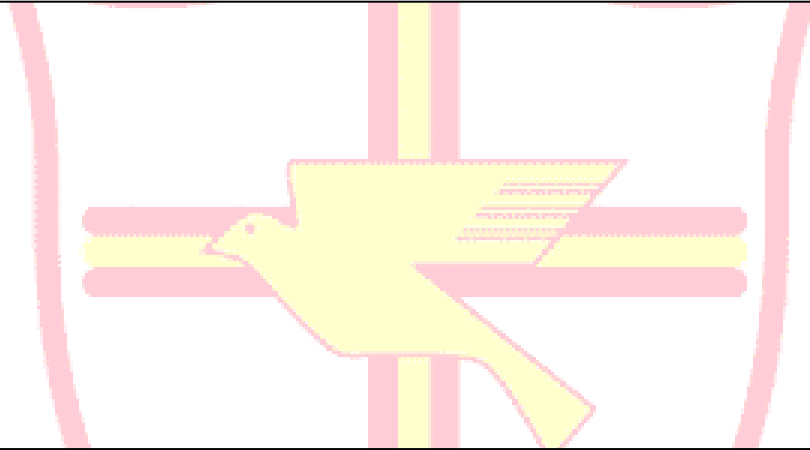




Examinations Contingency Plan



Approved by

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Date of next review 01 March 2020

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Useful information

A large, faint watermark of the St Gregory's Catholic Science College (SGS) logo is centered on the page. The logo features a shield with a vertical yellow and red stripe, and the letters 'SGS' in a grey, serif font at the bottom.

SGS

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 St. Gregory's Catholic Science 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.

Risk Factor 1: Examinations Officer extended absence at key points in the examination cycle

The following are the key tasks involved in the management and administration of the examination cycle which would be at risk in the event of the Examinations Officer being absent:

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

Options:

- The previous Examinations Officer, who is currently a teaching member of staff can be called upon to take over.
- Alternatively, the Examinations Officer of another school can be requested to provide assistance.
- The SLT should nominate a "Deputy" to cover a role or task.
- Consideration should be given to Work Shadowing.
- All procedures should be documented . There are products available via:
- The Key Tasks section of The Exams Office website.
- The Examinations Oracle and Centre Support Service of the Examination Officers Association.
- The Examinations Administration section of the DFE website.
- Examination Board helplines.
- The Exams Office section of the Joint Council for Qualifications website.

Risk Factor 2: SENCo extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

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.

Options:

- Request SenCo assistant to take over until SenCo returns.
- SenCo assistant to identify any candidates not yet approved by Awarding Bodies and complete.
- Examinations Officer to identify any shortfalls in Invigilation requirements and ensure that gaps are filled.
- Once gaps are filled, Examinations Officer to arrange suitable rooms and SenCo assistant to provide training.

Risk Factor 3: Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

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

Options:

- Subject Head of Department or SLT member to provide Examinations Officer with details of Estimated/Final entries.
- Subject Head of Department or SLT member to ensure Examinations Officer is provided with Estimated Grades/Coursework Marks and that Coursework samples are transmitted to Moderators.

Risk Factor 4: Lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence

- Failure to recruit and train sufficient invigilators to conduct exams
- Invigilator shortage on peak exam days
- Invigilator absence on the day of an exam

Options:

- Examinations Officer to maintain a panel of suitable Invigilators which can be called upon in the event of a shortfall.
- Conduct a review of available invigilators and their availability for the next exams series.
- Use provisional timetable and estimated entry information to determine invigilator numbers required.
- Identify where invigilators may be short.
- 4. Request permission to recruit additional invigilators
- SLT member responsible for Cover to provide additional Invigilator resource in the event of a shortfall at short notice.
- Staff agencies to be contacted if none of the above is successful.

Risk Factor 5. Disruption to Public Transport preventing students from reaching Exams Centre.

- Candidates unable to take examinations due to planned lack of public transport.
- Candidates unable to take examinations due to sudden disruption to public transport.
- Candidates arrive late due to public transport problems.

Options:

- Monitor news agencies on a regular basis to identify any potential transportation difficulties.
- Centre to utilise own bus facilities to transport candidates to centre.
- Centre to liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with the relevant awarding organisations.
- Centres to offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series.
- Centres to apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements.
- Latecomers to be permitted to take their examinations providing they are within the JCQ regulations.

Risk Factor 6: Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open

- Candidates are unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal

- Centre to liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with the relevant awarding organisations
- Centres to offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series
- Centres to apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements. Candidates are only eligible for special consideration if they have a medical certificate or have been advised by their centre not to attend an examination.
- If a candidate chooses not to sit an examination they should be aware that special consideration rules will not apply.
- JCQ guidance on special consideration can be accessed through the JCQ website

Risk Factor 7: Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period

- Centre closed or candidates are unable to attend for an extended period.
- The provision of normal teaching and learning is interrupted.
- Centre closed due to inaccessibility or risk of injury caused by severe weather.

Options:

- It remains the responsibility of centres to prepare students, as usual, for 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.
- The centres to open for examinations and examination candidates only, if possible
- Alternative centres should be considered in the event that candidates cannot come to school.
- Centres may advise candidates to sit examinations in an alternative series.
- Special Consideration can be used where candidates are unable to achieve a result due to one of the above factors.
- An exam result can be generated by the awarding body, based on factors such as a child's performance on other assessments in the same subject.

Risk Factor 8: Failure of IT systems

- MIS system failure at final entry deadline
- MIS system failure during exams preparation
- MIS system failure at results release time

Options:

- Awarding bodies to be informed of the situation and an extension to the deadline should be requested.
- MIS contractor and ICT team on standby to repair damage quickly.
- Special Consideration can be applied for in the event of a serious disruption.
- Results can be obtained at an alternative site.

Risk Factor 9: Lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice

- 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

Options:

- Identify, working with responsible SLT member, a short – list of suitable rooms including reserves.
- Move pupils from normal classrooms for the duration of the examinations.
- Plan alternative accommodation for the duration of the incident.

Risk Factor 10. Disruption to the distribution of examination papers.

- Disruption to the distribution of examination papers to centres in advance of examinations.

Recommended Actions:

- Awarding organisations to provide centres with electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network.
- Awarding organisations may be able to fax examination papers to centres if electronic transfer is not possible.
- The Examinations Officer would need to ensure that copies are received, made and stored under secure conditions
- Source alternative couriers for delivery of hardcopies.

Risk Factor 11: Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

- Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts

Recommended Actions:

- In the first instance centres to seek advice from awarding organisations and normal collection agency regarding collection. Centres are not to make their own arrangements for transportation without approval from awarding organisations.
- Centres to ensure secure storage of completed examination papers until collection.

Risk Factor 12: Assessment evidence is not available to be marked

- Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked

Recommended Actions:

- Awarding organisations to generate candidate marks for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement as defined by the awarding organisations
- Candidates to retake affected assessment at subsequent assessment window

Risk Factor 13: Centre unable to distribute results as normal

- Centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post-results services.

Recommended Actions:

- Centre to make arrangements to access its results at an alternative site.
- Centre to make arrangements to coordinate access to post results services from an alternative site.
- Centre to share facilities with other centres if this is possible.

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 <http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/16235/1/2012-12-11-joint-contingency-plan-november-2012.pdf>

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>

16. Useful information

AQA <http://www.aqa.org.uk/> JCQ <http://www.jcq.org.uk/homepage.cfm>

CCEA <http://www.rewardinglearning.org.uk/> Ofqual <http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/>

City & Guilds <http://www.cityandguilds.com/ukhome.html>

DfE <http://www.education.gov.uk/>

Edexcel <http://www.edexcel.com/Pages/home.aspx>

DfE – Exams

Delivery Support

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/qualifications/examsadmin>

EDI <http://www.ediplc.com/> DENI <http://www.deni.gov.uk/>

ICAAE <http://www.icaa.com/> UCAS <http://www.ucas.ac.uk/>

OCR <http://www.ocr.org.uk/> Welsh Government <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/?lang=en>

VTCT <http://www.vtct.org.uk/>

WJEC <http://www.wjec.co.uk/>

JCQ access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration

http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams_office/access_arrangements/

JCQ instructions for conducting examinations

http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams_office/instructions_for_conducting_examinations/

DfE guidance on dealing with disruption to teaching and learning

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/emergencyplanning/a0069425/advice-on-severe-weather>