

# Priory School

## Exam Contingency Plan Policy

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## **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 Priory 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 scenarios contained in the *Joint contingency plan in the event of widespread disruption to the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*, which requires examination centres to: *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.*

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;”*

## **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*
  - o annual data collection exercise not undertaken to collate information on qualifications and awarding body specifications being delivered
  - o annual exams plan not produced identifying essential key tasks, key dates and deadlines
  - o sufficient invigilators not recruited and trained
- *Entries*
  - o awarding bodies not being informed of early/estimated entries which prompts release of early information required by teaching staff
  - o candidates not being entered with awarding bodies for external exams/assessment
  - o awarding body entry deadlines missed or late or other penalty fees being incurred

- *Pre-exams*
  - o exam timetabling, rooming allocation; and invigilation schedules not prepared
  - o candidates not briefed on exam timetables and awarding body information for candidates
  - o exam/assessment materials and candidates' work not stored under required secure conditions
  - o internal assessment marks and samples of candidates' work not submitted to awarding bodies/external moderators
  
- *Exam time*
  - o exams/assessments not taken under the conditions prescribed by awarding bodies
  - o required reports/requests not submitted to awarding bodies during exam/assessment periods e.g. very late arrival, suspected malpractice, special consideration
  - o candidates' scripts not dispatched as required to awarding bodies
  
- *Results and post-results*
  - o access to examination results affecting the distribution of results to candidates
  - o the facilitation of the post-results services

Centre actions:

- The Principal to assume responsibility for the above tasks with the support of other members of the Senior Management team.
- Contact neighbouring schools to request Exams Officer support where appropriate

## **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:

- Senior Subject Teachers and Examinations Officer to work with the Principal to identify students where applications for access arrangements may be required. The employment of outside professionals may be required.
- Exams Officer to perform administration for pre-exams and exam time arrangements.
- Principal to nominate a 'deputy' to cover role/task should the Exams Officer be absent for a prolonged period of time .

### **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:

- Other subject staff to assume marking and assessment workload and prioritising of assessments for external award, to be directed by the relevant Senior Subject Teacher(s)
- The Exams Officer to liaise with relevant Senior Subject Teachers, if appropriate, to ensure all necessary deadlines are adhered to. Where this is not possible, the Exams Officer will liaise with the relevant Awarding Body and act upon advice and / or instructions received.

### **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:

- The Exams Officer will review invigilation staffing, at short notice if need be, to ensure that adequate supervision arrangements are in place
- Where a candidate needs to be separated or 'quarantined' from other candidates because of a timetable clash, the Examinations Officer will ensure that appropriate supervision is provided for the duration.
- Where a candidate, through injury or disability, requires an amanuensis for the writing of an examination paper, the Exams Officer will ensure the availability of properly qualified staff for the task.

### **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:

- The Exams Officer will organise room allocations for exams well in advance in consultation with the Principal.
- If an emergency or an unexpected last-minute problem occurs as a result of which a room is suddenly unavailable, the Exams Officer, in consultation with the Principal, will arrange for sufficient staff to be made available to ensure the security of the examination is not compromised while alternative rooms are found.

### **6. Failure of IT systems**

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

- *Complete system failure at final entry deadline*
- *Complete system failure during exams preparation*
- *Complete system failure at results release time*

#### Centre actions:

- The Exams Officer, in consultation with the Principal, will make entries from another venue directly to the relevant Awarding Bodies.
- The Principal, in consultation with the IT manager, will liaise directly with the Awarding Bodies to ensure that no candidates are disadvantaged through loss of access to information during the period of IT failure.
- Results may also be accessed directly from the Awarding Bodies.

## **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:

- The Principal will inform parents / guardians and students about the possible disruption to teaching time and plans to address this.
- The Principal to manage all such incidents and urgently seek alternative accommodation in the locality and / or from neighbouring schools / colleges.

## **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* Centre actions:
- The Exams Officer, in consultation with the Principal, will contact the relevant Awarding Bodies, to discuss alternative arrangements and any special consideration that may be necessary, and take appropriate action to deal with the situation.

## **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*

### Centre actions:

- The relevant Awarding Bodies will be informed immediately by the Exams Officer or the Principal if the centre cannot be opened for examinations, and advice sought as to appropriate alternative arrangements for all candidates who may be affected.

## **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*

Centre actions:

- The Exams Officer will contact the Awarding Bodies in question to alert them to the problem and ensure alternative arrangements are in place so that candidates are not disadvantaged.

## **11. 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 to be stored in exam safe.
- The Exams Officer to communicate with relevant Awarding Bodies to inform them of the difficulties and arrange suitable alternative means of secure transportation.

## **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*

Centre actions:

- The Exams Officer to notify the relevant Awarding Bodies immediately, and act upon advice / instructions.
- The Principal will notify students and their parents / guardians of the situation, reassuring them that the Awarding Bodies are aware of the situation and are issuing guidance / instructions.

## **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*

Centre actions:

- The exams Officer will immediately notify the Awarding Bodies and act upon advice / instructions given.

**Causes 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*



## Further guidance to inform and implement contingency planning

### Ofqual

*Joint contingency plan in the event of widespread disruption to the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*

<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*

<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>

### GOV.UK

*Emergencies and severe weather: schools and early years settings*

<https://www.gov.uk/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/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/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-guide>