT systems.....	5
7. Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lock down)	6
8. Disruption of teaching time – centre closed for an extended period.....	6
9. Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open	6
10. Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period	6
11. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers	7
12. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts.....	7
13. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked	7
14. Centre unable to distribute results as normal or facilitate post results services	7
15. Head of Centre or Member of SLT with Oversight of Examination Administration Absence.....	7
Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning	8
Ofqual.....	8
JCQ	9
GOV.UK	10
Covid-19 Contingency Plan	10

Key staff involved in contingency planning

Role	Name(s)
Head of Centre	Mr D Malachi
Exams Officer Line Manager (Senior Leader)	Mr D Malachi
Exams Officer	Ms S Walia
SENDCo	Mr D Malachi
SLT Member(s)	

Purpose of the plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exams process at Odyssey House 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 **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 in the event of widespread disruption to the Examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland**.

This plan also confirms Odyssey House School is compliant with the JCQ regulation (section 5.3, *General Regulations for Approved Centres 2019-20* 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.*

Possible causes of 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

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

Planning

- Where possible collect 2-year data information each year.
- Annual exams plan to be produced as soon as the assessment calendar is available, to incorporate all internal assessment key tasks, dates & deadlines alongside external exam information.
- Ensure recruitment is actioned at the start of each academic year in line with numbers of students and Sixth Form recruitment.

Entries

- Another member of centre staff to have access to the exam audit to enable estimates to be submitted by AB deadlines.
- A member of centre staff will be trained on creating and submitting AB entries/registrations.
- In line with the annual exams plan, the member of centre staff will ensure entry/registration deadlines are met.

Pre-exams

- EOs at Middleton Technology School & St. Cuthbert's RC High School to incorporate invigilators in their centre's training/update meetings.
- All exam rooms are booked at the beginning of the academic year according to the annual exams plan, invigilators are to be made aware of the plan at the same time.
- Student handbooks to be prepared once JCQ documents become available, distributed internally and posted on the centre's website. The centre's Key Dates Calendar will be posted on the website at the same time.
- Define the appropriate level of security, in line with each AB's requirements, for each department where necessary, ensure each department is made aware.
- Have a central system for the submission of centre marks, a log to be kept of candidates' work being despatched to ABs/external moderators.

Exam time

- Checklist available to ensure all criteria for external exams is met, teaching staff to ensure they familiarise themselves with each relevant ABs conditions for assessments.
- Required reports/requests to be submitted within 5 working days of the occurrence during exam/assessment periods.
- Candidates' scripts to be despatched in the afternoon following a morning exam, and afternoon exams to be ready for despatch the following morning.

Results and post-results

- Liaise with local schools to access their facilities to download/distribute results, if there is a change of location for distribution post on the centre's website.
- A member of centre staff will be trained on all aspects of post-results services to be able to facilitate.

2. SENDCo 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

Planning

- Establish contact with an appropriately qualified assessor who can facilitate the centre's access arrangements testing if required.
- All centre staff to be aware of the centre's Equality, Diversity & Community Cohesion Policy.
- Deputy HOD able to access evidence of need and evidence to support normal way of working.

Pre-exams

- EO able to request approval for access arrangements.
- EO to liaise with Senco to ensure that the MIS system is updated with all access arrangements once testing is complete.
- Modified paper requests as part of the annual exams plan to ensure AB deadlines are met.
- Additional Needs staff will be trained/have a review at the start of each academic year to update access arrangements procedures. The EO will provide a list of all candidates requiring support in a timely fashion before each exam series.

Exam time

- The EO will provide a list of all candidates requiring support in a timely fashion before each exam series.

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 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

- Early/estimated entry information will be collected before the end of the academic year, to ensure all information has been collated before the start of each academic year.
- The EO will request final entry information in a timely fashion, this will only be submitted once the HOD has confirmed in writing it is correct. Entry information for each exam series will be part of the annual data collection exercise.
- Non-examination assessment key dates to be included in each departments' assessment plan for the academic year.
- All candidates are informed of their centre –assessed marks before they are submitted to the ABs as per the centre's Appeals Against Internal Assessments of Work Procedure.
- The EO will ensure the deadlines for internal assessment marks and candidates' work submission are included on the annual exams plan.

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

- Ensure recruitment is actioned at the start of each academic year in line with numbers of students and Sixth Form recruitment, and training/update meetings are held at the beginning of each academic year.
- Exam timetables generated in a timely fashion to ensure all invigilator slots are covered.
- Establish a dedicated contact at a reputable agency to organise cover immediately the EO receives notification of invigilator absence.

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

- The main exam rooms will be booked at the start of each academic year, and separate rooms will be allocated once each session's timetable has been generated.
- As above.
- Relocate in school if possible, check whether there is accommodation available at local schools, special consideration requests to ABs.

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Ensure entries are final and ready to be sent 5 working days before the ABs deadline.
- Seating plans, attendance register checking, and any other preparation requiring the use of the MIS system to be actioned at least 5 working days before each exam.
- Liaise with local schools to access their facilities to download results.

7. Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lock down)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Whole centre evacuation (or lock down) 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

- Candidates will be made aware of the centre's emergency evacuation procedure outside each exam venue, and of the exam lockdown policy.

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 actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Liaise with local school/external venues to ensure students continue to be prepared for exams. Request extensions if appropriate.

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Liaise with local schools/external venues to check whether accommodation is available.

10. Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period

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

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Liaise with local schools/external venues to check whether accommodation is available.

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- EO to download papers from AB secure websites, and arrange for adequate amounts of papers to be securely printed in a timely fashion for each exam. EO to create checklist to ensure all papers have been received/downloaded in preparation for each exam day.

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- EO to report any missed collections as soon as possible, as a last resort exam papers will be taken to the Post 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

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- EO to submit claim for missing internal assessment, if applicable re-arrange the assessment.

14. 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

- Liaise with local schools to access their facilities to download/distribute results, if there is a change of location for distribution post on the centre's website.

15. Head of Centre or Member of SLT with Oversight of Examination Administration Absence

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Exams Officer's line manager is absent during key points in the exam cycle

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Another member of SLT to deputise and support where required
[See Appendix 1A: Escalation Process](#)

Ofqual

What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted

1. Contingency planning

You should prepare for possible disruption to exams and other assessments as part of your emergency planning and make sure your staff are aware of these plans.

When drafting contingency plans, you should consider the following guidance...

2. Disruption to assessments or exams

In the absence of any instruction from the relevant awarding organisation, you should make sure that any exam or timetabled assessment takes place if it is possible to hold it. This may mean relocating to alternative premises.

You should discuss alternative arrangements with your awarding organisation 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

3. Steps you should take

3.1 Exam planning

Review contingency plans well in advance of each exam or assessment series. Consider how, if the contingency plan is invoked, you will comply with the awarding organisation's requirements.

3.2 In the event of disruption

1. Contact the relevant awarding organisation and follow its instructions.
2. Take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether your centre is able to open.
3. Identify whether the exam or timetabled assessment can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation, ensuring the secure transportation of questions papers or assessment materials to the alternative venue.
4. Where accommodation is limited, prioritise 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 please refer to JCQ's '[Centre emergency evacuation procedure](#)'.
6. Communicate with parents, carers and students any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue.
7. Communicate with any external assessors or relevant third parties regarding any changes to the exam or assessment timetable.

3.3 After the exam

1. Consider whether any students' ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration.
2. Advise students, where appropriate, of the opportunities to take their exam or assessment at a later date.
3. Ensure that scripts are stored under secure conditions.
4. Return scripts to awarding organisations in line with their instructions. Never make alternative arrangements for the transportation of completed exam scripts, unless told to do so by the awarding organisation.

4. Steps the awarding organisation should take

4.1 Exam planning

Establish and maintain, and at all times comply with, an up-to-date, written contingency plan.

Ensure that the arrangements in place with centres and other third parties enable them to deliver and award qualifications in accordance with their conditions of recognition.

4.2 In the event of disruption

1. Take all reasonable steps to mitigate any adverse effect, in relation to their qualifications, arising from any disruption.
2. Provide effective guidance to any of their centres delivering qualifications.
3. Ensure that where an assessment must be completed under specified conditions, students complete the assessment under those conditions (other than where any reasonable adjustments or special considerations require alternative conditions).
4. Promptly notify the relevant regulators about any event which could have an adverse effect on students, standards or public confidence.
5. Coordinate its communications with the relevant regulators where the disruption has an impact on multiple centres or a wide range of learners.

4.3 After the exam

Consider any requests for special consideration for affected students. For example, those who may have lost their internally assessed work or whose performance in assessments or exams could have been affected by the disruption.

5. If any students miss an exam or are disadvantaged by the disruption

If some of the students have been adversely affected by the disruption, you should ask the awarding organisation about applying for special consideration.

Decisions about special consideration, when it is or is not appropriate, is for each awarding organisation to make. Their decisions might be different for different qualifications and for different subjects.

See also:

- [JCQ's guidance on special considerations](#)
- [FAB's guidance on special considerations](#)

6. Wider communications

The regulators, [Ofqual](#) in England, [Qualifications Wales](#) in Wales and [CCEA](#) in Northern Ireland, will share timely and accurate information, as required, with awarding organisations, government departments and other stakeholders.

The [Department for Education](#) in England, the [Department of Education](#) in Northern Ireland and the [Welsh Government](#) will inform the relevant government ministers as soon as it becomes apparent that there will be significant local or national disruption; and ensure that they are kept updated until the matter is resolved.

Awarding organisations will alert the [Universities and Colleges Admissions Service](#) (UCAS) and the [Central Applications Office](#) (CAO) about any impact of the disruption on their deadlines and liaise regarding student progression to further and higher education.

Awarding organisations will alert relevant professional bodies or employer groups if the impact of disruption particularly affects them.

7. Widespread national disruption

In the event of widespread sustained national disruption, the government departments will communicate with regulators, awarding organisations and centres prior to a public announcement. Regulators will provide advice to government departments on implications for exam timetables.

[Ofqual guidance extract taken directly from the *Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland - What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted*, (updated 23 January 2018) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland/what-schools-and-colleges-should-do-if-exams-or-other-assessments-are-seriously-disrupted>]

JCQ

15.1 The qualification regulators, JCQ and government departments responsible for education have prepared and agreed information for schools and colleges in the event of examinations being seriously disrupted. This jointly agreed information will ensure consistency of response in the event of major disruption to the examinations system affecting significant numbers of candidates.

Further information may be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland/what-schools-and-colleges-should-do-if-exams-or-other-assessments-are-seriously-disrupted>

15.2 In addition, awarding bodies have their own well-established contingency plans in place to respond to disruptions. It is important that exams officers who are facing disruption liaise directly with the relevant awarding body/bodies.

15.3 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.

15.4 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.

15.5 The awarding bodies have designated Wednesday 24 June 2020 as a 'contingency day' for examinations. This is consistent with the qualification regulators' document Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/examsystem-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland>

The designation of a 'contingency day' within the common examination timetable is in the event of national or local disruption to examinations. It is part of the awarding bodies' standard contingency planning for examinations.

In the highly unlikely event that there is national disruption to a day of examinations in summer 2020, the awarding bodies will liaise with the qualification regulators and the DfE to agree the most appropriate option for managing the impact. As a last resort the affected examinations will be rescheduled. Although every effort would be taken to keep the impact to a minimum, it is possible that there could be more than one timetable date affected following the disruption, up to and including the contingency day on 24 June 2020. Centres will be alerted if it was agreed to reschedule the examinations and the affected candidates will be expected to make themselves available in such circumstances. The decision regarding the re-scheduling of examinations will always rest with the awarding body. The centre must conduct the examination on the scheduled date unless instructed to do otherwise by the awarding body.

Where candidates choose not to be available for the rescheduled examination(s) for reasons other than those traditionally covered by special consideration, they will not be eligible for enhanced grading arrangements. Centres must therefore ensure candidates and parents are aware of this contingency arrangement so that they may take it into account when making their plans for the summer. However, the awarding bodies will not insist upon candidates being available throughout the entire timetable period as a matter of course.

[JCQ guidance taken directly from JCQ *Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2019-2020*

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>, section 15, **Contingency planning**]

JCQ Joint Contingency Plan <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/other-documents>

General Regulations for Approved Centres <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>

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

Guidance notes concerning *transferred candidates* <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms>

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

A guide to the special consideration process <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance>

GOV.UK

Emergency planning and response: Severe weather; Exam disruption

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/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>

Dispatch of exam scripts guide: Ensuring the service runs smoothly; Contingency planning
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-yellow-label-service>

Statutory guidance on school closures <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools>

Wales

School closures – examinations <https://gov.wales/school-closures-examinations>

Northern Ireland

Exceptional closure days <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/exceptional-closure-days>

Checklist for Principals when considering Opening or Closure of School <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/checklist-exceptional-closure-schools>

School closures <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/school-closures>

Covid-19 Contingency Plan

1. Organisation of exam seating

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Exam regulation of 1.25 metres does not allow for social distancing rules.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

Desks to be set at 3 metres apart to allow for invigilators to social distance when moving down aisles.

2. Candidates arriving for exams

Criteria for implementation of the plan

External candidates mixing with internal candidates

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

External candidates to be invigilated separately to internal candidates

3. Interaction with candidates

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Close proximity between invigilators and candidates

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

Invigilators to ensure they stand alongside candidates and not face to face

4. Illness of candidate or invigilator

Criteria for implementation of the plan

The spread of Covid19

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

The candidate or invigilator must inform the EO immediately they become unwell with Covid symptoms and isolate for 14 days. They must arrange to have a test and only return for exams or to invigilate if the test is negative or after the 14 day isolation period.

5. Cleaning of exam rooms

Criteria for implementation of the plan

The contamination of surfaces and furniture in and around the exam room.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

Rooms will be cleaned after each exam session before the room is in use again.

6. Candidates who miss exams in the exam series

Criteria for implementation of the plan

The candidate has to miss one or more exam due to becoming ill or having to self-isolate.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

The centre will claim special consideration provided the candidate has completed a minimum of 25% of the assessments in the subject. Any candidate not meeting this criteria will have the option to enter exams in summer 2021.