

Honiton Community College  
Academy Trust



This plan was adopted by the Governing Body of  
Honiton Community College Academy Trust  
on the 21<sup>st</sup> October 2020  
and will be reviewed annually.

# EXAM CONTINGENCY PLAN

## 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 Honiton Community College. 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 and Executive 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 information contained in the *Joint contingency plan for the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* where it is stated that “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.”

# 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

#### Exam Contingency Policy

- 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**

- Executive Leadership Team (ELT) to assume responsibility for the above tasks.

## **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:**

- The Additional Needs Assistants and Examinations Officer to work with ELT 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:**

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

### **4. Disruption because of COVID-19**

#### **Criteria for implementation of the plan**

*It is our expectation that schools and colleges will run autumn series exams, including where the school or college is only open for smaller student groups. We also expect schools and colleges in areas under local restrictions to run exams. Where candidates are travelling to or within an area under local restrictions to take exams, they should refer to the local restrictions guidance. Candidates should expect to be able to travel for the purpose of taking exams.*

#### **Centre actions**

The Examinations Officer will ensure that students are aware that exams will continue as published if there are local lockdown restrictions.

The Examinations Officer will ensure that where students are in mixed bubbles they will be seated at least 2m apart. Invigilators must be able to stay 2m away from students and still see all the students.

The centre will ensure that the exam rooms will be thoroughly cleaned including desks and chairs.

Invigilators will be provided with visors. Once the identity of a candidate has been checked they may wear a face covering if they wish.

Invigilators do not need to wear gloves but they will need to wash their hands after handling exam papers.

## 5. Internal governance arrangements

### Criteria for implementation of the plan

- has in place a written escalation process should the head of centre, or a member of the senior leadership team with oversight of examination administration, be absent;
- has in place a member of the senior leadership team who will provide support and guidance to the examinations officer and ensure that the integrity and security of examinations and assessments is maintained throughout an examination series

### Centre Actions

All members of ELT know how to support the Exams Officer and have the experience to start examinations. In particular, they are aware that the times that exams are allowed to start are dependent upon the length of time of the examination.

ELT are also aware that the security of the examination materials is paramount,

## 6. 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 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
- The Examinations Officer will be aware of the school staff available for invigilation duties at short notice and for peak exam days

## 7. 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:**

- The Examinations Officer 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 ELT will work with the Examinations Officer at all times during such emergencies

## **8. 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:**

- The Examinations Officer, in consultation with the ELT, will make entries from another venue direct to the Awarding Bodies. Results may also be accessed directly from the Awarding Bodies. At all times during the system failure the Examinations Officer will liaise with the Awarding Bodies to minimise disruption and costs incurred.

## **9. 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:**

- Stop the candidates from writing, invigilators to collect attendance registers, evacuate the exam room in line with the school fire and emergency evacuation procedures policy, ensure all question papers are left in the exam room. Advise candidates they must leave the room in silence and any discussion of the paper may lead to disqualification, lead the students out of the hall in single file keeping 1 meter between each other. Keep a record of the time and duration of the interruption. For small exams, move candidates to alternative location, where possible, ensure candidates have the full duration. Complete the incident log sheet and submit to relevant awarding body.

## **10. 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:**

- ELT to manage all such incidents. There is a contingency plan in place to provide a system of blended learning to all students.

## **11. 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

*\*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:**

- The Examinations Officer will contact the relevant Awarding Body to discuss alternative arrangements and liaise with the ELT to take appropriate action

## **12. 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 Examinations Officer will contact the relevant Awarding Body to discuss alternative arrangements and liaise with the ELT to take appropriate action

## **13. 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:**

Awarding organisations to provide centres with electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network. Centres would need to ensure that copies are received, made and stored under secure conditions and should have plans in place to facilitate such an action. Awarding organisations would provide guidance on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances. (as a last resort, and in close collaboration with centres and regulators, awarding organisations to consider scheduling of the examination on an alternative date)

## **14. 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 Examinations Officer will contact the Awarding Body to notify them of any such difficulties and put in place suitable alternative arrangements

## **15. 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 Examinations Officer will contact the Awarding Body to notify them of any such incidents and act upon advice given

## **16. 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 Examinations Officer will contact the Awarding Body 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 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/what-schools-and-colleges-should-do-if-exams-or-other-assessments-are-seriously-disrupted>

### **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 - Contingency planning*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-yellow-label-service/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-guide>

### **JCQ**

*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>

*Guidance on access arrangements and special consideration*

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>