Contingency Planning for Examinations

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 Hollygirt School. 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 JCQ document Instructions for Conducting Exams 2022-2023 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."
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> *Joint Council for Qualifications Instructions for Conducting Exams 2022-2023 Revision 1*

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
    - CAGs not entered

- Results and post-results
    - access to examination results affecting the distribution of results to candidates
    - the facilitation of the post-results services

Centre actions:

- Head to liaise with Bursar over entries.
- Head and Senior Leadership Team to liaise over pre-exam administration.
- Head to liaise with Senior Leadership Team regarding exam time issues and results.

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 identified for testing for access arrangements
    - evidence of need and evidence to support normal way of working not collated
    - testing for need of access arrangements not carried out

- 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 arrangements for candidate support not arranged for exam rooms

Centre actions:

- Access Arrangements are tested prior to undertaking GCSE courses wherever possible.
- Testing to support Access Arrangements is not carried out by the SENCo
- Exams Officer is responsible for jointly applying for Access Arrangements and will carry out this duty in SENCo absence.
- Ordering modified papers as required is done by the Access Arrangements person, or Examinations Officer in their absence.
- SLT and SENCo Team to liaise with Exams Officer in 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. CAGs not entered for internal deadlines (where applicable)

Centre actions:

- Exams Officer to liaise with remaining teaching staff and SLT.

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:

- Recruitment and training is done well in advance.
- Exams Officer and Deputy Head to cover absences or shortages
- Teaching staff used where they would otherwise have been teaching Candidates on their usual timetable.
- Additional Invigilators are considered well in advance and recruited accordingly.

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:

- In an emergency Main School Classrooms and Hall could be utilised for examination purposes.
- Planning of locations brought to SLT well in advance.

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 Officer to liaise with Examination Boards as to appropriate action.

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:
• Head, Trustees and SLT to take the necessary action.

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:
• Exams Officer to liaise with Head of Centre and inform awarding bodies. Head, SLT and Exams Officer to explore alternative venues.

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:
• Consideration would be given on an individual basis as to why they were unable to attend the examination centre. Special consideration may be applied for.

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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 remain securely stored in reception locked storage until next arranged collection or they are transported to the Post Office for sending if necessary.

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:

- Exams Officer to contact awarding bodies for advice.

12. 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:

- Exams Office to contact awarding bodies for advice.

13. Cyber Security Attack on the Centre
Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Centre is the victim of a cyber security attack, resulting in loss of data.

Centre actions:

- The Centre's Information and Computer Technology Policy details how ICT is used.
- External Consultants update virus protection for data security.
- Hard copies of students' evidence are retained.

14. Industrial Action

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Industrial action resulting in strikes prevents adequate preparation, organisation and/ or opening of schools resulting in disruption to examinations.

Centre actions:

- The actions listed in this document will be followed with reference to more specific situations.
- Head and SLT to give priority to school opening to ensure examinations face minimal disruption

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Reviewed - January 2023
Next Review Due - January 2024