Contingency Plan - Exams

Magna Academy

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- Ofqual 7
- JCQ
- GOV.UK

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 Magna Academy. 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.*

This plan complies with JCQ general regulations 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

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*
  - 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
- *Entries*
  - awarding bodies not being informed of early/estimated entries which prompts release of early information required by teaching staff
  - candidates not being entered with awarding bodies for external exams/assessment
  - awarding body entry deadlines missed or late or other penalty fees being incurred
- *Pre-exams*
  - exam timetabling, rooming allocation, and invigilation schedules not prepared
  - candidates not briefed on exam timetables and 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
- *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
- *Results and post-results*
  - access to examination results affecting the distribution of results to candidates
  - the facilitation of the post-results services

Centre actions:

- **Chris Buller (Assistant Principal) & Nicky Johnson (Lead Invigilator) will refer to the Exam Year Key Calendar.**

SENDCo 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:

- **Deputy SENDCo would coordinate with the Exams Officer**

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:

- **Due to the line management structure within the Academy this would automatically be addressed if any teaching staff were absent**

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 Academy would use TA's and support staff who have been trained as invigilators**

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 Academy has two main exam venues and a designated area for Access Arrangements during exams**

Cyber-attack

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Where a cyber-attack may compromise any aspect of delivery

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption:

- Promptly report any incidents to the relevant awarding body/bodies which might compromise any aspect of assessment delivery.
- Where students produce work electronically, ensure their work is backed-up regularly and stored securely on the centre's IT system/ensuring protection of the candidate's work from corruption and considering the risks of a potential cyber-attack.
- Following and regularly reviewing National Cyber Security Centre advice for support in cyber security preparedness and mitigation work/ Using the NCSC's free Web check and Mail check services to help protect from cyber-attacks.

Failure of IT systems

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*

Centre actions:

- **Contact awarding organisation/s**
- **Academy IT Support – priority**
- **Issue results via exam board download – using Oceans Academy IT system**

Disruption of teaching time in the weeks before an exam – 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 Academy would communicate with parents, carers and students about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plans to address this**
- **Find alternative site for exam students, the Trusts primary school – Ocean Academy**
- **Submit 'Special Consideration' for cohort**

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 Academy would communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to make them aware of the issue. The Academy would communicate with parents, carers and students regarding a solution to the issue**
- **Find an alternative site for exam students to sit the exams**
- **Submit 'Special Consideration' for cohort**

Escalation process in the event the Head of Centre, or the member of the senior leadership team with oversight of examination administration is absent

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- In the event of SLT absences affecting the support to the examination administration, to ensure guidance and support is provided to the examinations officer to maintain the integrity and security of examinations and assessments is maintained throughout an examination series.

Centre Actions

- The following line management structure will be implemented:
  - Head of Centre > VP > SLT Line Manager
  - SLT Exams Line Manager > VP > Head of Centre

Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lockdown)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Whole centre evacuation (or lockdown) during exam time due to series incident resulting in exam candidates being unable to start, proceed with or complete their exam.

Centre Actions:

The exams officer will provide a report of the incident for the awarding body/bodies (via the special consideration process or as advised by the awarding body/bodies)

safely/securely store all collected exam papers and materials pending awarding body advice/guidance

- **Where applicable/possible/available, SLT/exams officer will discuss any alternative exam sittings with the awarding body/bodies offer, arrange and provide support services to staff and candidates**
- **At the earliest opportunity, SLT/head of centre will prepare a communication to parents/carers advising them of events (including relevant actions and outcomes)**
- **Where possible, exams staff and candidates will be invited to attend an assembly lead by the head of centre to discuss the lockdown and offer ongoing support**
- **If this is not possible, communications will be provided via a centre text/email/newsletter and information uploaded to the centre website**

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 Academy would communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to make them aware of the issue. The Academy would communicate with parents, carers and students regarding a solution to the issue**
- **Find an alternative site for exam students to sit the exams**
- **Submit 'Special Consideration' for cohort**

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:

- **Academy would communicate with awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of papers.**

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:

- **The Academy to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to resolve the issue.**

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 Principal (Head of Centre) would communicate this immediately to the relevant awarding organisation/s and subsequently to students and their parents/carers**

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 Academy would contact the awarding organisations about alternative options**