

All Saints Catholic College



Exam Contingency Plan

**This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance
with current regulations**

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Date to be further reviewed: June 2023

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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 ALL SAINTS 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:

- In the event of the extended absence of the Exams Officer, the Headteacher will appoint a suitable Deputy Examinations Officer as rapidly as possible, who will follow procedures and practices within the Examinations Officer remit.
- Exams Officer to ensure essential information is available to Headteacher

- Exams Officer to ensure Exam Cycle, policies and procedures are up to date at all time

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:

- Deputy Head to appoint a suitable Deputy SENCo as rapidly as possible, who will follow procedures and practices within the SENCo remit.
- Exams Officer to ensure essential information is available to Deputy Head (Academic)
- Exams Officer to ensure Exam Cycle, policies and procedures are up to date at all times (Once tested and access arrangements approved, the implementation of these arrangements would be organised by the Exams Officer during the exam season.)

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 Exams Officer would ensure all entry information was collected and submitted on time by informing the Departmental Line Manager of missing information required and together liaising with remaining departmental staff to ensure a complete and accurate entry.

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:

- Where invigilation shortages are known in advance, the school will source trained invigilators from supply agencies.
- In the case of an invigilator failing to attend on the day of the exam, appropriately trained centre staff would be used to cover the shortage.
- Examinations Officer to ensure a specific Exams Day Contingency Plan is in place (Appendix 1)

- Examinations Officer to ensure a specific Emergency Evacuation Plan is in place (Appendix 2)

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:

- In the event of the Exams Officer being unable to identify sufficient or appropriate rooms, she would liaise with a Senior Leader to arrange relocation of classes to ensure best possible exam environment for candidates.
- In the unlikely event that the lack of rooms was due to an unusually large cohort for any given exam, we would consider splitting the cohort into 2 groups whilst maintaining the security of the exam at all times.
- If the main Hall venue were to be unavailable we would conduct the exam session in the Gym and additional smaller venues as required.

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:

- Examinations Officer to contact in-house IT department.
- Examinations Officer to contact all Examination Boards (see Appendix 1 for telephone numbers) for alternative route for dissemination of results.

7. 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 and students about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plans to address this.
- Prioritise alternative venues for students with imminent exams working with local/partner schools.
- Examinations Officer to advise the Examination Boards as appropriate.
- In extreme circumstances advise candidates they may need to sit exams in the next available series.

8. 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.
- Centre to liaise with Exam Boards to sit exams at a different venue in extreme circumstances.
- Should a significant number of candidates need to be isolated due to sickness, use the Gymnasium and request a member of the First Aid team to be available.
- If a small number <5 then students to be isolated in small venue/classroom in school with separate invigilation.
- Apply for Special Consideration for those affected to the appropriate Exam Boards.

9. 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:

- 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.
- Centre to liaise with Exam Boards to sit exams at a different venues in discussions with local authority/local schools and partner schools
- Pupils to be isolated until such time a suitable venue and transport has been arranged
- In extreme circumstances advise candidates they may need to sit exams in the next available series.

10. 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:

- In all scenarios the centre would communicate with the awarding organisations to fully understand the plans in place for alternative delivery of papers where possible.
- When necessary and made available, the Exams Officer would access electronic copies of examination papers via secure external network or organise the receipt of faxed copies. The Exams Officer would subsequently organise the copying and secure storage of the exam papers.

11. 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:

- In the event of a missed collection the Exams Officer would ensure that completed scripts remain in secure exam storage until despatch arrangements are established.
- The centre would seek advice from the awarding organisations and the normal collection agency regarding arrangements for collection of scripts.

12. 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 centre would immediately report the damage or loss to the relevant awarding organisations and seek advice.
- In circumstances where the awarding organisations are able to generate candidate marks for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence, the centre would provide all requested evidence.
- Where possible and advised to do so, the centre would organise for the candidates to retake the assessment that has been affected at a subsequent session.
- The Head of Centre would communicate the action taken with the students and their parents or carers.

13. 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:

- In circumstances where accurate results or post result services are unavailable due to system failure within one or more of the awarding organisations, the centre would follow the procedures put in place and communicated to the centre by that awarding body.
- In circumstances where access to results is unavailable due to system failure within centre, download of results would be made via secure external networks, in order to provide the timely distribution of all necessary information to students.
- In the event that the centre building is inaccessible on results day access to results will be arranged at an alternative site and staff, students and parents informed as soon as possible of the change in distribution of results

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*

Exam Day Contingency Plan

Exam Item	Location	Responsibility
Keys to secure storage for exam papers and exam stationary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exams Officer – onsite Data Manager – offsite 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exams Officer Head of Centre Deputy Exams Officer (if required)
Exams office – Centre Timetable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emailed to ALL staff On School website Handed to students On Social Media Exams Notice Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exam Officer SLT Deputy Exams Officer (if required)
Seating Plans	<p>Completed on SIMs and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> handed to students copy in exam rooms exams Notice Board exams officer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exams officer Deputy Exams Officer (if required)
Exam cards/setting out of exam rooms/notices etc.	<p>ALL exam rooms inc:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hall Learners with AA Learning Support Other exam rooms where needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exams officer Deputy Exams Officer (if required)
Invigilators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment Training Allocation of rooms Supervision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exams officer Lead Invigilator SLT Deputy Exams Officer (if required)
Access Arrangements (incl Cover Sheets)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tested and applied for by SENCO WP/Scribe/Reader sheets AAO applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exams officer SENCO Deputy Exams Officer (if required) Deputy SENCO (if required)
Script envelopes/Examiner address labels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reception Exam secure room and storage <p>(All signed for on arrival)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receptionist Exams officer Deputy Exams Officer (if required)
Exam clashes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resolved prior to exams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exams officer Deputy Exams Officer (if required)
Collection of scripts	<p>On arrival at centre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reception Secure room and storage <p>Dispatched to ALL exam rooms inc:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exams Officer Lead Invigilator Deputy Exams Officer (if required)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hall • Learners with AA • Learning Support • Other exam rooms where needed <p>Once exam has finish:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Returned to the secure exams room 									
Collation of Scripts	Collation in the exam secure storage, before and after the exam incusinf packaging of scripts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exams officer • Lead Invigilator • Deputy Exams Officer (if required) 								
Completion of proof of posing form/posting scripts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection arranged before exam season with Parcelforce Worldwide. • Collection on a daily basis. • Parcelforce Worldwide log is completed and signed and dated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exams Officer • Receptionist • Parcelforce Worldwide • Deputy Exams Officer (if required) 								
<p>Awarding bodies telephone numbers:</p> <table> <tr> <td>1. AQA</td> <td>0800 197 7162</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. PEARSON/EDEXCEL</td> <td>0844 463 2535</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3 OCR</td> <td>01223 553 998</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4. WJEC</td> <td>029 2026 5000</td> </tr> </table>			1. AQA	0800 197 7162	2. PEARSON/EDEXCEL	0844 463 2535	3 OCR	01223 553 998	4. WJEC	029 2026 5000
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Policy for Severe Disruption/Evacuation during External Examinations

Possible Causes

- Unreasonable noise disruption
- Fire/Bomb/Flood Alert during an Examination

1. Unreasonable noise disruption

In the event of a severe disruption in an externally set examination, invigilators are advised to stop the examination, tell the candidates to close their answer books, make a note of the time and summon help (Exams Officer/Headteacher/Deputy Head/Main Office) to sort out the problem. Exam room conditions must be maintained in accordance with the JCQ Information for Candidates booklet.

When the disruption has been resolved the candidates can resume their examination and the time taken to resolve the issue added on at the end of the examinations. The candidates must be supervised at all times and thus the break in the examination can be regarded as 'a supervised rest break'.

An incident log must be completed with the times of the disruptions noted. The Exams Officer to make Examining Bodies aware of the disruption if necessary.

2. Fire / Lockdown Alert during an Examination

In the event of fire or lockdown alarm sounding (or any other emergency situation arising) during an examination, the first priority of the invigilators is to preserve life. The next priority is to ensure the security of the examination.

On hearing the fire or lockdown alarm the invigilators must ensure the candidates safety by following the relevant school's procedure.

A Room Log must be completed with the times of the disruptions noted and a special consideration form will be filled in so as not to disadvantage the candidates.

If the emergency is over quickly, the candidates should resume the examination. A careful note of the time of resumption must be noted and the full time allocated for the examination allowed.

In the event of the Fire Alarm sounding, the invigilators must implement the school's 'Public Examination Emergency Evacuation Procedures'

If it is necessary to evacuate the building, the lead invigilator should then stop the examination taking a note of the time and evacuate the building by row and in silence. The candidates must leave all examination papers, scripts and writing equipment behind, and in accordance with the school emergency evacuation procedures. The candidates should remain supervised and in silence throughout the emergency. Several other members of staff will be needed to help police this.

In the event of an emergency requiring candidates to evacuate buildings during an examination the following areas should be used but the candidates must be kept at a distance and in silence from the main body of pupils who will be mustering at the same emergency evacuation points:

- Pupils from examinations to be kept on the 'red gra' area at the far end

At all times invigilators must act in accordance with section 16 of the 'Instructions for conducting examination' booklet. They should also summon assistance immediately an emergency arises. Silence should be maintained during the time the candidates are outside the examination room. Section 16 of 'Instructions for conducting examination' booklet states:

The invigilator must take the following action in an emergency such as a fire alarm or a bomb alert.

- Stop the candidates from writing.
- Collect the attendance register and evacuate the examination room in line with the instructions given by the appropriate authority.
- Advise candidates to leave all question papers and scripts in the examination room
- Candidates should leave the room in silence.
- Make sure that the candidates are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room to make sure there is no discussion about the examination. Make a note of the time of the interruption and how long it lasted.
- Allow the candidates the full working time set for the examination.
- If there are only a few candidates, consider the possibility of taking the candidates (with question papers and scripts) to another place to finish the examination.
- Make a full report of the incident and the action taken (Appendix 3), and send to the relevant awarding body.

In the event of the Lockdown Alarm sounding, the invigilators must implement the school's 'Lockdown Procedure'

- Students sitting an exam in the Main Hall will be evacuated quickly row by row via the opened sliding partition to the Performing Arts room, where the door will be wedged and barricaded with furniture and students prompted to keep low on the floor in silence. An invigilator will check that the rear door is locked.
The Hard lockdown procedures will be followed.
- Students sitting exams in small venues will remain in that venue with their invigilator and follow The Hard lockdown procedure.
Invigilator to inform students to get under their desks and remain silent.
Staff and students must be away from windows and doors.
Classroom door should be wedged or locked if possible and if possible an attempt made to barricade the door.
- Once the emergency is over the Head of Centre, in consideration of the nature of the emergency will make a decision as to whether the school will remain open and in the light of this and in full consideration of the welfare of the candidates will make a decision as to the possibility of resuming the exam.

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>