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Exam Contingency Plan

2018-19

Exam
contingency
plan

2018/19

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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 Newman Catholic 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.

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 (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;*”

Causes of potential 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 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:

- Head teacher to appoint an acting Exams Officer as soon as possible, ensuring the Key tasks as listed above are understood
- Exam Boards to be kept informed of developments
- Exams Officer to ensure essential information is available to the AHT in charge of exams and Head of Key stage 4
- Exams Officer to ensure the Exam policies and procedures are up to date at all times

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
 - 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 head of SENCo to act as SENCo immediately
- Testing and Assessments continue to be carried out by qualified members of the SEN team
- Applications for Access Arrangements to be made in conjunction with the Exams Officer
- Senior members of the SEN team to be fully up to date with the JCQ Regulations (Orange Book)

3. Head of Department 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:

- Head teacher to appoint an acting HOD as soon as possible
- Exam Officer to liaise with the acting HOD to ensure that all the above key tasks are carried out on time

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:

- Teaching staff are trained in invigilation
- Teaching staff are to be used as invigilators- absence and resulting gaps in invigilation are managed by the Cover Manager in consultation with head teacher.
- Invigilation is planned well in advance and always with reserve staff allocated
- A pool of senior, experienced staff are used as Senior Invigilators- absence of Senior Invigilators can therefore be covered

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:

- Pre-planning is essential. Exam rooms are allocated well in advance of the examination window by the Exams Officer in consultation with the Assistant Head teacher and the Head of Key stage 4
- The two large exam venues are situated in different, unconnected buildings around the school. Should one become unavailable it will be possible to rearrange venues and seating plans at short notice in order to accommodate candidates. In this case, the centre will communicate with parents, carers, candidates and staff with up-to-date information.
- Senior Invigilators and Head of Key stage 4 will assist the Exams Officer in maintaining the security of exam papers should a venue be changed a very short notice.
- Exams Officer to ensure that any late-notice rooms comply with regulations as set out in the JCQ ICE book.

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:

- Failure at Entry Deadline -Assistant Head to liaise with Head of IT and Exams Officer to enable a swift resolution to any issues. Exams Officer to contact exam boards as quickly as possible to identify alternative route for processing entries (e.g. via exam board secure websites).
- Failure during exams preparation - Assistant Head to liaise with the Head of IT as above. Exams Officer to inform exam boards of ongoing situation
- Failure at results release time - Assistant Head to liaise with Head of IT and Exams Officer to enable a swift resolution to any issues. Exams Officer to contact exam boards as quickly as possible to identify alternative route for receiving results (e.g. via exam board secure sites).

7. Emergency evacuation of the exam room

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Whole centre evacuation during exam time due to serious incident resulting in exam candidates being unable to return to exam rooms to start, proceed with or complete their exams

Centre actions

- Senior Invigilators, Invigilators, SLT, Head of key stage 4 and Exams Officer to ensure emergency evacuation plan is followed, maintaining the integrity of the exam
- Candidates to be held separately, avoiding contact with other pupils, and ensuring that candidates do not talk to one another until they have been relocated to another of our principal venues wherever possible

8. 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:

- The centre to communicate with parents, carers, students and staff about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plans to address this.
- Head teacher to prioritise teaching venues on site for students in exam years if possible
- Exams Officer to inform exam boards of developments
- Consider use of alternative venues

9. 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 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
- Consider use of alternative venues

10. 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:

- School will always be open for examination candidates unless a situation means that it is unsafe for anyone to enter the building
- In this instance, Exams Officer will inform each awarding organisation which examinations are affected as soon as possible
- Consider use of alternative venues
- Centre to communicate with parents, carers, candidates and staff regarding alternative arrangements

11. 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:

- Exams Officer to communicate with awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of papers
- Exams Officer to inform Head teacher, Senior Leadership team and Head of Key stage 4 of new arrangements

12. 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:

- Exams Officer to communicate with relevant awarding organisations as soon as possible to resolve the issue
- Scripts to be stored securely according to JCQ regulations until transport is confirmed

13. 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:

- Head teacher to communicate this immediately to the relevant awarding organisation(s) and subsequently to students and their parents or carers.
- Candidates to re-take the affected assessments at a subsequent assessment window if possible

14. 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:

- Unable to access results - Exams Officer will contact awarding bodies regarding alternative options (e.g, download results from awarding body secure websites)
- Unable to distribute results - the centre will communicate with parents, carers, students and HODs with details of alternative arrangements (e.g. alternative site). Information also to be posted on the school website and communicated to reception staff and school office

Causes 7-13 – all scenarios, criteria and specific communications have been taken directly from the *Joint contingency plan in the event of widespread disruption to the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*

15. Contact Numbers for Awarding Bodies

AQA	0800 197 7162
CIE	01223 553554
Edexcel	0844 463 2535
OCR	01223 553998
WJEC	029 2026 5000

Further guidance to inform and implement contingency planning

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>

Guidance on alternative site arrangements

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

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>