



Exam Contingency Plan

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

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1.4	14/11/2022	M A Price	Review & Update to include reference to BTEC
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Purpose of the plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exams process at the centre. 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 at Linwood School.

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', the JCQ Joint Contingency Plan for the Examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the JCQ document Preparing for disruption to examinations (Effective from 1 September 2023).

This plan details how Linwood School complies with the JCQ's General Regulations for Approved Centres (section 5.3, Centre management) by having 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 SENCo 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.

Key staff at Linwood School

Exams Office

Examinations and Assessment Manager – tbc

Examinations Officer – Ms Sarah J Hawkins Also BTEC Quality Nominee

Both staff members are familiar with current exams administration and procedures. Therefore, each can cover the roles and duties of the other in case of absence.

Head of Campuses – Ms Teresa Brennan

Familiar with exams processes and procedures and able to deputise on exam days and assist with planning tasks as required.

BTEC Lead Internal Verifier – Karen Taylor

Can carry out Quality Nominee Role if QN is absent.

If Karen is absent Long Term, Lee Rockingham is also able to carry out QN/Lead IV role.

National Centre Number Register and other information requirements

The head of centre will also 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. (GR 5.3)

Causes of potential disruption to the exam process

Key tasks required in the management and administration of the exam cycle not undertaken including:

	Criteria for implementation of the plan	Centre Actions
1. Exams officer extended absence at key points in the exam process (cycle)		
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to exams procedures manual / action planner Nominated deputy to share tasks
Entries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 Internal exams database not updated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to exams procedures manual / action planner Nominated deputy to share tasks Refer to Accreditation checklist and folder
Pre-Exams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to exams procedures manual / action planner Nominated deputy to share tasks
Exam Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exams Administrator/Phase Leader to deputise Refer to exams procedures manual / action planner Refer to Exam Day Checklist

	Criteria for implementation of the plan	Centre Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • candidates' scripts not dispatched as required for marking to awarding bodies • scripts, equipment and other confidential materials not transported to exam venue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish timetables and checklists • Seek advice from awarding body
Results And Post-Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • access to examination results affecting the distribution of results to candidates • the facilitation of the post-results services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to exams procedures manual / action planner • Nominated deputy to share tasks • Seek advice from awarding body
2. Phase Leaders extended absence at key points in the exam cycle		
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • approval for entries not obtained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to exams procedures manual / action planner • Escalate to Lee Rockingham – Assistant Headteacher senior leadership team responsible for Exam & Assessment across campuses
Pre-Exams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EO to deputise
Exam time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EO to deputise
3. Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle		
	<p><i>Key tasks not undertaken including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase Leaders provide information as part of covering teaching staff duties, supported by Exams Office • Escalate to Lee Rockingham – Assistant Headteacher senior leadership team responsible for Exam & Assessment across campuses

	Criteria for implementation of the plan	Centre Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-examination assessment tasks not set/issued/taken by candidates as scheduled • Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet awarding body submission deadlines 	
4. Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to train sufficient invigilators to conduct exams • Invigilator shortage on peak exam days • Invigilator absence on the day of an exam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow annual training plan • Plan for cover in case of unexpected absence
5. Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • Exam room unavailable e.g. due to flooding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Source alternative venues at other campuses • Arrange transport for candidates • Communicate with candidates (parent/carers where appropriate) any changes • Apply alternative site • Seek advice from awarding body • Ensure safe transportation of question papers or assessment materials • Consider whether any special consideration needs to be applied for if candidate level of attainment has been materially affected
6. Cyber-attack		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where a cyber-attack may compromise any aspect of delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT to determine which IT systems and data are vital for the operating of the school. • Backup of data are made and these are kept separate from the physical network • IT keeping upto date with latest threat and mitigation information. • Inform other organisations if we have access to there systems

	Criteria for implementation of the plan	Centre Actions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to prevent any unauthorised access. Follow IT policy and procedures in relation to cyber-attack/internet safety The centre to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to make them aware of the issue. take advice offered by the awarding body on the options for candidates who have not been able to take scheduled examinations
7. Failure of IT systems		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> System failure at final entry deadline System failure during exams preparation System failure at results release time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternative systems generally available Seek advice from awarding body
8. Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lock down)		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to Emergency Evacuation Policy (Exams) Seek guidance from awarding body(ies) Apply for special consideration for candidates if their level of attainment has been materially affected
9. Disruption of teaching time – centre closed for an extended period		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognise it remains the responsibility of the centre to prepare students, as usual, for examinations The centre to communicate with parents, carers and students about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plans to address this. [Joint

	Criteria for implementation of the plan	Centre Actions
		<p>Contingency Plan (JCP scenario 1]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • facilitate alternative methods of learning i.e. remote learning • take advice offered by the awarding body regarding alternative arrangements for conducting examinations that may be available • take advice offered by the awarding body on the options for candidates who have not been able to take scheduled examinations
<p>10. Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open</p>		
	<p>Candidates are unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The centre to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to make them aware of the issue. • take advice offered by the awarding body on the options for candidates who have not been able to take scheduled examinations • discuss alternative arrangements with the awarding body if a candidate misses an exam or loses their assessment due to an emergency, or other event, outside of the candidate's control • identify whether the exam or timetabled assessment can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding body, ensuring the secure transportation of questions papers or

	Criteria for implementation of the plan	Centre Actions
		<p>assessment materials to the alternative venue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The centre to communicate with parents, carers and candidates regarding solutions to the issue. • consider whether any candidates' ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration • advise candidates, where appropriate, of the opportunities to take their exam or assessment at a later date
11. Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period		
	<p>Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations (including centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether the centre is able to open • contact the relevant awarding body as soon as possible and follow its instructions (This could include implementing alternative arrangements for the conducting of examinations and notifying the JCQ Centre Inspection Service of an alternative site arrangement by submitting the JCQ Alternative Site form online, using the Centre Admin Portal (CAP).) • follow guidance provided by the awarding body on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances

	Criteria for implementation of the plan	Centre Actions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where accommodation is limited, prioritise candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned • Alternative sites considered & applied for. Special consideration applied for as appropriate. [JCP scenario 4] • communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue • consider whether any candidates' ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration
12. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers		
	Disruption to the distribution of examination papers to the centre in advance of examinations	The centre to communicate with awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of papers. This may be by electronic copies in which case secure printing facilities available at Linwood Campus [JCP scenario 2]
13. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts		
	Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examinations are part of the national 'yellow label' service or where awarding organisations arrange collections, seek advice from the relevant awarding organisations and will not make its own arrangements for transportation unless told

	Criteria for implementation of the plan	Centre Actions
		<p>to do so by the awarding organisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> for any examinations where the centre makes its own arrangements for transportation, investigate alternative dispatch options that comply with the requirements detailed in the JCQ Instructions for conducting examinations ensure the secure storage of completed examination scripts until collection
14. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked		
	<p>Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked</p> <p>Completed examination scripts/assessment evidence does not reach awarding organisations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> liaise with the awarding body to determine if candidate marks for affected assessments may be able to be generated based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement as defined by the awarding body where marks cannot be generated by awarding body, inform candidates they may need to retake the affected assessment in a subsequent assessment series
15. Centre unable to distribute results as normal		
	<p>Centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post-results services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centre to contact awarding organisations about alternative options. [JCP scenario 11] make arrangements to access its results at an alternative venue/share facilities with another centre if this is possible, in agreement with the relevant awarding body make arrangements to coordinate access to



	Criteria for implementation of the plan	Centre Actions
		post-results services from an alternative venue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> inform candidates of any alternative arrangements in place for the distribution of results and the facilitation of post-results services

Causes 8-14 – all scenarios, criteria and specific communications have been taken directly from the *Joint contingency plan in the event of widespread disruption to the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*.

Further guidance to inform and implement contingency planning

GOV.UK

Emergency planning and response Severe weather Exam disruption

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/emergencies-and-severe-weather-schools-and-early-years-settings>

Cyber crime and cyber security: a guide for education providers

www.gov.uk/government/publications/indicators-of-potential-fraud-learning-institutions/guide-on-cyber-crime-and-cyber-security-for-education-providers

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: yellow label service

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>

Ofqual

Joint contingency plan in the event of widespread disruption to the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland Including Covid Specific Guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland/joint-contingency-plan-in-the-event-of-widespread-disruption-to-the-examination-system-in-england-wales-and-northern-ireland>



JCQ

General regulations for approved centres <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>

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>

A guide to the special consideration process

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

Contingency planning

The qualification regulators, awarding bodies 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.

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.

All centres must have 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 SENCo 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 owing to an unforeseen emergency.

All relevant centre staff must be familiar with the examination contingency plan. Consideration should be given as to how these arrangements will be communicated to candidates, parents and staff should disruption to examinations occur.

The awarding bodies will designate 'contingency sessions' for examinations, summer 2024. This is consistent with the qualification regulators' document Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-englandwales-and-northern-ireland>

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

In the event of national disruption to a day of examinations in summer 2024, the awarding bodies will liaise with the qualification regulators and government departments 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 last contingency day. Centres will be alerted if it is agreed to reschedule the examinations and the affected candidates will be expected to make themselves available in such circumstances. The decision regarding the rescheduling 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 covered by special consideration, they will not be eligible for enhanced grading arrangements. Centres must



therefore ensure candidates and parents are aware of the contingency arrangements so that they take them into account when making their plans for the summer.

[Taken directly from JCQ *Instructions for conducting examinations* https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/ICE23-24-Sept23revision_FINAL.pdf , page 35]