



HEADLANDS SCHOOL  
SINCE 1965

# Exam Contingency Policy / Plan

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# Headlands School

## Contents

### Part A - Introduction

1. Overall Outcome
2. When the plan would be triggered

### Scenarios

1. Absence of Examinations Officer at the centre
2. Disruption of teaching time - a significant number of centre's are closed for an extended period
3. Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis - centre's remain open
4. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers
5. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts
6. Centres are unable to open as normal during the examination period
7. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked
8. Disruption to the scanning process - where completed examination scripts are being scanned in preparation for on-screen marking
9. Markers unable to mark examination scripts according to marking schedules
10. Difficulty in meeting planned schedule or unable to issue results
11. Awarding organisations unable to issue accurate results
12. Centres are unable to distribute results as normal
13. Awarding organisations are unable to offer post results services
14. Invigilators absence or lack of
15. Failure of ICT systems

## Introduction

### 1. Overall outcome

- 1.1 The overall outcome of the plan is to ensure that the interests of candidates are safeguarded while maintaining the integrity of the examination system and qualification standards.
- 1.2 There are three specific outcomes the plan seeks to achieve:
  - delivering assessments to published timetables
  - delivering results to published timetables
  - complying with regulatory requirements in relation to assessment, marking and standards

### 2. When the plan would be triggered

- 2.1 The plan would be triggered in the event of a major disruption to the examination system affecting significant numbers of candidates across several awarding organisations. This could include severe weather, widespread illness, travel disruption, fires, logistical problems or system failures.
- 2.2 Any actions taken will be subject to the advice of the official agencies dealing with the specific circumstances being faced, for example the police, Environment Agency or Health Protection Agency.
- 2.3 Any restorative actions taken will be in full agreement with the Awarding Body/s consent.

## Scenarios

### 1. Absence of Examinations Officer at the centre

Example of scenario	The Examinations Officer in the centre is absent during external exams
Actions	<p>The centre will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure that there is a second suitably qualified member of the data team (normally a member of the Data team) is available to take over running the exams at all times during the exam season</li> <li>- Ensure that all members of the data team know who keeps the keys to secure storage and understand the need for security if they temporarily take over holding the keys</li> <li>- All tasks related to day to day running of exams - (seating plans, invigilator bookings etc.) are completed well in advance and easily accessible to the member of staff taking over</li> </ul>
Specific communication	Centre staff to be notified
Success criteria	Exams run smoothly

### 2. Disruption of teaching time - a significant number of centre's are closed for an extended period

Example of scenario	Severe flooding closes a significant number of centre's in a region
Actions	<p>Where there is disruption to teaching time and students miss teaching and learning, it remains the responsibility of centre's to prepare students for examinations as usual.</p> <p>The centre will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- use the VLE to facilitate alternative methods of learning and also use alternative venues - North Bridlington Library, Primary school, the Spa and other venues in the local area</li> <li>- prioritise candidates who will be facing examinations shortly</li> <li>- advise candidates, where appropriate, to sit examinations in the next available series</li> </ul>
Specific communication	The centre to communicate with parents, carers and students about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plans to address this
Success criteria	Students continue to be taught either through an alternative method of learning or at an alternative venue
Further advice and information	Guidance on emergency planning, with advice on severe weather, is available from the Department for Education and statutory guidance on school closures

### 3. Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis - centre's remain open

<b>Example of scenario</b>	<b>A sickness bug means that a number of candidates are not able to attend a centre to take an examination.</b>
<b>Actions</b>	<p>The centre will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with the relevant awarding organisations</li> <li>- offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series</li> <li>- apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements</li> </ul> <p>Please note: candidates are only eligible for special consideration if they have been fully prepared and have covered the whole course but are affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control.</p>
<b>Specific communication</b>	The centre to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to make them aware of the issue. The centre to communicate with parents, carers and candidates regarding solutions to the issue.
<b>Success criteria</b>	Candidates are able to sit examinations with minimum disruption or additional stress to them.
<b>Further advice and information</b>	JCQ's guidance on special consideration and alternative site arrangements can be accessed through the JCQ website.

### 4. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers

<b>Example of scenario</b>	<b>A courier delivers a wrong set of examination papers to a centre.</b>
<b>Actions</b>	<p>The centre will liaise with the awarding organisations who will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- source alternative couriers for delivery of hard copies</li> <li>- provide centre's with electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network</li> </ul> <p>Please note that the examinations officer will ensure that copies are received, made and stored under secure conditions</p>
<b>Specific communication</b>	The centre to communicate with awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of papers.
<b>Success criteria</b>	Students are able to proceed with taking examinations without having to reschedule examinations.

## 5. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

Example of scenario	Courier contacts centre to report a problem picking up scripts on time
Actions	<p>The centre will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in the first instance, seek advice from awarding organisations and their normal collection agency regarding collection</li> <li>- not make own arrangements for transportation without approval from awarding organisations - ensure secure storage of completed examination scripts until collection</li> </ul>
Specific communication	The centre to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to resolve the issue.
Success criteria	Scripts are stored 'securely' in line with JCQ guidance. Scripts are collected and delivered to awarding organisations with the minimum of delay
Further advice and information	JCQ guidance regarding the 'secure storage of scripts' is available on the JCQ website under Instructions for Conducting Examinations. Guidance on the 'Life of a script' is also available on the JCQ website

## 6. Centre's are unable to open as normal during the examination period

Example of scenario	A natural disaster or emergency such as fire at the centre means that it is closed when examinations are due to take place.
Actions	<p>The Centre will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- be open for examinations and examination candidates only, if possible</li> <li>- use alternative venues in agreement with relevant awarding organisations (eg share facilities with other centre's or use other public buildings if possible)</li> <li>- apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements (see Scenario 3)</li> <li>- offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series, if possible</li> </ul>
Specific communication	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
Success criteria	Students are able to take examinations in alternative venues in a timely way
Further advice and information	<p>The centre will cover the impact on examinations as part of their general planning for emergencies.</p> <p>Responsibility for deciding whether it is safe for a centre to open lies with the head of centre. The head is responsible for taking advice, or following instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether they are able to open. DfE guidance on school closures is available on the GOV.UK website</p>

**7. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked**

<b>Example of scenario</b>	<b>A fire at the centre destroys completed examination scripts</b>
Actions	The Centre will liaise with the awarding body to ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- awarding organisations generate candidate marks for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement, as defined by the awarding organisations in consultation with the regulators</li> <li>- candidates retake the assessment that has been affected at a subsequent assessment window, if possible</li> </ul>
Specific communication	The head of centre will communicate this immediately to the relevant awarding organisation(s) and subsequently to students and their parents/carers
Success criteria	Candidate marks are able to be generated (if possible) from existing assessment materials
Further advice and information	To be sought from the relevant awarding organisation

**8. Disruption to the scanning process - where completed examination scripts are being scanned in preparation for on-screen marking**

<b>Example of scenario</b>	<b>A scanning centre reports technical problems with scanning machines leading to delays</b>
Actions	It is the awarding organisations' responsibility to ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- awarding implement their existing contingency plans for disruption to on-screen marking process</li> <li>- revert to traditional forms of marking, recruit, train or re-standardise qualified new markers</li> </ul>
Success criteria	Deadlines for marking schedules are met
Further advice and information	To be sought from the relevant awarding organisation

**9. Markers unable to mark examination scripts according to marking schedules**

<b>Example of scenario</b>	<b>Significant numbers of markers withdraw from a specific qualification at short notice</b>
Recommended actions	It is the awarding organisations' responsibility to ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- reallocate scripts to available markers</li> <li>- recruit, train or re-standardise qualified new markers</li> <li>- contact each other to 'share' markers for specific qualifications</li> <li>- prioritise marking based on results dates, UCAS deadlines, qualifications that require further study (eg maths and English)</li> </ul>
Success criteria	Deadlines for marking schedules are met

## 10. Difficulty in meeting planned schedule or unable to issue results

Example of scenario	A process failure delays both the preparation and issuing of results
Actions	<p>It is the awarding organisations' responsibility to ensure that they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- establish priorities for processing results in line with UCAS and Central Applications Office 2 (CAO) deadlines</li> <li>- implement existing contingency plans for disruption to the schedule for issuing results</li> <li>- in consultation with regulators, assess the level of disruption and consider alternative options for issuing results, dependent upon the nature of the issue</li> <li>- in consultation with regulators, liaise with relevant organisations (eg UCAS, CAO) regarding candidate progression to further and higher education</li> </ul>
Specific communication	Awarding organisation(s) to brief schools and colleges about potential delays to issuing results
Success criteria	Deadlines for issuing results to candidates are met

## 11. Awarding organisations unable to issue accurate results

Example of scenario	An IT system failure impacts upon the accuracy of results
Actions	<p>It is the awarding organisations' responsibility to ensure that they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- revalidate results</li> <li>- reissue results, via an alternative format if necessary</li> </ul>
Specific communication	<p>Awarding organisations to inform schools, colleges and candidates of any incorrect results</p> <p>Awarding organisations to advise UCAS and CAO about any issues with incorrect results that may impact on their deadlines</p>
Success criteria	Results are revalidated or reissued in a timely way for candidates

## 12. Centre's are unable to distribute results as normal

Example of scenario	A school or college is closed and therefore candidates are not able to visit to find out their results
Actions	<p>The Centre will ensure that they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- make arrangements to access results at an alternative site</li> <li>- share facilities with other schools and colleges if possible</li> </ul>
Specific communication	Centre's to contact awarding organisations about alternative options
Success criteria	Candidates receive results in a timely way

### 13. Awarding organisations are unable to offer post results services

Example of scenario	A systems failure shuts down an awarding organisation's online post results service
Actions	It is the awarding organisations' responsibility to ensure that they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- make arrangements to provide post results services for centres and candidates through alternative methods (eg paper, Excel spread sheets, traditional re-marking)</li> <li>- prioritise candidates going through UCAS or CAO</li> </ul>
Specific communication	Awarding organisations inform centres and UCAS or CAO about the implications of not providing this service
Success criteria	Candidates are offered a post results service using alternative methods in a timely way

### 14. Invigilators

Example of scenario	Lack of appropriately trained invigilators or absence
Actions	It is the schools responsibility to ensure that they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- make arrangements to have sufficient trained invigilators</li> <li>-recruitment and training is done in advance</li> <li>-exams officer to ensure cover for shortages</li> </ul>
Specific communication	Invigilators to inform Exams Officer as soon as they are aware of problems
Success criteria	Candidates sit exams at the pre-arranged time

### 15. ICT

Example of scenario	Failure of ICT Systems
Actions	It is the schools responsibility to ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Exams Officer and ICT Manager liaise with the Examination Boards as to the correct action</li> <li>-ICT department have spare computers and printers as required</li> <li>-Exams Officer to cover shortages</li> </ul>
Specific communication	Exams Officer to contact Examination Board/s
Success criteria	Candidates sit exams at the pre-arranged time or are offered alternative times by the Examinations Boards