ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST'S COLLEGE

CONTINGENCY POLICY

St John the Baptist's College Examinations Contingency Plan

The purpose of the plan

The purpose of the joint contingency plan is to ensure there is a consistent and effective response in the event of major disruption to the examination system.

The outcomes of the plan

The overall outcome of the plan is to ensure that the interests of candidates are safeguarded while maintaining the integrity of the examination system and qualification standards.

Qualifications covered by the plan

The qualifications covered by the plan are primarily externally assessed examinations delivered in schools. These include GCSEs.

When the plan would be triggered

The plan would be triggered in the event of a major disruption to the examination system affecting significant numbers of candidates across several awarding organizations.

This could include severe weather, widespread illness, travel disruption, fires, logistical problems or system failures.

Any actions taken will be subject to the advice of the official agencies dealing with the specific circumstances being faced, for example the police, Environment Agency or Health Protection Agency.

Communication

This includes communications between the organizations involved in the response, and communications to stakeholders such as centers, candidates, parents or carers and the public.

Scenario 1 – Disruption of teaching time – a significant number of centres are closed for an extended period

Type of scenario   Disruption to candidates.

Impact on   Teachers, candidates, parents and carers.

When to implement the plan	In the event that a significant number of centres are closed, and candidates are unable to attend for an extended period during normal teaching or study supported time, interrupting the provision of normal teaching and learning.
Example of scenario	Severe flooding closes a significant number of centres in a region. Where there is disruption to teaching time and students miss teaching and learning, it remains the responsibility of centres to prepare students for examinations as usual using the "My school" app and posting relevant teaching materials on the school website.
Recommended actions	It is recommended that centres: - have contingency plans in place to facilitate alternative methods of learning, alternative venues or both. If necessary exam pupils may be taught in the Pastoral Centre. - prioritise candidates who will be facing examinations shortly - advise candidates, where appropriate, to sit examinations in the next available series
Specific communication	The centre will communicate with relevant exam boards, parents, carers and students about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plans to address this. Parents will be notified of alternative arrangements through school website, facebook and text message.
Success criteria	Students continue to be taught either through an alternative method of learning or at an alternative venue

Guidance on emergency planning, with [advice on severe weather](), is available from the Department for Education

Further advice and information

There is also [statutory guidance on school closures]()

Further advice from the Department of Education Northern Ireland can be found in the Useful Information section of this document.

3.2 Scenario 2 – Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centres remain open

Type of scenario   Disruption to candidates

Impact on   School and college staff, teachers, candidates, parents and carers

When to implement the plan   In the event that candidates are unable to attend examination centres to take examinations as normal.

Example of scenario   A sickness bug means that a number of candidates are not able to attend a centre to take an examination.

Recommended actions   It is recommended that centres:
- liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with the relevant awarding organisations. Possibly the library in school (depending on the number of pupils) or the Pastoral Centre.
- offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series.
- apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements.

Please note: candidates are only eligible for special consideration if they have been fully prepared and have covered the whole course but are affected by

adverse circumstances beyond their control. If a candidate chooses not to sit an examination for other reasons they should be aware that special consideration rules will not apply.

Specific communication	The centre will liaise 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. Correspondence via school website, facebook and text message.
Success criteria	Candidates are able to sit examinations with minimum disruption or additional stress to them.
Further advice and information	JCQ's guidance on special consideration and alternative site arrangements can be accessed through the JCQ website.

3.3 Scenario 3 – Disruption in the distribution of examination papers

Type of scenario	Transport or delivery
Impact on	Awarding organisation staff, teachers, candidates
When to implement the plan	In the event that there is a disruption to the distribution of examination papers to centres in advance of examinations.
Example of scenario	A courier delivers a wrong set of examination papers to a centre.
Recommended actions	It is recommended that awarding organisations: - source alternative couriers for delivery of hard copies. - provide centres with electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network. - fax examination papers to centres if electronic transfer is not possible. Please note that the examinations officer would need to ensure that copies are received, made and

stored under secure conditions.

Specific communication	The centre will communicate with specific awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of papers.
Success criteria	Students are able to proceed with taking examinations without having to reschedule examinations.
Further advice and information	not applicable

3.4 Scenario 4 – Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

Type of scenario	Transport or delivery
Impact on	Courier staff, centre staff, awarding organisation staff.
When to implement the plan	In the event that there is a delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts
Example of scenario	A courier contacts a centre to report a problem about picking up scripts on time.
Recommended actions	It is recommended that centres: - in the first instance, seek advice from the specific awarding organisations and their normal collection agency regarding collection. - ensure secure storage of completed examination scripts in the school safe until collection of papers. - do not make their own arrangements for transportation without approval from awarding organisations.
Specific communication	The centre to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to resolve the issue.
Success criteria	Scripts are stored 'securely' in line with JCQ guidance in the school safe. Scripts are collected

	and delivered to awarding organisations with the minimum of delay.
Further advice and information	JCQ guidance regarding the 'secure storage of scripts' is available on the JCQ website under [Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2014-2015](#) [Guidance on the 'Life of a script'](#) is also available on the JCQ website

3.5 Scenario 5 – Centres are unable to open as normal during the examination period

Type of scenario	Disruption to centre
Impact on	Candidates, teachers, centre staff, parents, carers and awarding organisation staff
When to implement the plan	In the event that centres are unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations.
Example of scenario	A fire at the centre means that it is closed when examinations are due to take place.
Recommended actions	It is recommended that centres: - open for examinations and examination candidates only, if possible. - use alternative venues in agreement with relevant awarding organisations e.g. examinations may be relocated to the Pastoral Centre and pupils continue with the exams as normal. - apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements (see Scenario 3) - offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series, if possible.
Specific communication	A centre which is unable to open as normal for examinations must inform each awarding organisation with which examinations are due to be

taken as soon as is possible.

Success criteria	Students are able to take examinations in alternative venues.
Further advice and information	Centres should cover the impact on examinations as part of their general planning for emergencies. The responsibility for deciding whether it is safe for a centre to open lies with the head of centre. The head is responsible for taking advice, or following instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether they are able to open. [DfE guidance on school closures](#) is available on the GOV.UK website

3.6 Scenario 6 – Assessment evidence is not available to be marked

Type of scenario	Marking
Impact on	Candidates, teachers, school and college staff, parents, carers and awarding organisation staff.
When to implement the plan	In the event of large scale damage to, or destruction of, completed examination scripts or assessment evidence before it can be marked.
Example of scenario	A fire at the centre destroys completed examination scripts.
Recommended actions	It is recommended that: - awarding organisations generate candidate marks for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement, as defined by the awarding organisations in consultation with the regulators. - Candidates retake the assessment that has been affected at a subsequent assessment window, if possible.
Specific communication	It is the responsibility of the head of centre to communicate this immediately to the relevant awarding organisation(s) and subsequently to

students and their parents or carers.

Success criteria	Candidate marks are able to be generated (if possible) from existing assessment materials and predicted grades/mock examinations.
Further advice and information	To be sought from the relevant awarding organisation.

3.7 Scenario 7 – Disruption to the scanning process – where completed examination scripts are being scanned in preparation for on-screen marking

Type of scenario	Marking
Impact on	Scanning centre staff, awarding organisation staff.
When to implement the plan	In the event that there is disruption to the scanning process.
Example of scenario	A scanning centre reports technical problems with scanning machines leading to delays.
Recommended actions	It is recommended that awarding organisations: - awarding implement their existing contingency plans for disruption to on-screen marking process. - revert to traditional forms of marking, recruit, train or re-standardise qualified new markers.
Specific communication	None
Success criteria	Deadlines for marking schedules are met.
Further advice and information	To be sought from the relevant awarding organisation.

3.8 Scenario 8 – Markers unable to mark examination scripts according to marking schedules

Type of scenario	Marking

Impact on	Awarding organisation staff
When to implement the plan	In the event that a significant number of markers are unable to mark examination scripts, resulting in a risk to the delivery of results by scheduled dates.
Example of scenario	Significant numbers of markers withdraw from a specific qualification at short notice.
Recommended actions	It is recommended that awarding organisations: - reallocate scripts to available markers. - recruit, train or re-standardise qualified new markers. - contact each other to 'share' markers for specific qualifications. - prioritise marking based on results dates, UCAS deadlines, qualifications that require further study (e.g. Maths and English).
Specific communication	None
Success criteria	Deadlines for marking schedules are met.
Further advice and information	Not applicable

3.9 Scenario 9 – Difficulty in meeting planned schedule or unable to issue results

Type of scenario	Issuing results
Impact on	Awarding organisation staff, candidates, parents and carers.
When to implement the plan	In the event that an awarding organisation (including the case of a single awarding organisation) is unable to meet a planned schedule for issuing results, due to a catastrophic process or systems failure.
Example of scenario	A process failure delays both the preparation and issuing of results
Recommended	If awarding organisations face delays in meeting the

actions	planned schedule for issuing results, it is recommended that they: - implement existing contingency plans for disruption to the schedule for issuing results. - in consultation with regulators, assess the level of disruption and consider alternative options for issuing results, dependent upon the nature of the issue - in consultation with regulators, liaise with relevant organisations regarding candidate progression to further and higher education.
Specific communication	Awarding organisation(s) to brief schools and colleges about potential delays to issuing results.
Success criteria	Deadlines for issuing results to candidates are met.
Further advice and information	Not applicable

3.10 Scenario 10 – Awarding organisations unable to issue accurate results

Type of scenario	Issuing results
Impact on	Awarding organisation staff, school and college staff, candidates, parents and carers.
When to implement the plan	In the event that a catastrophic system error, failure or attack on systems means a significant number of results cannot be validated as accurate, or are issued and found to be inaccurate.
Example of scenario	An IT system failure impacts upon the accuracy of results.
Recommended	It is recommended that awarding organisations:

actions	- revalidate results - reissue results, via an alternative format if necessary
Specific communication	Awarding organisations to inform schools, colleges and candidates of any incorrect results.
Success criteria	Results are revalidated or reissued in a timely way for candidates.
Further advice and information	Not applicable

3.11 Scenario 11 – Centres are unable to distribute results as normal

Type of scenario	Issuing results
Impact on	Awarding organisation staff, school and college staff, candidates, parents and carers.
When to implement the plan	In the event that schools or colleges are unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates.
Example of scenario	A school or college is closed and therefore candidates are not able to visit to find out their results.
Recommended actions	It is recommended that schools and colleges: - make arrangements to access results at an alternative site eg the Pastoral Centre. - share facilities with other schools and colleges if possible.
Specific communication	Centres to contact awarding organisations about alternative options.
Success criteria	Candidates receive results.
Further advice and information	Not applicable

3.12 Scenario 12 – Awarding organizations are unable to offer post results services

Type of scenario	Post results services
Impact on	Awarding organisation staff, centre staff, candidates, parents and carers.
When to implement the plan	In the event that awarding organisations are not able to provide post results services, with centres and candidates unable to access services such as enquiries about results and appeals.
Example of scenario	A systems failure shuts down an awarding organisation's online post results service.
Recommended actions	It is recommended that awarding organisations: - make arrangements to provide post results services for centres and candidates through alternative methods (eg paper, Excel spread sheets, traditional re-marking).
Specific communication	Awarding organisations inform centres about the implications of not providing this service.
Success criteria	Candidates are offered a post results service using alternative methods.
Further advice and information	Not applicable

4. Summary of responsibilities in the event of disruption to examinations

Awarding organisations are responsible for:	Examination centres are responsible for:
Offering advice regarding communication with candidates, parents and carers	Communicating with candidates, parents and carers.
	Preparing plans for any disruption to exams as part of general emergency

Awarding organisations are responsible for:	Examination centres are responsible for:
	planning.
Ensuring centres receive examination materials for scheduled examinations	Preparing candidates for examinations.
	Ensuring examinations and assessments are taken under the conditions prescribed by awarding bodies. organisations
	Ensuring, where relevant, that assessment materials and candidate work are stored under secure conditions.
	Deciding whether the centre can open for examinations as scheduled and informing relevant awarding organisations if the centre is unable to open.
Advising centres on possible alternative examination arrangements and declining or approving proposals for alternative examination arrangements	Exploring the opportunities for alternative arrangements if the centre cannot open for examinations and agreeing such arrangements with the awarding organisations.
Evaluating and declining or approving requests for special consideration	Judging whether candidates meet the requirements for special consideration as a result of any disruption and submitting these requests to the relevant awarding organisations.
	Assessing and liaising with awarding organisations in the event of disruption to the transportation of

Awarding organisations are responsible for:	Examination centres are responsible for:
	papers.
Marking, moderating and grading candidate work	
Issuing results to centres on scheduled dates	The distribution of examination results to candidates.
Advising UCAS and CAO about any delays that may impact on their deadlines	
Making a post results service available	Offering a post results service.