

Greenford High School

Policy Document



Examination Contingency Policy

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Purpose of Exam Contingency planning

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the management and administration of the exams process at Greenford High 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.

Alongside internal processes, this plan is informed by scenarios contained in the *Joint contingency plan in event of widespread disruption to the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*.

This plan also confirms Greenford High School is compliant with JCQ general regulations (section 5.3) in that:

The Centre agrees to “have 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.

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

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 candidate’s work not stored under required secure conditions
- 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 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

Actions taken at Greenford High School to mitigate exam officer extended absence at key point in the exam process (cycle):

- In event of extended absence of the Examination Officer, the Exams Assistant will provide cover with support from Data Manager and SLT responsible for Exams.
- Failing this Data Manager and SLT responsible for exams take over.
- A member of the invigilation team may be required to assist with administration on a part time basis.

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 providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained

Exam time

- Access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms

Actions taken at Greenford High School to mitigate SENCo extended absence at key points in the exam process (cycle):

- In event of extended absence of SENCo, the Deputy Head of Department will be required to provide cover with assistance of the SEN members.
- SLT responsible for SEN takes over with support from SLT responsible for exams.

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

- 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

Action taken at Greenford High School to mitigate staff extended absence at key points in the exams process (cycle):

- In the event of teaching staff extended absence, the Deputy Head of department assisted by nominated member of department staff will cover to ensure all tasks are undertaken. The Exams Officer will ensure that proper planning is in place to assist with each task. The Assistant Head teacher in charge of Exams will also assist when required.
- Deputy in department or Key Stage holders takes responsibility.

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

Actions taken at Greenford High School to mitigate lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence:

- As we have a pool of 14 invigilators, we always have cover in case of absence. When needed, Exams officer, Exams Assistant or Data Manager will cover when there is a lack of appropriately trained invigilators. Members of support staff are also trained for use in such circumstances.

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

Actions taken at Greenford High School to mitigate lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice:

- As we are a large new build, we are able to use alternative rooms when required at short notice. Cover Manger is advised and classes displaced to ensure exams take place. Provision is in place to source alternative accommodation e.g. Marquee if required.
- The school has sufficient emergency space to be used including the Main Gym and class rooms above the dining hall that are quite.

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

Actions taken at Greenford High School to mitigate failure of IT system

- We have our ICT Technical Manager and three IT technicians on call when IT system fails. The ICT Department teaching staffs is also available if required. The Deputy Head teacher in charge of ICT will provide any input if required. The Examinations staffs are responsible for communication with the Examining Bodies in the event of IT failure at any point during the exam process.
- The extensive IT support department will access an alternative appropriate system with the support of SLT responsible for Data and SLT responsible for exams.

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

Actions taken at Greenford High School to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The 'Centre emergency evacuation procedure' will be followed
- Notices and warnings to give out
- Invigilators were given training and knows what to do

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

Actions taken at Greenford High School to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Exams officer to advise awarding bodies, Exams officer also submit plans for special consideration or with support of SLT find alternative accommodation.
- Where there is disruption to teaching time and students miss teaching and learning, it is school's responsibility to prepare students for examinations as usual. Decisions will be made to have lessons and hold examinations at an alternative site, i.e. hire a marquee for exams and lessons or facilitate alternative methods of learning in lesson time. The centre will also prioritise candidates who will be facing examinations in a near future and advise other students, where appropriate, to sit examinations in the next available series.
- Centre will communicate with parents, carers and students about the disruption to teaching time and provide appropriate work through google classroom.

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

Actions taken at Greenford High School to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Centre to liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat an alternative site in agreement with the awarding bodies.

- Candidates can also be offered the possibility of sitting the examination at the next available series.
- Exams officer will apply to awarding bodies for special considerations for candidates who meet the minimum requirement.
- Centre will communicate solutions to parents, carers and candidates.

10. Centre unable to open as normal during the examination period

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations

Actions taken at Greenford High School to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The school would endeavour to open for examinations only, if possible. Otherwise an alternative site would be available in agreement with awarding bodies, e.g. share with another centre, use of other building or a marquee. Again, an application for special consideration would be made where candidate meet the minimum requirement.

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

Actions taken at Greenford High School to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Exams officer to follow up with exam boards if scripts not in centre 10 days before exam. Exam officer or deputy to contact awarding bodies to arrange for alternative provisions or to enable printable copies through electronic transfer.
- Awarding bodies to provide centre with electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network. Centre will ensure that copies are received, made and stored under secure conditions and will have plans in place to facilitate such an action. Awarding bodies would provide guidance on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances.
- As a last resort and in close collaboration with centre and regulators, awarding bodies to consider scheduling of examination on an alternative date.

12. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts/assessment evidence

Actions taken at Greenford High School to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- In the event of a delay to normal collection arrangements, the Exams staff will contact Parcelforce to advice of the delay and request an ad hoc collection if necessary. As Parcelforce collect exams script on a daily basis at a pre-arranged time slot, the collection is usually made the following day. The examining bodies will be advised of this delay.
- All completed examination papers will be kept in the secure storage until collection.

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
- Completed examination scripts/assessment evidence does not reach awarding bodies

Actions taken at Greenford High School to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The Exams Officer will contact the examining bodies who would generate marks for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement as defined by the awarding organisations in consultation with the regulators.
- Candidates are offered the possibility of retaking the assessment affected at a subsequent assessment window if possible.
- Students, parents and carers will be informed

14. Greenford High School unable to distribute results as normal or facilitate post results services

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

Actions taken at Greenford High School to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- **Distribution of results:** In this event, an alternative site would be made available in agreement with awarding bodies. For example, School would share with another centre or use another building or a marquee.
- Exams officer to download results from awarding body's website.
- **Facilitation of post results services:** Centre will make arrangements to make post results requests at an alternative location.
- Centre will contact the relevant awarding bodies if electronic post results requests are not possible.