



Malbank School and Sixth Form College



Rejoice in being the best that we can be

EXAM CONTINGENCY PLAN



Key staff involved in contingency planning	
John Harrison	Headteacher
Janine Edwards	Deputy Headteacher
Dave Shepherd	Assistant Headteacher in charge of exams
Jo Lunt	SENCO
Vicki Denny/Nicki Hemmings	Exams Officers
Craig Batty	Head of 6th Form

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 Malbank School. 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.

At all times, the Examinations Officer, Assistant Examinations Officer and Senior Leadership Team will liaise with the relevant Awarding Body to ensure any contingency plans meet with its requirements and that JCQ regulations are adhered to where possible.

Alongside internal processes, this plan is informed by the Ofqual **Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland** which provides guidance in the publication *What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted* and the **JCQ Joint Contingency Plan** for the Examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the **JCQ notice Preparing for disruption to examinations** (effective from 11 October 2021).

This plan also confirms Malbank School's compliance with JCQ's **General Regulations for Approved Centres** (section 5.3) 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. The examination contingency plan should reinforce procedures in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations, or on results day, owing to an unforeseen emergency



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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Assistant Principal to assume responsibility for the above tasks with the support of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)



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
- 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The Lead Teaching Assistant, Examinations Officer and Assistant Principal to work with SLT to identify students where applications for access arrangements may be required. The employment of outside agencies/professionals may be required.

3. 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The Examinations Officer to liaise with acting Head of Department and/or SLT, if necessary, to ensure all necessary deadlines are adhered to. Where this is not possible, the EO will liaise with the relevant Awarding Body and act upon advice received.



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

- The Examinations Officer will review the invigilation staffing at the start of each academic year to ensure sufficient staff are recruited and trained in a timely fashion.
- Key support staff (who have been trained) will be called upon for invigilation duties at short notice and for peak exam days.
- In extreme cases, teachers who are not involved in the subject being examined will be used in a room where there is already one or more trained 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 expected incident at exam time

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The EO with the Operations Director will organise rooming for examinations before the Easter holidays ensuring sufficient time is available to identify appropriate rooms and plan appropriately.
- In the event of a room not being available at very short notice, sufficient staff will be made available to ensure the security of the examination is not compromised whilst alternative rooming is sourced. The SLT will work with the EO at all times during such emergencies.



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*
- *Network Failure during online examinations and use of Word Processors*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Submit the final entries a day before Awarding Bodies deadline.
- Failing this - the EO, in consultation with the SLT, will make entries from another venue direct to the Awarding Bodies. Results may also be accessed directly from the AB. At all times during the system failure the EO will liaise with the AB to minimise disruption and costs incurred.
- Examinations for Functional Skills to be rescheduled.
- Examinations requiring a word processor, separate log in available and spare standalone laptops as back up.

7. Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lock down)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Whole centre evacuation (or lock down) during exam time due to serious incident resulting in exam candidates being unable to start, proceed with or complete their exams

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

Please refer to the lockdown policy, comprehensive updates have been applied to the fire and lockdown policy in light of covid and this material will be referenced. Also, transfer exams to one of our 5 other primary schools and/or Nantwich Town football ground conference suite

8. 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- SLT to manage all such incidents

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Where there is disruption to teaching time and students miss teaching and learning, it remains the responsibility of Malbank School to prepare students, as usual, for examinations. In the case of modular courses, Malbank may advise candidates to sit examinations in an alternative series. Malbank has a remote learning policy which will come into place should the school have to close for any reason

9. Candidates at risk of being unable to take examinations – centre remains open

Criteria for implementation of the plan



- *Candidates at risk of being unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The EO will contact the relevant AB to discuss alternative arrangements and liaise with the SLT to take appropriate action.

10. Centre at risk of being unable to open as normal during the exams period

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Centre at risk of being unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations

**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.*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The EO will contact the relevant AB to discuss alternative arrangements and liaise with the SLT to take appropriate action. SLT will liaise with our 5 primary schools/ Nantwich Town Football Club to arrange.

School- Phone number

School- Phone number

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Malbank School would contact the AB and request electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network. Malbank School would need to ensure that copies are received, made and stored under secure conditions. Awarding organisations would provide guidance on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances.

12. Disruption to transporting 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:

- Where the 'Yellow Label' service is used the EO will contact the AB to notify them of any such difficulties and put in place suitable alternative arrangements

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The EO will contact the AB to notify them of any such incidents and act upon advice given

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The EO has access from home and will download the files from the AB
- The EO can email students to advise them to come in to the changed venue and collect the results at certain time slots. If this is not possible then the EO can arrange for the students to have their results emailed to their google accounts.
- The EO will contact the AB to notify them of any such incidents and act upon advice given

**information taken from the Joint contingency plan for the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*

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

Contingency planning

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

Covid specific guidance

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

- actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak from the Department for Education in England
- actions for FE colleges and providers during the coronavirus outbreak from the Department for Education in England
- responsibility for exams from the Department for Education in England
- vocational, technical and other general qualifications in 2022 from Ofqual (regulator)
- GCSE, AS and A level qualifications in 2022 from Ofqual (regulator)
- education and childcare: coronavirus from Welsh Government
- Qualifications Wales homepage from Qualifications Wales (regulator)



- coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance for school and educational settings in Northern Ireland from Department of Education in Northern Ireland
- coronavirus (COVID-19) (information from CCEA) – information on vocational, technical and general qualifications from CCEA Regulation

General contingency guidance

- emergency planning and response from the Department for Education in England
- school organisation: local-authority-maintained schools from the Department for Education in England
- exceptional closure days from the Department of Education in Northern Ireland
- checklist - exceptional closure of schools from the Department of Education in Northern Ireland
- school terms and school closures from NI Direct
- opening schools in extremely bad weather - guidance for schools from the Welsh Government
- bomb threats procedures for handling bomb threats from the National Counter Terrorism Security Office

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

See also the JCQ Joint Contingency Plan for the Examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Steps you should take

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.

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.

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.

Steps the awarding organisation should take

Exam planning

1. Establish and maintain, and at all times comply with, an up-to-date, written contingency plan.
2. 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.

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.

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.

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.

Wider communications



The regulators, Ofqual in England, Qualifications Wales in Wales and CCEA Regulation 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.

*(Ofqual guidance extract above 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**)*

JCQ

1. **15.1** The qualification regulators, awarding bodies 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-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland/what-schools-and-colleges-should-do-if-exams-or-other-assessments-are-seriously-disrupted>
2. **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.
3. **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.
4. **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.
5. **15.5** The awarding bodies will designate a 'contingency day' for examinations, summer 2022. This is consistent with the qualification regulators' document *Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland*: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland>



6. The designation of a 'contingency day' within the common examination timetable is in the event of national or significant local disruption to examinations. It is part of the awarding bodies' standard contingency planning for examinations.
7. In the event of national disruption to a day of examinations in summer 2022, the awarding bodies will liaise with the qualification regulators and government departments to agree the most appropriate option for managing the impact. As a last resort the affected examinations will be rescheduled. Although every effort would be taken to keep the impact to a minimum, it is possible that there could be more than one timetable date affected following the disruption, up to and including the contingency day. Centres will be alerted if it is agreed to reschedule the examinations and the affected candidates will be expected to make themselves available in such circumstances. The decision regarding the rescheduling of examinations will always rest with the awarding body. The centre must conduct the examination on the scheduled date unless instructed to do otherwise by the awarding body.
8. Where candidates choose not to be available for the rescheduled examination(s) for reasons other than those traditionally covered by special consideration, they will not be eligible for enhanced grading arrangements. Centres must therefore ensure candidates and parents are aware of this contingency arrangement so that they may take it into account

when making their plans for the summer. However, the awarding bodies will not insist upon candidates being available throughout the entire timetable period as a matter of course.

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

JCQ Joint Contingency Plan www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/other-documents

Contacting the awarding bodies

In all cases, if there are any concerns, please contact the relevant awarding body for advice:

AQA

0800 197 7162

eos@aqa.org.uk

CCEA

028 9026 1212, 028 9026 1293, 028 9026 1425

centresupport@ccea.org.uk

OCR

01223 553998

support@ocr.org.uk

Pearson

0344 463 2535

WJEC



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