

Examination contingency plan



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1. Aims

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exam process. 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 Nottingham Free 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'. This plan details how Nottingham Free 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 staff absence. 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.

2. Legislation and guidance

This plan complies with the [Joint Council for Qualifications \(JCQ\) General Regulations for Approved Centres](#), which requires all exam centres to have a written examination contingency plan/examinations policy.

This plan also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

It's also based on:

- Ofqual's [guidance on contingency planning](#)
- JCQ's [joint contingency plan](#)

3. Responsibilities

3.1 Head of centre

The head of centre is Dr. Jo Simpson. They will ensure that a written examination contingency plan/examinations policy is in place and covers all aspects of examination administration.

3.2 Staff and invigilators

Staff and invigilators involved in the centre's exam process are responsible for reading, understanding and implementing the contingency plan.

4. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the Director of School Improvement (Outcomes) at the beginning of each academic year. At every review, the Policy will be approved by the board of trustees.

5. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our:

- Assessment policy

6. Contingency plan

The table below sets out examples of scenarios where a contingency plan may be needed to minimise risk to examination administration. These are based on the [JCQ's joint contingency plan](#), and are consistent with [Ofqual's current contingency planning guidance](#).

SCENARIO	WHEN TO IMPLEMENT	ACTIONS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Disruption of teaching time in the weeks before an exam – centre is closed for an extended period	When the centre is closed and candidates are unable to attend for an extended period during normal teaching or supported study time, interrupting the provision of normal teaching and learning, e.g. if the centre is forced to close due to increasing rates of coronavirus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Seek advice from relevant awarding organisations and JCQ ➤ Have a contingency plan to facilitate alternative methods of learning, alternative venues or both ➤ Offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series ➤ Communicate any changes to your plans with parents, carers and pupils 	Head of Centre and Examinations Officer
Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open	In the event that candidates are unable to attend examination centres to take examinations as normal, e.g. sickness bug, or if they are self-isolating due to coronavirus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to make them aware of the issue ➤ Liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with relevant awarding organisations ➤ Communicate any changes to your plans with parents and pupils ➤ Offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series ➤ Apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements 	Head of Centre and Examinations Officer

SCENARIO	WHEN TO IMPLEMENT	ACTIONS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Centre is unable to open as normal during the examination period	In the event that the centre is unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations, e.g. a fire at the centre, or increasing rates of coronavirus forces it to close	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Inform relevant awarding organisations as soon as possible ➤ Refer to emergency plans and/or health and safety policy, where appropriate ➤ Head of centre will decide whether the centre is safe to open, based on advice or instructions from relevant local or national agencies ➤ Use alternative venues in agreement with relevant awarding organisations ➤ Communicate any changes to your plans with parents, carers and pupils ➤ Apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements ➤ Offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series, if possible 	Head of Centre and Examinations Officer
Disruption in the distribution of examination papers	In the event that there is disruption to the distribution of examination papers to centres in advance of examinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Find out from the awarding organisation if they're able to organise an alternative courier and time to deliver hard copies ➤ If the above isn't possible, you will receive electronic access to papers via a secure external network ➤ You will need to have plans in place to ensure you can receive, make and store papers under secure conditions ➤ As a last resort, your awarding organisation may consider rescheduling the examination 	Examinations Officer

SCENARIO	WHEN TO IMPLEMENT	ACTIONS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts	In the event that there is a delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If your examinations are part of the national 'yellow label service' or where your awarding organisation arranges collections, seek advice from awarding organisations and their normal collection agency regarding collection ➤ Only make alternative arrangements after approval from the awarding organisation and make sure papers are securely stored until collection ➤ Ensure secure storage of completed examination papers until collection ➤ If your centre makes its own transportation arrangements, investigate alternative arrangements that comply with the JCQ's instructions for conducting examinations 	Head of Centre and Examinations Officer
Assessment evidence is not available to be marked	In the event of large-scale damage to, or destruction of, completed examination scripts or assessment evidence before it can be marked, e.g. a fire at the centre destroys completed examination scripts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Communicate this immediately to the relevant awarding organisation(s), candidates and their parents or carers ➤ Where possible, the awarding organisation will generate candidate marks based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement ➤ Where marks cannot be generated by awarding organisations, candidates may need to retake affected assessment in a subsequent assessment series 	Head of Centre and Examinations Officer

SCENARIO	WHEN TO IMPLEMENT	ACTIONS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Centre is unable to distribute results as normal or facilitate post results services	In the event that the centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post results services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Contact awarding organisations about alternative options ➤ Make arrangements to access results at an alternative site ➤ Share facilities with other schools/colleges if possible ➤ Co-ordinate access to post results services from an alternative site ➤ Contact the relevant awarding organisation if electronic post results requests are not possible 	Head of Centre and Examinations Officer
Exam officer is absent at key moments in the exam process (Cycle)	In the event that the centre is unable to administer the organization of examinations including the leadership of invigilators.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identify and publish a 'deputy exams officer to cover a role or task' ➤ Assign overall responsibility for the organization of examinations to a member of the Senior Leaders Team (Assistant Head level and above) ➤ Contact Trust schools to source support, advice and guidance ➤ Liaise with Director of Data to source alternative venues/resource to ensure the smooth running of exams. 	Head of Centre

SCENARIO	WHEN TO IMPLEMENT	ACTIONS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
SENDCO is absent at key moments in the exam process (Cycle)	In the event that the centre is unable to administer the organization of examinations for students with additional needs and including the leadership of invigilators that ensure that students have equity of access to their entitlement for additional resource.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Examinations officer, Senior Teaching Assistants or equivalent role will work collaboratively on ensuring access arrangements and additional resource are managed effectively. ➤ Source external support to ensure that access arrangements are conducted fairly and accurately and communicated with all stakeholders. 	Head of Centre
Lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence	In the event that the centre is unable to provide the requisite number of invigilators that meet the specified ratio required by JCQ (Currently 1:40) and when staffing suggest that not all access arrangements can be met for those students entitled to them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review the invigilator list at the start of each academic year and recommend further recruitment and training where appropriate in a timely manner. ➤ Create a 'cover' list of available staff on the day of examinations that can stand in for absent invigilators. ➤ Seek external support from the Trust and other agencies to ensure that full coverage is achieved during the exam season. 	Exams officer

SCENARIO	WHEN TO IMPLEMENT	ACTIONS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Lack of appropriate exam rooms and main venue unavailable at short notice.	In the event that the centre is unable to provide appropriate rooming for all candidates during examinations periods due to an unexpected incident.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Exams officer will, where possible, make use of other available rooms within the centre, prioritising candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned. ➤ identify whether the exam or timetabled assessment can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding body. ➤ Where main exam venue(s) unavailable due to an unexpected incident at exam time) where possible, move to alternative venue, prioritising candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned <p>Alternative Venue information:</p> <p>The Head of Centre/SLT will work with the Examinations Officer to source an alternative venue. Nottingham University Academy of Science and Technology (NUAST) has been identified for use for Nottingham Free School exams and this would be the initial first option, followed by Miri Piri House, 329 Haydn Road, Nottingham NG5 1DG.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Exams Officer will communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or venue ➤ The Exams Officer will communicate with candidates (and where appropriate parents/carers) and changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue. ➤ The Head of Centre will send out notification of any changes via text and email to parents. This information will also be posted on social media and the school website 	Head of Centre and Examinations officer

SCENARIO	WHEN TO IMPLEMENT	ACTIONS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Head of Centre will ensure the safe and secure distribution of examination materials to the designated alternative venue. 	
<p>Failure of IT systems.</p>	<p>In the event that the centre is unable to use IT facilities that are critical to the smooth running of examinations that use such resource or in the event that printing of examination resources are unavailable for example.</p> <p>In the event that examination entry is unavailable and schools are unable to process entries by the specified deadline.</p> <p>In the event that examination results download is unavailable due to systems failure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Examinations Officer, in consultation with the SLT, will make entries from another venue direct to the Awarding Bodies. ➤ The Examinations Officer will download results by accessing them directly from the Awarding Body. ➤ At all times during the system failure the Exams Officer will liaise with the Awarding body to minimise disruption and costs incurred ➤ The Head of Centre will liaise with the Trust's IT Service provider to remedy the situation as soon as possible. 	<p>Head of Centre and Exams Officer.</p>

SCENARIO	WHEN TO IMPLEMENT	ACTIONS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Cyber Attack	Where it is identified that a cyber attack may compromise any aspect of the delivery of examinations or results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Examinations Officer will work with the trust central IT team and make contact with the relevant Awarding Body to seek further guidance. ➤ Senior Leaders will monitor the situation and take any action required as directed by the Awarding Bodies ➤ Where candidates produce work electronically, ensuring their work is backed-up regularly and stored securely on the centre's IT system ➤ Following and regularly reviewing National Cyber Security Centre advice for support in cyber security preparedness and mitigation work 	Exams Officer, SLT and Central IT staff

