



Exam Contingency Plan

2021/2022

This plan is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations.

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Purpose of the plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exams process at the Working Men's College. 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 and allow adequate guidance to staff if such disruptions occur.

Please note that this policy should be used in conjunction with the **WMC Exams Policy** and the **Emergency Evacuation Procedure for Examinations** doc. These documents can be found on iLearn and on One drive.

This plan also confirms the college is compliant with the JCQ regulation (section 5.3, *General Regulations for Approved Centres 2020-2021*) that the centre *has in place a written examination contingency plan which covers all aspects of examination administration. This will allow members of the senior leadership team to act immediately in the event of an emergency or staff absence.*

Possible causes of 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

- *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*

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

- *invigilators not trained or updated on changes to instructions for conducting exams*
- *exam timetabling, rooming allocation; and invigilation schedules not prepared*
- *candidates not briefed on exam timetables and awarding body information for candidates*
- *confidential 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, for example very late arrival, suspected malpractice, special consideration*

- *candidates' scripts not dispatched as required for marking 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ *The MIS Manager (who acts as Exams Manager) can administer exams and has the same knowledge and training as the EO*
- ▶ *In the unlikely event both members of the Exams Department are absent long term, the Directors of Learning have access to key Awarding Body portals*
- ▶ *Members of the administration team will be appointed to help administer exams where necessary*
- ▶ *Policy and procedural documents have been developed in order to guide any member of staff to administer the exams cycle if necessary. These include the college Exams Policy and availability of the JCQ ICE Document via iLearn, online etc.*

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*
- ▶ *centre fails to recognise its duties towards disabled candidates as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010*
- ▶ *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*
- ▶ *centre-delegated arrangements not put in place*
- ▶ *modified paper requirements not identified in a timely manner to enable ordering to meet external deadline*
- ▶ *staff (facilitators) providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained*

Exam time

- ▶ *access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ *Director of Learning (DL) for Learning and Life Skills will ensure functionality of Additional Learning Support team*
- ▶ *ALS team to continue to collate Normal Way of Working evidence and assessments*
- ▶ *Exams Department will work closely with ALS team to ensure access arrangements deadlines are met*

3. Director of Learning 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

Non-examination assessment tasks not set/issued/taken by candidates as scheduled

Candidates not being informed of centre assessed marks before marks are submitted to the awarding body and therefore not being able to consider appealing internal assessment decisions and requesting a review of the centre's marking

Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet awarding body submission deadlines

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ Meeting to be held with Deputy Principal, Exams Department and Curriculum Managers (CMs) in area of absent Director
- ▶ Responsibilities to be discussed and allocated
- ▶ CMs likely to take over exam info submission duties
- ▶ Exams Department will ensure deadlines and dates are followed and work closely with the CMs to ensure timely registrations, submissions etc.

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ Shortlist of invigilators kept with dates of training and refresher training planned
- ▶ Exams Officer manages pool of invigilators and maintains a full pool as necessary
- ▶ Pool includes salaried staff including the Exams Officer and MIS Manager in case of a shortage of sessional invigilators

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ Programme planning necessary to avoid clashes
- ▶ Rooms always prioritised for exams, in particular Maurice Hall (201)
- ▶ If an emergency situation occurs, classes to be cancelled to ensure learners sit exams

6. 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ All exam entries are made well in advance of the deadline to avoid this issue.
- ▶ If there is a system failure at the time of a deadline, the Exams Officer will contact the relevant exam boards to explain
- ▶ The college maintains adequate system backups as part of its Disaster Recovery plan
- ▶ AO portals can be accessed via any computer either at Kentish town or a member of staff's personal computer (the college will ensure compliance to data protection rules)
- ▶ IT department are made aware of the exam results days to ensure smooth running of downloads
- ▶ Examinations Officer to contact Examination Boards for alternative route of dissemination of results during time of disruption

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ The centre to communicate with parents, carers and students about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plans to address this.
- ▶ Use of alternative site at Kentish Town if necessary and movement of delivery to prearranged spaces with local partners like schools, community centres, training centres, etc.

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ Centre to contact Awarding Organisation as soon as possible for advice and guidance. The centre to communicate with parents, carers and students about the potential for and plans to address this.

- ▶ If necessary, exams to be sat at alternative sites local partners like schools, community centres, training centres, etc.
- ▶ If necessary, learners to sit in next possible window
- ▶ Application of Special Consideration where applicable

9. Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period (including in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ Centre to contact Awarding Organisation as soon as possible for advice and guidance. The centre to communicate with parents, carers and students about the potential for and plans to address this.
- ▶ Exams to be sat at alternative sites local partners like schools, community centres, training centres, etc.
- ▶ If necessary, learners to sit in next possible window
- ▶ Application of Special Consideration where applicable

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ The centre to communicate with awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of papers.
- ▶ Arrange with Exam Boards for alternative means of receiving papers either electronically or alternative courier.
- ▶ Examinations Officer to ensure papers are kept securely until needed.

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ The centre to communicate with relevant Exam Boards immediately to resolve the issue.
- ▶ Alternative transport to be used only with the agreement of the relevant Exam Boards.
- ▶ Scripts must be stored securely until such time transport is confirmed.

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ The Head of Centre to communicate this immediately to the relevant awarding organisation(s) and subsequently to students and their parents or carers.
- ▶ The Exam Boards may generate candidate marks for the affected assessments based on other evidence, as defined by the Exam Boards and the regulators.
- ▶ It may be necessary for the candidates to retake the assessment at the next available opportunity.

13. Centre unable to distribute results as normal (including in the event of the centre being unavailable on results day owing to an unforeseen emergency)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate postresults services

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ Centre to contact awarding organisations about alternative options.
- ▶ Arrange to access results at an alternative site, including Kentish Town
- ▶ Use of alternative methods of communication and or IT systems to find results
- ▶ Inform staff, students and parents as soon as possible of the change in distribution of results.

14. Covid 19

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Centre Staff Absent due to the current Pandemic
Learners Exams are affected due to the current Pandemic

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ See page 13 for detailed outline

Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning

Ofqual

What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted

1. Contingency planning

You should prepare for possible disruption to exams and other assessments as part of your emergency planning and make sure your staff are aware of these plans.

When drafting contingency plans, you should consider the following guidance...

2. Disruption to assessments or exams

In the absence of any instruction from the relevant awarding organisation, you should make sure that any exam or timetabled assessment takes place if it is possible to hold it. This may mean relocating to alternative premises.

You should discuss alternative arrangements with your awarding organisation if:

- the exam or assessment cannot take place
- a student misses an exam or loses their assessment due to an emergency, or other event, outside of the student's control

3. Steps you should take

3.1 Exam planning

Review contingency plans well in advance of each exam or assessment series. Consider how, if the contingency plan is invoked, you will comply with the awarding organisation's requirements.

3.2 In the event of disruption

1. Contact the relevant awarding organisation and follow its instructions.
2. Take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether your centre is able to open.
3. Identify whether the exam or timetabled assessment can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation, ensuring the secure transportation of questions papers or assessment materials to the alternative venue.
4. Where accommodation is limited, prioritise students whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned.
5. In the event of an evacuation during an examination please refer to JCQ's ['Centre emergency evacuation procedure'](#).
6. Communicate with parents, carers and students any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue.
7. Communicate with any external assessors or relevant third parties regarding any changes to the exam or assessment timetable.

3.3 After the exam

1. Consider whether any students' ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration.
2. Advise students, where appropriate, of the opportunities to take their exam or assessment at a later date.
3. Ensure that scripts are stored under secure conditions.
4. Return scripts to awarding organisations in line with their instructions. Never make alternative arrangements for the transportation of completed exam scripts, unless told to do so by the awarding organisation.

4. Steps the awarding organisation should take

4.1 Exam planning

Establish and maintain, and at all times comply with, an up-to-date, written contingency plan.

Ensure that the arrangements in place with centres and other third parties enable them to deliver and award qualifications in accordance with their conditions of recognition.

4.2 In the event of disruption

1. Take all reasonable steps to mitigate any adverse effect, in relation to their qualifications, arising from any disruption.
2. Provide effective guidance to any of their centres delivering qualifications.
3. Ensure that where an assessment must be completed under specified conditions, students complete the assessment under those conditions (other than where any reasonable adjustments or special considerations require alternative conditions).
4. Promptly notify the relevant regulators about any event which could have an adverse effect on students, standards or public confidence.
5. Coordinate its communications with the relevant regulators where the disruption has an impact on multiple centres or a wide range of learners.

4.3 After the exam

Consider any requests for special consideration for affected students. For example, those who may have lost their internally assessed work or whose performance in assessments or exams could have been affected by the disruption.

5. If any students miss an exam or are disadvantaged by the disruption

If some of the students have been adversely affected by the disruption, you should ask the awarding organisation about applying for special consideration.

Decisions about special consideration, when it is or is not appropriate, is for each awarding organisation to make. Their decisions might be different for different qualifications and for different subjects. See also:

- [JCQ's guidance on special considerations](#)
- [FAB's guidance on special considerations](#)

6. Wider communications

The regulators, [Ofqual](#) in England, [Qualifications Wales](#) in Wales and [CCEA](#) in Northern Ireland, will share timely and accurate information, as required, with awarding organisations, government departments and other stakeholders.

The [Department for Education](#) in England, the [Department of Education](#) in Northern Ireland and the [Welsh Government](#) will inform the relevant government ministers as soon as it becomes apparent that there will be significant local or national disruption; and ensure that they are kept updated until the matter is resolved.

Awarding organisations will alert the [Universities and Colleges Admissions Service](#) (UCAS) and the [Central Applications Office](#) (CAO) about any impact of the disruption on their deadlines and liaise regarding student progression to further and higher education.

Awarding organisations will alert relevant professional bodies or employer groups if the impact of disruption particularly affects them.

7. Widespread national disruption

In the event of widespread sustained national disruption, the government departments will communicate with regulators, awarding organisations and centres prior to a public announcement. Regulators will provide advice to government departments on implications for exam timetables.

[Ofqual guidance extract taken directly from the *Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland - What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted*, (updated 23 January 2018) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland/what-schools-and-colleges-should-do-if-exams-or-other-assessments-are-seriously-disrupted>]

JCQ

15.1 The qualification regulators, JCQ and government departments responsible for education have prepared and agreed information for schools and colleges in the event of examinations being seriously disrupted. This jointly agreed information will ensure consistency of response in the event of major disruption to the examinations system affecting significant numbers of candidates.

Further information may be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingencyplan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland/what-schools-and-colleges-should-do-if-exams-or-otherassessments-are-seriously-disrupted>

15.2 In addition, awarding bodies have their own well-established contingency plans in place to respond to disruptions. It is important that exams officers who are facing disruption liaise directly with the relevant awarding body/bodies.

15.3 Centres should 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.

15.4 In the event that the head of centre decides the centre cannot be opened for scheduled examinations, the relevant awarding body must be informed as soon as possible. Awarding bodies will be able to offer advice regarding the alternative arrangements for conducting examinations that may be available and the options for candidates who have not been able to take scheduled examinations.

15.5 The awarding bodies have designated **Wednesday 26 June 2019** as a 'contingency day' for examinations. This is consistent with the qualification regulators' document Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/examsystemcontingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland>

The designation of a 'contingency day' within the common examination timetable is in the event of national or local disruption to examinations. It is part of the awarding bodies' standard contingency planning for examinations.

Centres must therefore remind candidates that they must remain available until Wednesday 26 June 2019 should an awarding body need to invoke its contingency plan.

[JCQ guidance taken directly from JCQ *Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2018-2019*
<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>, section 15, **Contingency planning**]

General Regulations for Approved Centres <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>

Guidance on Alternative Site arrangements and Transferred Candidate arrangements

Accessed through secure login to the Centre Admin Portal (CAP) or through the JCQ training site
<http://jqc.training.jcq.org.uk/CAP/Home/Training>

Instructions for Conducting Examinations <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-forconducting-examinations>

A guide to the special consideration process <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/accessarrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance>

GOV.UK

Emergency planning and response: Severe weather; Exam disruption

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/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>

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>

Statutory guidance on school closures

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

Wales

School closures – opening schools in extreme bad weather

<http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/publications/guidance/schoolclosuresfaq/?lang=en>

Northern Ireland

Exceptional closure days <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/exceptional-closure-days>
Checklist for Principals when considering Opening or Closure of School
<https://www.educationni.gov.uk/publications/checklist-exceptional-closure-schools> School closures
<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/school-closures>

Contingency Plan Covid 19

Introduction

Due to the recent pandemic and the risks associated with exams we will action the plan detailed below should we encounter any issues.

This has been agreed with both the Exams department and Maths and English Curriculum area.

Our commitment to you as a Learner

Should a Learner test positive (or show symptoms) for COVID before sitting an exam they will be advised not to attend, in line with government guidelines for self-isolation.

Should a Learner test positive (or show symptoms) and be required to self-isolate mid-way through their exams they will be advised not to attend and special consideration will be applied for in line with awarding body guidance.

Our commitment to exam staff

In the event of the Exams Officer tests positive or develops symptoms before or during an exam series they will follow government guidelines for self-isolation. The MIS manager will cover and lead the exam series.

In the event that the Exams Officer and MIS manager test positive or develop symptoms before or during an exam series they will follow government guidelines for self-isolation. A member of EMG will cover and lead the exam series.

Keys to the secure room are held in room 605 in a lock safe, the exams officer will share the code with the appropriate member of staff.