



The Priory School of Our Lady Of Walsingham



Examination Contingency Policy

Reviewed by: Executive Committee

On:

Next review due: September 2024

Signature of Head of Centre

Examination Contingency Policy

Purpose of the plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the management and administration of the examination process at Priory School.

This plan complies with JCQ general regulations.

Causes of potential disruption to the examination process

1. Examination officer extended absence at key points in the examination process

Key tasks required:

- Undertaking annual data collection exercise to collate information on qualifications and awarding body specifications being delivered.
- Production of annual examinations plan to identify essential key tasks, key dates and deadlines.
- Information to awarding bodies of early/estimated entries.
- Examination entries sent within deadlines.
- Examination timetabling, rooming allocation; and invigilation schedules.
- Briefing of candidates on examination timetables and awarding body information.
- Storage of exam/assessment materials and candidates' work under required secure conditions
- Submission of internal assessment marks and samples of candidates' work to awarding bodies.
- Examination conditions ensured.
- Submission of reports/requests to awarding bodies during exam/assessment periods e.g. very late arrival, suspected malpractice, special consideration, in consultation with SENCO team
- Despatch of candidates' scripts as required.

Results and post-results

- Distribution of results to candidates; handling of appeals where requested.

Centre actions

- The Head of Centre to assume responsibility for appointment to the above tasks and, in the first instance and with the support of the Vice Principal and other appropriate colleagues, to follow the procedure outlined in Appendix I.

2. SENCo extended absence at key points in the examination cycle

Key tasks required:

- Assessment of candidates to identify potential access arrangement requirements.
- Request for approval for access arrangements by the awarding body via online JCQ Access Arrangements (Form 8/9)
- Provision of modified paper requirements.

Centre actions

- Head of Centre to nominate an appropriate member of staff with knowledge of examination procedures to cover role/task should the SENCO be absent for a prolonged period of time.

3. Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the examination cycle

Key tasks required:

- Provision of early/estimated and final entry information, including internal assessment marks and candidates' work, to examinations officer on time.
- Marking of Non-Examination Assessments (NEAs) following standard procedure. These must be marked, and results submitted by the deadline set out by the awarding body

Centre actions

- Other subject staff to assume marking and assessment workload and prioritise assessments for external award as directed by the Vice Principal.
- In cases where there are no subject teachers, liaise with the awarding body for advice
- The Examinations Officer to liaise with relevant Senior Subject Teachers, if appropriate, to ensure all necessary deadlines are adhered to.

4. Invigilator absence

- Lack of sufficient trained invigilators to conduct exams / support as required access arrangements
- Invigilator shortage on peak examination days
- Invigilator absence on the day of an examination

Centre actions

- The Vice Principal and Head of Centre 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 and/or illnesses, the Vice Principal, in consultation with the Head of Centre, will ensure that appropriate supervision is provided for the duration.
- Where a candidate, through injury or disability, requires a scribe for the writing of an examination paper, the SENCo, in consultation with the Head of Centre, will ensure the availability of properly qualified staff for the task.

5. Examination rooms

- Main examination venues unavailable due to an unexpected incident at examination time

Centre actions

- If an emergency or an unexpected last-minute problem occurs as a result of which a room is suddenly unavailable, the Examinations Officer, in consultation with the Head of Centre, will arrange for sufficient staff to be made available to ensure the security of the examination is not compromised while alternative rooms are found. The examination will be relocated within the centre, with appropriate number of invigilators.
- In this event, relevant examination boards must be contacted immediately for instructions.

6. Failure of IT system – See Appendix 2

- Complete system failure at final entry deadline
- Complete system failure during examinations preparation; including uploading NEA / Coursework / speaking tests
- Complete system failure at results release time

Centre actions

- The Examinations Officer, in consultation with the Head of Centre and IT manager, will make entries from another venue directly to the relevant Awarding Bodies, if system failure affects approved venue in its entirety.
- The Head of Centre, in consultation with the Examinations Officer and 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.

7. Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open

- Candidates are unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal

Centre actions

- The Examinations Officer, in consultation with the Head of Centre, 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.

8. Centre unable to open as normal during the examinations period

Centre actions

- The relevant Awarding Bodies will be informed immediately by the Examinations Officer or the Head of Centre if the centre cannot be opened for examinations, and advice sought as to appropriate alternative arrangements for all candidates who may be affected.
- Permission will be sought to use the Community Hall across the road from our current centre as an emergency space until the school premises become available (01983 295122 (daytime) or 01983 290183).

9. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers

Centre actions

- The Examinations 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.

10. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

Centre actions

- Scripts to be stored in examination safes.
- The Examinations Officer to communicate with relevant Awarding Bodies to inform them of the difficulties and arrange suitable alternative means of secure transportation.

11. Assessment evidence not available to be marked because of damage, destruction or loss

Centre actions

- The Examinations Officer to notify the relevant Awarding Bodies immediately, and act upon advice / instructions, including completion of relevant paperwork.
- The Head of Centre to notify pupils and their parents / guardians of the situation, reassuring them that the Awarding Bodies are aware of the situation and are issuing guidance / instructions.

12. Centre unable to distribute results as normal

Centre actions

- The Examinations Officer will seek alternative methods of communication with candidates.
- The Examinations Officer will immediately notify the Awarding Bodies and act upon advice / instructions given.

Clauses 6-12 – 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>

JCQ

- General regulations

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>

- Guidance on alternative site arrangements

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/forms/>

- Instructions for conducting examinations

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>

- A guide to the special consideration process

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

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 examination scripts guide: Ensuring the service runs smoothly; Contingency planning

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-yellow-label-service>

Authorised by Mr David EJJ Lloyd, Head of Centre

September 2023

APPENDIX 1

Priory School Contingency Plan From January 2023

Named parties

1. In the event of Jennie Wheeler (Examinations Officer) being absent, Emma Dale (Examinations Officer) will take the lead. Due to conflict of interest (2023/24, 2025/26), Key Holder 3, David Lloyd (Principal and HoC from September 2023), will escort and supervise Emma Dale in any examination related activity.
2. In the event of Emma Dale (Examinations Officer) being absent, Jennie Wheeler (Examinations Officer) will continue as normal.
3. In the event of both Jennie Wheeler (Examinations Officer) and Emma Dale (Examinations Officer) being absent, Key Holder 3, David Lloyd (Principal and HoC from September 2023), will take the lead on exams with support from Senior Leadership – Emma Soar (Vice Principal, conflict of interest 2024/2025), Ana Barnes (Head of Junior School, conflict of interest 2023/2024), Kate White (School Manager, conflict of interest 2025/2026), or Katie Pragnell (SENCO, conflict of interest 2026/2027).

Appendix 2

IT Failure or Cyber Attack

All staff are trained in cyber awareness and always ensure communication with the IT department if they are unsure of something online (including emails).

Our current security system (Smoothwall) is our initial blocker to the outside world which is programmed to discover and block both known and unknown cyber-attacks, never before seen malware, ransomware etc. in real time.

All our exam data is stored securely via OneDrive cloud storage which is accessible from any venue with internet access and has two factor authentication enabled as well as correct access rights to the system. NO DATA is stored solely on local machines.

If our Smoothwall system was to fail, then we would proceed as follows:

- Follow our contingency plan for IT failure (this would include using the Internet elsewhere at an approved venue – the proprietor’s offsite office)
- Contact the National Cyber Security Centre
- Contact the police and ‘action fraud’
- Inform the Department for Education
- Inform all exam boards

Activities that require the Internet during exams season:

- Making entries
- Amending entries
- Entering exam grades where necessary
- Uploading speaking tests
- Uploading NEA/Coursework
- Printing dispatch logs
- Printing AQA dispatch labels
- Booking Parcel Force for Cambridge iGCSE dispatch
- Downloading listening exam sound files