



<b>Title:</b>	<b>Examinations Contingency Plan</b>
<b>Policy Coordinator:</b>	<b>PK Maselino</b>
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<b>Chair of Management Committee:</b>	<b>Seeta Mephani</b>
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## **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 The Helix Education Centre. 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.

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.

## **Causes of potential disruption to the exams process:**

- Examinations Officer extended absence at key points in the Examinations Cycle
- SENCo extended absence at key points in the exam cycle
- Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle
- Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence
- Disruption to Public Transport preventing students from reaching Exams Centre
- Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open
- Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period
- Failure of IT systems/Cyber Attack
- Lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice
- Disruption to the distribution of examination papers
- Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts
- Assessment evidence is not available to be marked
- Centre unable to distribute results as normal

## **1: Examinations Officer extended absence at key points in the examination cycle**

The following are the key tasks involved in the management and administration of the examination cycle which would be at risk in the event of the Examinations Officer being absent:

### **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 are Helix staff members who are trained using bespoke in-house training which is delivered annually.

### **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 unnecessarily

### **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

### **Options**

- The Head Teacher to stand in for the Examinations Officer should they be absent.
- Alternatively, the Examinations Officer of another school could be requested to provide assistance
- All procedures should be documented and contained in the intranet \_EXAMINATIONS folder and a physical folder.

- There is helpful information available at:
  - The Examinations Administration section of the DFE website
  - Examination Board helplines
  - The Exams Office section of the Joint Council for Qualifications website

## 2. SENCo extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

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

### Options

- Head Teacher to nominate a member of staff to take over SENCo duties temporarily
- Temporary SENCo to identify any candidates not yet approved by Awarding Bodies and complete access arrangements administration
- Examinations Officer to identify any shortfalls in invigilation requirements and ensure that gaps are filled
- Once gaps are filled, Examinations Officer to arrange suitable rooms and assist temporary SenCo to provide invigilation training

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

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

### Options

- Data Manager or SLT member to assist Examinations Officer with details of Estimated/Final entries
- Data Manager or SLT member to ensure Examinations Officer is provided with Estimated Grades/Coursework Marks and that Coursework samples are transmitted

to Moderators.

#### **4. Lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence**

- Failure to recruit and train sufficient invigilators to conduct exams
- Invigilator shortage on peak exam days
- Invigilator absence on the day of an exam

##### **Options**

- SLT to recruit suitable Invigilators if required in the event of a shortfall at short notice using staff agencies if necessary
- Use provisional timetable and estimated entry information to determine invigilator numbers required
- Identify where there may be a shortfall of invigilators beforehand

#### **5. Disruption to public transport preventing students from reaching exams centre**

- Candidates unable to take examinations due to planned lack of public transport
- Candidates unable to take examinations due to sudden disruption to public transport
- Candidates arrive late due to public transport problems

##### **Options**

- Monitor news agencies on a regular basis to identify any potential transportation difficulties
- Centre to utilise own minibus facilities to transport candidates to centre
- Centre to liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with the relevant awarding organisations
- Centre to offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series
- Centres to apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements
- Latecomers to be permitted to take their examinations providing they are within the JCQ regulations – JCQ to be notified of any latecomers.

#### **6. Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis**

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

- Centre to liaise with candidates to notify them that the exams will be held at the Church hall 90 Uxbridge Road, Harrow Weald, Middlesex HA3 6DQ, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisations
- Centres to offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series
- Centres to apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements. Candidates are only eligible for

special consideration if they have a medical certificate or have been advised by their centre not to attend an examination

- If a candidate chooses not to sit an examination they should be aware that special consideration rules will not apply
- JCQ guidance on special consideration can be accessed through the JCQ website

## **7. Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period**

- Centre closed or candidates are unable to attend for an extended period
- The provision of normal teaching and learning is interrupted
- Centre closed due to inaccessibility or risk of injury caused by severe weather

### **Options**

- It remains the responsibility of centres to prepare students, as usual, for examinations
- The church hall 90 Uxbridge Road, Harrow Weald, Middlesex HA3 6DQ, will be used for exams should the centre be closed.
- In the event that the Head Teacher 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
- The centre to open for examinations and examination candidates only, if possible
- Centres may advise candidates to sit examinations in an alternative series
- Special Consideration can be used where candidates are unable to achieve a result due to one of the above factors
- Special Consideration means that an exam result can be generated by the awarding body, based on factors such as a child's performance in other assessments in the same subject

## **8. Failure of IT systems and Cyber attack**

- IT system failure at final entry deadline
- IT system failure during exams preparation
- IT system failure at results release time
- Cyber-attack on IT system

### **Options**

- Awarding bodies to be informed of the situation immediately and an extension to any deadlines should be requested
- ICT contractor team, Wibird, to be on standby to repair damage/rectify the situation quickly
- Special Consideration can be applied for in the event of a serious disruption
- All GCSE exams are conducted on paper which are held in secure storage
- All policies and relevant paperwork are filed in a secure location
- Results have also been requested via post should there be any disruptions to the systems.
- Where candidates produce work electronically, their work is backed up regularly

and stored securely on the centre's secure IT system, thus ensuring protection from corruption and any implications of any cyber-attack.

- The Exam's officer will ensure they regularly review National Cyber Security Centre advice for support in cyber security.

### **9. Lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice**

- 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 expected incident at exam time

#### **Options**

- Identify, working with responsible SLT member, a short – list of suitable rooms including reserves
- Move pupils from normal classrooms for the duration of the examinations
- The church hall, 90 Uxbridge Road, Harrow Weald, Middlesex HA3 6DQ is available for contingency should the school not be available.
- School can be closed for other pupils and lessons can be offered online.

### **10. Disruption to the distribution of examination papers**

- Disruption to the distribution of examination papers to centres in advance of examinations

#### **Recommended Actions**

- Contact awarding organisations who can provide centres with electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network
- Awarding organisations may be able to fax examination papers to centres if electronic transfer is not possible
- The Examinations Officer would need to ensure that copies are received, made and stored under secure conditions
- Source alternative couriers for delivery of hardcopies

### **11. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts**

- Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts

#### **Recommended Actions**

- In the first instance centres to seek advice from awarding organisations and normal collection agency regarding collection. Centres are not to make their own arrangements for transportation without approval from awarding organisations.
- Centres to ensure secure storage of completed examination papers until collection

### **12. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked**

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

#### **Recommended Actions**

- Special Consideration from awarding organisations should be requested to generate candidate marks for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement as defined by the awarding organisations
- Candidates to retake affected assessment at subsequent assessment window

### 13. Centre unable to distribute results as normal

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

#### Recommended Actions

- Centre to make arrangements to access its results at an alternative site.
- Centre to post results to individual students.
- Centre to make arrangements to coordinate access to post result services from an alternative site.
- Centre to share facilities with other centres if this is possible.

#### Useful information

AQA

<http://www.aqa.org.uk/>

JCQ

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/homepage.cfm>

Pearson/Edexcel

<http://www.edexcel.com/Pages/home.aspx>

Ofqual

<http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/>

DfE

<http://www.education.gov.uk/>

DfE – Exams Delivery Support

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/qualifications/examsadmin>

OCR

<http://www.ocr.org.uk/>

WJEC

<http://www.wjec.co.uk/>

ASDAN

<https://www.asdan.org.uk/about/faqs>