UCP-EXM002 Higher Education Contingency Policy for Examination

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document established the examination contingency plan for University Centre Peterborough (UCP).

2. PURPOSE

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that there is a consistent and effective response in the event of a major disruption to examination minimising risk to exams administration and any adverse impact on students. By outlining actions/procedures to be invoked in case of disruption it is intended to mitigate the impact these disruptions have on the examination process.

3. SCOPE

3.1 This policy applies exclusively to all higher education exams administered by University Centre Peterborough. This also applies to sub contractual provision.

4. RELATED DOCUMENTS

UCP-ASS001 Higher Education (Non-examination) Assessment Policy for Open University Programmes
UCP-ASS002 Higher Education Security of Summative Assessment Policy
UCP-ASS006 Higher Education Extenuating Circumstance Procedure
UCP-EXM001 Higher Education Examination Policy

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 The Peterborough College Exams Manager is responsible for the management of exams at the Peterborough College / UCP main Campus.

5.2 The Stamford College Exams Manager is responsible for the management of exams at the Stamford College and franchised locations (ESPA and Addict).

5.3 Exams Officer's (under direction of each of the Exam's Manager's) is responsible for the administration of exams.

5.4 The wider Exams Office Team are to assist with the administration of exams when required.

6. RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 This policy is required to ensure that correct procedures are in place and are followed by all involved in Exams.

Analyse risks of non-adherence to this policy

UCP-EXM002 Higher Education Contingency Policy for Examination
Originator: UCP Academic Officer
Issue: 1 26/04/2021
Approved: ASQC 26/04/2012   Review date: 31 July 2022

Page **1** of **5**

6.2   Non adherence will lead to student dissatisfaction, removal of Awarding Body accreditation and bad reputation.

Staff training needed

6.3   Invigilators and Exam's Office staff receive annual training by the Exams Manager.

6.4   All staff involved in the assessment of students are required to undertake annual training delivered by the Academic Office and Exams Manager to outline the process by which they need to adhere. This training will be enhanced by annual updates provided on procedural requirements which will be delivered by the Academic Office

7. DATA PROTECTION

7.1   UCP complies with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation Data Protection Act, 2018. We may use anonymised data collected as part of an individual's examination and assessment for the purpose of fulfilling statistical and reporting requirements.

PROCEDURE

8   Key Risks identified

8.1   The key risks involved with tasks are undertaken in the administration and management of exams include, but are not inclusive, are:

a) **Planning**
- awarding body specifications not being received
- annual data collection exercise not undertaken to collate information on qualifications and annual exams plan not produced identifying essential key tasks, key dates and deadlines
- candidates not tested/assessed to identify potential access arrangement requirements
- sufficient invigilators not recruited
- Exams Officer unable to identify sufficient/appropriate rooms during exams timetable planning

b) **Entries**
- awarding bodies not being informed of entries
- information is required from 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

c) **Pre-exams**
- approval for access arrangements not applied for to the awarding body
- Invigilators not trained or updated on changes to instructions for conducting exams
- staff providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained
- exam timetabling, rooming allocation; and invigilation schedules not prepared
- candidates not briefed on exam timetables and exam requirements i.e., use of calculators/open-book exam
- exam/assessment materials and candidates' work not stored under required secure conditions

UCP-EXM002 Higher Education Contingency Policy for Examination
Originator: UCP Academic Officer
Issue: 1 26/04/2021   Page **2** of **5**
Approved: ASQC 26/04/2012   Review date: 31 July 2022

- internal assessment documents not submitted to the Academic Office/ external examiners for moderation

d) Exam time
- invigilator absence on the day of an exam
- Main exam venues unavailable due to an unexpected incident at 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 academic offence, extenuating circumstances (mitigation)
- Whole centre evacuation (or lock down) during exam time
- Candidates are unable to attend the examination centre to take exams as normal

e) Results and post-results
- issue with access to examination results affecting the distribution of results to candidates
- the facilitation of the post-results processes (Exam Boards/ Assessment Panels/ Awards Boards
- MIS system failure
- Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before marked

9   Key Strategies Identified to negate risks outline in 8.1

a) Absence of key staff at key exam process points
- Early recruitment ensures adequate invigilation and training session
- Exam Officer operates with a line manager and within a wider exams team.
- In the event of lead invigilator absence/sickness then the Exam would co-ordinate invigilator team. All team members are able and capable of running UCP exams
- Members of the exams team or MIS team are trained and can help invigilate.
- There is established team of invigilators who are all trained and a record of training held. On peak days other centre staff may be co-opted to assist bit only as support to an appropriately trained invigilator
- Use of college staff or agency staff in emergency
- Staff in the Additional Learning Support department to assist with access arrangements

b) Unavailability of appropriate examination venues at short notice
- Source alternative venues/facilities e.g., University Technical College, Peterborough College, UCP (all are separate buildings)
- At Peterborough there is 1 designated exam room and 2 designated online exam rooms accommodating up to 100 students. The main hall, sports hall and enterprise lounge can accommodate up to 500 students.
- For access arrangements use will be made of classrooms and tutorial rooms.
- If additional rooms are required support staff can vacate their offices.
- If further rooms are required the college/ UCP is prepared to close certain parts of the building and suspend the timetable to release rooms for exam use.
- Exam Officer to inform awarding organisation of exams and students affected
- Exams Manager to Identify whether the exam can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation. Where accommodation is

limited, prioritize students whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exams when planned

- The Exams Officer to advise students, where appropriate, to sit exams in the next available date

c) Failure of IT systems

- In any event of MIS system failures, the exam team would liaise directly with awarding bodies
- MIS system is backed up daily and all data is held on a backup server
- IT department informed of online exam dates and available on call in line with awarding body regulations

d) Emergency Evacuation of the exam room / site

- At time of an examination, exam candidates are grouped separate from rest of school and supervised in silence by exam invigilation staff
- The Invigilator and Exams Officer to Ensure that scripts are stored under secure condition
- If necessary, Health and Safety Manger takes advice from relevant official agency, e.g., Police, Environment Agency, Health Protection etc
- Site closure is communicated with students through the UCP website, CANVAS and on social media if closure is prior to an exam starting
- Site to partially open if possible, to allow exams take place.
- Designated examination rooms are in mobile units so unlikely to be affected by main building issues
- Ability to use neighbouring UTC and UCP buildings to accommodate exams or use computers to make entries/access results

e) Exam candidates unable to attend an examination/ affected by unforeseen circumstance

- If an examination already started is disrupted, the Exams Manager, with Awarding Body advice to consider whether students may be eligible for special consideration.
- If performance of all or some of the students has been negatively affected by the disruption the Exams Manager asks the awarding body about applying for special consideration. The decision about what special consideration is, or is not appropriate, is for awarding body to make.
- Refer students to the Extenuating Circumstance process where individual disruption is caused.

Meeting key dates and deadlines

- Key dates to be sent to staff at the start of the academic year so internal deadlines can be set well in advance
- Ensure all entries made ahead of deadlines and teaching staff adhere to these deadlines
- Exam Officer to make all requests for estimated entries via email to Course Leader, with HE Manager cc'd in. In the event of no return correspondence by deadline, Exam Officer will liaise with the HE Manager regarding assigning deputy to provide information.
- All members of exams team able to make examination entries to awarding bodies
- Students are informed of examination period dates at the start of each academic year in course handbooks, on the UCP website and in assessment information documents (i.e., module guides)

- Students are informed of individual examination dates and times at least 3 weeks prior to the date sat
- All members of the exams team able to issue timetables
- All members of the exams team able to assign rooms and organise invigilation
- All awarding body communications received by the exams team either by post or by shared email so team are able to forward to relevant departments