

Exam Contingency Plan Policy

Responsibility for Review: Exams Officer

Date of Last Review: September 2021



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 Dixons Allerton Academy. 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 complies with JCQ general regulations (section 5) in that:

The centre agrees to “have 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;”

Signed by :

Date:.....

(Principal)

Signed by :

Date:.....

(Chair of Governors)

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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:

- If it is a planned absence arrange cover with Line Manager.
- If it is an unplanned absence for a short period of time Line Manager to cover when needed.
- If it is an unplanned absence for a long Period of time Line Manager to use other Exams Managers within the Dixons Group.
- Termly plan of deadlines left in Exams office for Line Manager or Cover to follow to ensure deadlines are met.

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:

- Contact the Dixons Group.
- Contact external company (Education Bradford) to test/assess candidates if access arrangements are required.
- Inclusion Department to arrange for member of staff to collect evidence of need to support normal way of working.
- Exams Manager to sit with member of inclusion department to apply for access arrangement approval.
- Exams Manager to contact Inclusion Department at the beginning of the academic year to highlight any candidates that may require modified papers.
- Inclusion Department to ensure that all staff providing access arrangements have been fully trained and attend a refresher session each academic year.
- Exams Manager to contact Inclusion Department for each exam series with a list of candidates, their access arrangement and an exam room. Inclusion Department then email the list back to the Exams Manager with a list of staff that will support the candidates.

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:

- DOL to complete or hand in work in absence of a staff member.
- Any missing information from departments is chased up by the Exams Manager to ensure all deadlines are met.

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:

- Ensure at the beginning of each academic year new invigilators are recruited if needed.
- In house pool of support staff trained to invigilate in case of invigilator absence or shortage on exam days.

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:

- Exams Manager to liaise with SLT and the site team regarding closing areas of the building to run exams in.
- Staff re-roomed so that exams can be taken.
- Liaise with Dixons Group in Extreme circumstances to seek alternative accommodation.

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:

- Exams Manager to contact awarding organisations to seek guidance if there is a MIS system failure.
- Contact MIS system provider to seek guidance and try and resolve problem.
- Manually enter.
- If the MIS system fails at results release download and enter via excel until issue is resolved by MIS service provider.

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

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:

- Contact the Dixons Group to seek alternative Venue. If this fails contact local community village halls.
- Prioritise candidates who will be facing examinations.
- Advise candidates, where appropriate, to sit examinations in the next available series.

8. 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

The centre to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to make them aware of the issue. The centre to communicate with parents, carers and candidates regarding solutions to the issue. [JCP scenario 2]

Centre actions:

- Candidate / Parent to contact the school to inform the Exams manager about possible absence. Exams Manager to liaise with candidate and parent to identify whether examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with the relevant awarding organisations. Please refer to Examinations Policy
- Offer candidate an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series
- Apply to the awarding organisation for special consideration for candidates that have met minimal requirements. (Obtain supporting evidence from candidate within 5 working days of the exam)

9. 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

A centre which is unable to open as normal for examinations must inform each awarding organisation with which examinations are due to be taken as soon as is possible. [JCP scenario 5]

Centre actions:

- If possible only open for examinations and examination candidates.
- Contact Dixons Group to seek alternative venue in agreement with the awarding organisations.
- Apply for special consideration for candidates where they have met minimal requirements.
- If possible offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series.

10. 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

The centre to communicate with awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of papers. [JCP scenario 3]

Centre actions:

- Contact awarding organisation to seek guidance or inform them of incorrect dispatch/ number of examination papers.
- Ask awarding organisation to provide centre with electronic access to the examination papers via a secure external network. The Exams Manager would ensure that copies are received, made and stored under exam conditions.

11. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts

The centre to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to resolve the issue. [JCP scenario 4]

Centre actions:

- Contact awarding organisation and courier to seek guidance for collection of completed scripts.
- Exams Manager to ensure that completed scripts are kept secure until collection

12. 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

It is the responsibility of the head of centre to communicate this immediately to the relevant awarding organisation(s) and subsequently to students and their parents or carers. [JCP scenario 6]

Centre actions:

- Contact awarding organisations to seek guidance.
- DOL to inform parents and candidate.
- Awarding organisation to generate candidate mark for affected assessment based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement, as defined by the awarding organisation.
- Candidate to retake the assessment that has been affected at a subsequent window if possible.

13. 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

Centres to contact awarding organisations about alternative options. [JCP scenario 11]

Centre actions:

- Arrange collection of results from alternative venue.
- Contact Dixons Group to share facilities or seek alternative venue to download result files.
- Contact awarding organisation regarding alternative options.

14. COVID-19

Addendum due to Covid-19

In addition to the measures above which cover most eventualities in the event of candidate, invigilator, key personnel or centre disruption due to events linked to Covid-19 the centre will also adhere to all guidance in "Public Health Guidance to support Autumn Exams series: September 2020" and any subsequent updates.

Clauses 7-13 – 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*