



Examinations Contingency Plan 2017-2018

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Contents

	Page
Purpose of the Plan	3
Causes of potential disruption to the exam process/cycle:	
1. Exam Officer - extended absence during key points in the exams process/cycle	3
2. SEND Co-ordinator - extended absence at key points in the exam cycle	4
3. Teaching staff - extended absence at key points in the exam process/cycle	5
4. Invigilators – lack of appropriately trained invigilator or invigilator absence	5
5. Exam rooms – lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice	6
6. Failure of IT systems	6
7. Disruption of teaching time – centre closed for an extended period	7
8. Students unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open	7
9. Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period	8
10. Disruption in the distribution of examinations papers	8
11. Disruption in the transportation of completed examinations scripts	8
12. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked	9
13. Centre unable to distribute results as normal	9
Further Guidance to inform and implement contingency planning	9
• Ofqual	
• JCQ	
• Gov.UK	

1. PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

1.1 This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the management and administration of the exam process at Thomas Deacon Academy. 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.

1.2 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*.

1.3 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;"

2. CAUSES OF POTENTIAL DISRUPTION TO THE EXAM PROCESS

2.1 Exam officer extended absence at key points in the exam process (cycle)

2.1.1 Criteria for implementation of the plan

Key tasks required in the management and administration of the exam cycle not undertaken including:

2.1.2 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.

2.1.3 Entries

- awarding bodies not informed of early/estimated entries which prompts release of early information required by teaching staff.
- candidates not entered with awarding bodies for external exams/assessment.
- awarding body entry deadlines missed or late, or other penalty fees being incurred.

2.1.4 Pre-exams

- exam timetabling, rooming allocation and invigilation schedules not prepared.
- candidates not briefed on exam timetables and on 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.

2.1.5 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.

2.1.6 Results and post-results

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

2.1.7 Centre Actions:

a) The Exams Administrators will cover the absence to ensure essential deadline dates/information to staff is not overlooked; they will liaise closely with the Deputy Vice Principal during the period of absence.

b) The exams 'help file' detailing key roles specific to the Exams Office will be kept up to date at all times.

c) The internal exams key dates calendar is available to all exams office staff; this details in-house and external deadline dates for entries and coursework submissions. The master exams timetable is also available and is published on the internal vle intranet as well as the public website.

3. SEND Co-ordinator extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

3.1 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:

3.2 Planning

- candidates not tested/assessed to identify potential access arrangement requirements.
- evidence of need and evidence to support normal way of working not collated.

3.3 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.

3.4 Exam time

- access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms

3.5 Centre Actions:

- a) The allocated HLTAs and the SEND Administrator will cover the absence to ensure essential deadline dates/information to staff is not overlooked. They will be responsible for the deployment of staff within the department for invigilation. They will liaise closely with the Exams Office and the Deputy Vice Principal Wellbeing.
- b) The exams access arrangements folder in the SEND Office will be kept up to date at all times.
- c) The internal / external exam key dates calendar is available to all allocated staff within the department, in addition, a hard copy is displayed in the SEND Office.

4. Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

4.1 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.

4.2 Centre Actions:

The relevant Deputy Vice Principal will ensure departmental continuity by requesting an alternative member of staff to take responsibility for the actions above.

5. Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence

5.1 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.

5.2 Centre Actions:

- a) Examinations Officer will liaise with Human Resources to recruitment new invigilators, whenever necessary, during the academic year.
- b) Examinations Office to ensure sufficient training is offered and updated regularly. When necessary, additional training will be given to individual or groups of invigilators.

- c) In the event that insufficient invigilators are available for an external exam, or an invigilator is absent, all invigilators will be contacted to see if they are available; exam office staff will cover in the interim until they arrive.
- d) Examinations Officer to ensure that capacity is never exceeded on any one session to allow, where possible, additional invigilator availability.
- e) If there are insufficient numbers an approved supply agency will be contacted to provide suitable invigilator cover.

6. Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice

6.1 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.

6.2 Centre Actions:

- a) Exams Office will liaise, in the first instance, with the Academy's timetabler.
- b) The Junior College building or the Sixth Form Centre to be used in the event of insufficient appropriate rooms in the main Academy building.
- c) Emergency Evacuation Procedures are outlined in the Exams Policy (Page 26).

7. Failure of IT systems

7.1 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.
- MIS system failure during examination.

7.2 Centre Actions:

- a) Contact and liaise with in-house IT Technical support immediately the issue has been identified to try and resolve the issue.
- b) In the event that exam board deadlines may be missed, the appropriate awarding bodies will be contacted to agree an extension or alternative means of supplying data.
- c) For exams requiring IT, the exams office will delay the start of the exam or will suspend the exam for the group or individual until the matter is resolved. Evidence of the incident will be gathered to enable a special consideration request to be submitted.

d) In the event that the Academy is unable to access results on site, Senior Leaders will approve an off-site location for results to be downloaded. Any delay will be communicated to students and parents as necessary.

e) Whenever necessary, the appropriate awarding body will be contacted for advice at the time of the issue.

8. Disruption of teaching time - centre closed for an extended period

8.1 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]

8.2 Centre Actions:

- a) The academy will communicate with parents, carers and students about the potential for disruption to teaching time/examinations and plans to address this.
- b) In extreme circumstances, alternative venues to be found off site. Students may be advised that they may need to sit exams in the next available series.
- c) Exams Office to notify the appropriate awarding bodies.
- d) Senior Leadership, where necessary, to keep the LEA updated.

9. Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis - centre remains open

9.1 Criteria for implementation of the plan

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

9.2 Centre Actions:

- a) Exams Officer to communicate with appropriate awarding bodies as soon as possible to seek advice and guidance.
- b) The centre will communicate to parents and students regarding a solution to the issue.

10. Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period

10.1 Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Thomas Deacon Academy 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]

10.2 Centre Actions:

- a) If the whole site is unable to open, the appropriate awarding bodies will be notified immediately. Peterborough City council will be contacted to help find an alternative venue.
- b) If appropriate, applications for special consideration to the awarding body for students who have met the minimum requirements.
- c) If appropriate, students to be offered the opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available session.

11. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers

11.1 Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Disruption to the distribution of examination papers to the centre in advance of examinations.

11.2 Centre Actions:

- a) The Exams Office will contact the awarding body as soon as possible to arrange for alternative delivery of papers.
- b) If necessary, arrange for the awarding body to send papers electronically or via their secure network.
- c) Examinations Office to ensure that all exam papers are kept securely until needed.

12. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

12.1 Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts

12.2 Centre Actions:

- a) If the delay is due to a Parcelforce collection, the script envelopes will be taken to the nearest post office.
- b) If the delay is due to an internal issue, the necessary awarding bodies will be notified immediately to arrange alternative collection.

13. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked

13.1 Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked

13.2 Centre Actions:

- a) The Academy will communicate immediately with the appropriate awarding bodies, students and parents.
- b) Candidates offered to re-take the assessment that has been affected for a subsequent assessment window, if possible.

14. Centre unable to distribute results as normal

14.1 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]*

14.2 Centre Actions:

- a) In the event the main Academy building cannot be used, the Junior College and/or Sixth Form Centre will be used.
- b) If the whole site is closed, senior management to liaise with the LEA to make arrangements to access results at an alternative site.
Awarding bodies to be contacted immediately about alternative options.

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>

Examinations Contingency Policy

Guidance on *alternative site arrangements*

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/forms>

Instructions on transferred candidate arrangements

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

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>

Statutory guidance on school closures

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools>