



ETC International College

Exams Contingency Procedure

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1.0 Scope and Purpose:

- 1.1 This plan is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that exam contingency planning at ETC International College is managed in accordance with current requirements and regulations.
- 1.2 This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exam process.
- 1.3 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 at ETC International College.
- 1.4 Alongside internal processes this plan is informed by the Ofqual Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland which provides guidance in the publication, 'What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted' and the JCQ Joint Contingency Plan for the Examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- 1.5 This plan details how ETC International College complies with the JCQ's General Regulations for Approved Centres (section 5.3, Centre management) by having 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. The examination contingency plan should reinforce procedures in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations, or on results day, owing to an unforeseen emergency. The potential impact of a cyber-attack should also be considered.

2.0 Possible causes of disruption to the exam process

2.1 Exams officer absence at key points in the exam process (exam cycle)

Key tasks required in the management and administration of the exam cycle not undertaken including: Planning, Entries, Sufficient invigilators not recruited, 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, for example 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 post-results services

2.2 Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

Designate two staff members to oversee our annual data collection. Currently Head of FE/HE and Exams Officer.

Exams Officer to create an annual exams plan, identifying essential key tasks, key dates and deadlines. Sufficient invigilators to be recruited. Exam timetabling, rooming allocation; and invigilation schedules are prepared at least one month before first exam.

Ensure training is provided as needed. Invigilators trained and updated on changes to instructions for conducting exams.

Awarding bodies are informed of estimated entries as required. Candidates are to be entered with awarding bodies for external exams/assessments before the deadline.

Candidates briefed on exam timetables and awarding body information for candidates via email, Moodle(VLE) and assessors. Confidential exam/assessment materials and candidates' work to be stored under the required secure conditions as specified by JCQ.

Internal assessment marks and samples of candidates' work submitted to awarding bodies/external moderators as specified and by the deadline. Exams/assessments are taken under the conditions prescribed by awarding bodies and managed by the Exams Officer and Head of FE/HE.

All required reports/requests to be submitted to awarding bodies during exam/assessment periods, for example very late arrival, suspected malpractice, special consideration on appropriate templates, and within a reasonable timeframe, managed by the Exams Officer and Head of FE/HE.

Candidates' scripts are dispatched as required for marking to awarding bodies within a day of completion of exams as specified by JCQ.

At least two staff members will have access to examination results and will be responsible for the distribution of results to candidates as required by sponsors at College Policies. Currently Head of FE/HE and Exams Officer.

Post-results services to be provided by College and accessible to students where needed.

2.3 ALS lead/SENCo extended absence at key points in the exam process (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, 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 (facilitators) providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained.

Exam time; access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms.

2.4 Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

Business Programme Coordinator/Academic Office Manager to carry out key tasks required in Planning and Pre-exams.

Exams Officer to ensure candidate support for exams is in place in exam rooms.

2.5 Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam process (exam cycle)

Head of FE/HE and Subject Coordinator to ensure that all key tasks are undertaken.

2.6 Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence

Available centre staff will be requested to cover exams. Selection of centre staff will receive invigilator training.

2.7 Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venue(s) unavailable at short notice

Where main exam venue(s) unavailable due to an unexpected incident at exam time where possible, make use of other available rooms within the centre, prioritising candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned.

Identify whether the exam or timetabled assessment can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding body. Exams Officer to liaise with local hotels, where established relationships exist to provide a suitable alternative venue.

Communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or venue.

Ensure the secure transportation of question papers or assessment materials to the alternative venue.

After the exam consider whether any candidate's ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration.

Communication details:

Candidates will be contacted during lessons and/or via VLE

Candidates will be contacted directly by email and by phone where needed

Candidates' embassies and sponsors will be contacted where needed online meetings or phone call or by email.

Candidates' supervisors or Parents (where applicable) will be contacted by admin staff via email or phone calls where needed.

2.8 Cyber-attack: Where a cyber-attack may compromise any aspect of delivery.

Exams officer will work with IT and contact the relevant awarding bodies for guidance. Head of FE/HE and Exams Officer will monitor and take action required as directed by the awarding bodies.

2.9 Failure of IT systems

Backup systems are ready to be used in the form of additional laptops and desktops.

Separate Internet connections are provided by the College to connect to the internet. Systems in a separate building to be used as a backup.

A separate system as a backup to be used for the release of the results.

A designated staff member has been assigned (AK) to deal with IT issues.

2.10 Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lockdown)

ETC College Emergency Evacuation Plan and Procedures have been created and will be followed. Refer to JCQ's 'Centre emergency evacuation procedure'.

Contact the relevant awarding body as soon as possible and follow its instructions.

Where accommodation is limited, prioritise candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned.

After the exam consider whether any candidate's ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration.

2.11 Disruption of teaching time in the weeks before an exam - centre closed for an extended period: 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. Cover arranged for absent staff. Online support if College has been closed.

Recognise it remains the responsibility of the centre to prepare students, as usual, for examinations.

Facilitate alternative methods of learning (eg online).

Communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, sponsors/parents/carers) information relating to alternative methods of learning.

Take advice offered by the awarding body regarding alternative arrangements for conducting examinations that may be available.

Take advice offered by the awarding body on the options for candidates who have not been able to take scheduled examinations.

Advise candidates, where appropriate, of the opportunities to take their exam or assessment at a later date.

Communication details:

Candidates will be contacted during lessons and/or via VLE

Candidates will be contacted directly by email and by phone where needed

Candidates' embassies and sponsors will be contacted where needed online meetings or phone call or by email.

Candidates' supervisors or Parents (where applicable) will be contacted by admin staff via email or phone calls where needed.

2.12 Centre at risk of being unable to open as normal during the examination period (including in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency)

Take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether the centre is able to open.

Contact the relevant awarding body as soon as possible and follow its instructions.

Discuss alternative arrangements with the awarding body if the exam or assessment cannot take place.

Follow guidance provided by the awarding body on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances.

Where accommodation is limited, prioritise candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned.

Communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, sponsors/parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue.

Consider whether any candidates' ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration.

2.13 Disruption in the distribution of examination papers

Liaise with awarding bodies regarding the provision of electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network and will ensure when copies are received/made these are stored under secure conditions.

Follow guidance provided by the awarding body on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances.

2.14 Disruption to transporting completed examination scripts

Where examinations are part of the national 'yellow label' service or where awarding bodies arrange collections, contact the relevant awarding bodies for advice and instructions and will not make its own arrangements for transportation unless told to do so by the awarding body.

For any examinations where the centre makes its own collection arrangements, investigate alternative options that comply with the requirements detailed in the JCQ publication 'Instructions for Conducting Examinations'.

Ensure the secure storage of completed examination scripts until collection.

2.15 Assessment evidence is not available to be marked

Liaise with the awarding body to determine if candidate marks for affected assessments may be able to be generated based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement as defined by the awarding body.

Where marks cannot be generated by awarding body, inform candidates they may need to retake the affected assessment in a subsequent assessment series.

3.0 Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning

- DfE
- Ofqual
- Ofqual guidance extract taken directly from the Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland - What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted

4.0 General contingency guidance

- Emergency planning and response (www.gov.uk/guidance/emergencies-and-severe-weather-schools-and-early-years-settings) from the Department for Education in England
- exceptional closure days (www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/exceptional-closure-days) from the Department of Education in Northern Ireland

- JCQ notice to centres on exam contingency plans (www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/notice-to-centres--exam-contingency-plan/) and JCQ's notice on preparing for disruption to examinations (www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/other-documents/preparing-for-disruption-to-examinations/) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland for qualifications within its scope.

4.1 Exam planning

- Establish and maintain, and at all times comply with, an up-to-date, written contingency plan.
- Ensure that the arrangements in place with centres and other third parties enable them to deliver and award qualifications in accordance with their conditions of recognition.

4.2 In the event of disruption

- Take all reasonable steps to mitigate any adverse effect, in relation to their qualifications, arising from any disruption.
- Provide effective guidance to any of their centres delivering qualifications.
- Ensure that where an assessment must be completed under specified conditions, students complete the assessment under those conditions (other than where any reasonable adjustments or special considerations require alternative conditions).
- Promptly notify the relevant regulators about any event which could have an adverse effect on students, standards or public confidence.
- Coordinate its communications with the relevant regulators where the disruption has an impact on multiple centres or a wide range of learners.

4.3 After the exam

- Consider any requests for special consideration for affected students. For example, those who may have lost their internally assessed work or whose performance in assessments or exams could have been affected by the disruption.
- If any students miss an exam or are disadvantaged by the disruption
- If some of the students have been adversely affected by the disruption, you should ask the awarding organisation about applying for special consideration.
- Decisions about special consideration, when it is or is not appropriate, is for each awarding organisation to make. Their decisions might be different for different qualifications and for different subjects.
- See also JCQ's guidance on special considerations (www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/) Wider communications

- The regulators, Ofqual in England, Qualifications Wales in Wales and CCEA Regulation in Northern Ireland, will share timely and accurate information, as required,
- with awarding organisations, government departments and other stakeholders.
- Awarding organisations will alert the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) and the Central Applications Office (CAO) about any impact of the
- disruption on their deadlines and liaise regarding student progression to further and higher education.
- Awarding organisations will alert relevant professional bodies or employer groups if the impact of disruption particularly affects them. Widespread national disruption to the taking of examinations or assessments
- The governments' view across England, Wales and Northern Ireland is education in 2022 to 2023 has returned to normal. Schools are open and examinations will go
- ahead in summer 2023.

5.0 Links to other JCQ documentation

- JCQ Joint Contingency Plan - [jqc.org.uk/exams-office/other-documents](https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/other-documents)
- JCQ Preparing for disruption to examinations (Effective from 1 September 2022) - [jqc.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations](https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations)
- JCQ Notice to Centres - Examination contingency plan/examinations policy - [jqc.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/notice-to-centres--exam-contingency-plan](https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/notice-to-centres--exam-contingency-plan)
General Regulations for Approved Centres - [jqc.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations](https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations)
- Guidance notes on alternative site arrangements - [jqc.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms](https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms)
Guidance notes for transferred candidates - [jqc.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms](https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms)
- Instructions for conducting examinations - [jqc.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations](https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations)
- A guide to the special consideration process - [jqc.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance](https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance)

6.0 National Cyber Security Centre

- The NCSC's free Web Check ([ncsc.gov.uk/information/web-check](https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/information/web-check)) and Mail Check ([ncsc.gov.uk/information/mailcheck](https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/information/mailcheck)) services can help protect schools from cyber-attacks. Two NCSC cyber security services, which are already helping thousands of organisations to protect their websites and email servers from cyber-attacks, are now

available to all UK schools. Both tools are available free of charge, are quick to set up, and thereafter run automatically. More information is available from

- the NCSC website (ncsc.gov.uk/blog-post/cyber-tools-for-uk-schools).
- The Department for Education has been asking centres to review National Cyber Security Centre advice following increasing number of cyber-attacks involving ransomware infections. The NCSC information supports centres in cyber security preparedness and mitigation work.
- Ransomware attacks continue and the Department is reminding centres to review the NCSC advice and to take precautions. This includes ensuring that you have backups in place for your key services and data.
- For ease of reference, the Department has highlighted key links relating to the NCSC cyber security guidance below:
- More ransomware attacks on UK education - NCSC.GOV.UK (ncsc.gov.uk/news/alert-targeted-ransomware-attacks-on-uk-education-sector)
- Ransomware advice and guidance for your IT teams to implement (ncsc.gov.uk/guidance/mitigating-malware-and-ransomware-attacks)
- Offline backups in an online world (ncsc.gov.uk/blog-post/offline-backups-in-an-online-world)
- Backing up your data (ncsc.gov.uk/collection/small-business-guide/backing-your-data)
- Practical resources to help improve your cyber security (gov.uk/section/education-skills/cyber-security-schools)
- Building Resilience: Ransomware and the risks to schools and ways to prevent it (com/watch?v=FppzWedY0ic&t=237s)

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