



Chulmleigh Community College:

Exam Contingency Plan 2018 - 2019

Approved/reviewed by	
Head of Centre: M Johnson Exams Officer: C Harrington	
Date of next review	November 2019

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

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Key staff involved in contingency planning:

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Academy Business Manager	Tina Harrison
SENCo	Laura Mackie
Exams Officer	Cressida Harrington

Purpose of the plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exams process at Chulmleigh Community 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 the *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*.

This plan also confirms Chulmleigh Community College is compliant with the JCQ regulation (section 5.3, *General Regulations for Approved Centres 2018-2019*) that the Centre has 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.

Possible causes of 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 exams plan not produced identifying essential key tasks, key dates and deadlines
- sufficient invigilators not recruited

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

- invigilators not trained or updated on changes to instructions for conducting exams
- exam timetabling, rooming allocation; and invigilation schedules not prepared
- candidates not briefed on exam timetables and awarding body information for candidates
- confidential 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, 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 the post-results services*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Head of Centre to appoint member of administrative staff to take over responsibilities, should the absence of the Exams Officer have a potential to affect the meeting of deadlines
- Exams Officer to create an administrative library, for other nominated administrative staff member(s) to access
- Administrative library to be updated annually by the Exams Officer; to ensure that all accessible documentation is current and relevant
- Exams Officer to produce an annual exam plan, to be included within the administrative library.
- Member of SLT, responsible for oversight of exams, will ensure appointed administrative staff is aware of priorities
- Appointed member(s) of administrative staff to refer to www.theexamsoffice.org for detailed instructions on all exam procedures. Log in to be provided
- Head of Centre to report any long term absence to the awarding bodies and the MIS provider (SCOMIS), to notify of interim contact name(s) – should they need advice or to make contact

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*
- *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*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Head of Centre responsible for ensuring position is filled, should absence have the potential to disrupt exam preparation
- Exams Officer to be notified by the SENCo department of confirmed access arrangements immediately after the deadline of the applications for access arrangements in February
- Exams Officer to ensure that all preparations to facilitate the exams for candidates with access

arrangements are in place well in advance for the summer series; in consultation with the SENCo department

- Head of Centre to nominate a deputy to cover the role / task
- Head of Centre to appoint external qualified assessor to test candidates

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

Non-examination assessment tasks not set/issued/taken by candidates as scheduled

Candidates not being informed of Centre assessed marks before marks are submitted to the awarding body and therefore not being able to consider appealing internal assessment decisions and requesting a review of the Centre's marking

Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet awarding body submission deadlines

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Exams Officer responsible for ensuring deadlines are met for estimated entries and final entries, to the awarding bodies. Any omissions to be referred to Head of Centre
- Subject Heads of Departments should liaise with Exams Officer to relay details of entries, coursework / assessment marks in the absence of teaching staff
- Head of Centre to be responsible for ensuring the priority for teaching of the examination cohort. Staff will be covered in good time, by trained professionals, in all circumstances

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Head of Centre to be informed if recruitment is necessary
- Exams Officer responsible for the recruitment and training of Exam Invigilators in the autumn term, in preparation for the summer exam series
- Exams Officer to devise an invigilator timetable for the exam series, to ensure that the correct numbers / required ratio of Exam Invigilators are present at each timetabled exam
- Exams Officer to ensure that there are additional trained Exam Invigilators available to assign each day, should an absence arise

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Exams Officer responsible for ensuring the planning of rooms is completed by the end of the spring term to identify potential rooming issues
- Alternative venues within the College to be made available by teaching staff in the event of an unexpected incident
- Head of Centre to liaise with Exams Officer to ensure of no disruptions, due to room shortages.
- Alternative rooms available: Heywood Hall and classrooms that the cohort would have been previously taught in, at the time of the exam

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Exams Officer to complete all exam entries with the awarding bodies well in advance of the deadline, to avoid hindrance to the process
- Exams Officer to provide the I.T Department with the key dates within the exams cycle, to ensure the smooth running of downloads. The MIS provider is already aware of these dates
- If there is an IT failure on the date of the deadline and entries are still outstanding, Exams Officer to contact the awarding bodies directly to arrange alternative methods of information exchange
- Head of Centre to be informed of any failures

7. Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lock down)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Whole Centre evacuation (or lock down) during exam time due to serious incident resulting in exam candidates being unable to start, proceed with or complete their exams

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Chulmleigh Community College *Emergency Evacuation Policy and procedure to be adhered to
- Reason for evacuation assessed / investigated by Head of Centre and Exams Officer

- If authorised and safe to do so, candidates to return to the exam room(s) under the continued supervision of the head of Centre, Exams Officer and Exam Invigilators
- If unauthorised and unsafe to return to the exam room(s), Exams Officer to notify relevant awarding body
- In the absence of any instruction from the relevant awarding body, the Head of Centre should assume that any time tabled exam should take place if it is possible to do so. In this instance an alternative venue must be sought. Alternative rooms available within the College: Heywood Hall and classrooms that the cohort would have been previously taught in, at the time of the exam
- If essential, alternative site(s) may be accessed to accommodate the cohort of exam candidates, should the usual Centre exam room(s) not be available due to emergency circumstances: Chulmleigh Primary School Hall (ref: Lully Newman), Chulmleigh Pavilion (ref: Mr Howard Meadows).
- If applicable, Exams Officer to apply for special consideration for all candidates affected

*Emergency Evacuation Policy displayed on College website (and Exams Noticeboard prior to exam series).

8. 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 closed interrupting the routine of normal teaching and learning

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Head of Centre responsible for finding alternative venues / methods of learning
- Head of Centre, Exams Officer and Exams Invigilators to liaise
- Priority given to exam cohort
- Exams Officer to communicate with relevant exam awarding body
- Centre to communicate with parents and candidates

9. 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Exams Officer to liaise with students and parents to find an alternative venue. If an alternative venue is required, appropriate exam awarding body and Centre paperwork to be completed and submitted by the Exams Officer
- Exams Officer to apply to the awarding body for special consideration, if required
- Procedures for individual candidate absence outlined to students in “Guidance for students and Parents” handbook, provided each year in October

10. Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period (including in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations

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 possible

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Open College / Centre to students for examinations, only if possible
- In the event that The Head of Centre decides that the Centre cannot be opened for scheduled examinations, the relevant awarding bodies will be informed by the Exams Officer as soon as possible
- Exams Officer to gain advice from awarding bodies 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
- Use alternative venue, in agreement with awarding bodies
- Exams Officer to apply to awarding organisations for *special consideration for candidates, where they have met the minimum requirements. (Fully prepared, covered the whole course, but are affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control)

*Special Consideration Policy displayed on College website.

11. 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Prior to the timetabled exam, Exams Officer to communicate with awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of papers
- Exams Officer to keep a log of all exam papers received and to monitor the late arrival / absence of exam papers
- If there are no exam papers present on the exam day, Exams officer to contact awarding body to arrange electronic download

12. 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Exams Officer to communicate with relevant awarding organisations and usual collecting agency (Parcel Force) at the outset to resolve the issue and to make alternative delivery arrangements
- Exams Officer to ensure the secure storage of the completed examination papers until collection

13. 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- 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
- Exams Officer to submit the candidates marks to the awarding bodies, based on appropriate evidence of candidate achievement as defined by the awarding body

14. Centre unable to distribute results as normal (including in the event of the centre being unavailable on results day owing to an unforeseen emergency)

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Exams Officer to contact awarding organisations about alternative options
- Exams Officer and Head of Centre to assess alternative arrangements for issuing results, in line with the awarding body's instruction
- Head of Centre to inform transition schools and colleges
- Head of Centre to inform candidate and parents, as soon as possible
- Head of Centre to inform subject Heads of Departments, if the "Enquiries about Results (EAR) process becomes affected

Causes 8-14 – 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*.

Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning

Ofqual

What schools and colleges and other Centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted

1. Contingency planning

You should prepare for possible disruption to exams and other assessments as part of your emergency planning and make sure your staff are aware of these plans.

When drafting contingency plans, you should consider the following guidance...

2. Disruption to assessments or exams

In the absence of any instruction from the relevant awarding organisation, you should make sure that any exam or timetabled assessment takes place if it is possible to hold it. This may mean relocating to alternative premises.

You should discuss alternative arrangements with your awarding organisation if:

- the exam or assessment cannot take place
- a student misses an exam or loses their assessment due to an emergency, or other event, outside of the student's control

3. Steps you should take

3.1 Exam planning

Review contingency plans well in advance of each exam or assessment series. Consider how, if the contingency plan is invoked, you will comply with the awarding organisation's requirements.

3.2 In the event of disruption

1. Contact the relevant awarding organisation and follow its instructions.
2. Take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether your centre is able to open.
3. Identify whether the exam or timetabled assessment can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation, ensuring the secure transportation of questions papers or assessment materials to the alternative venue.
4. Where accommodation is limited, prioritise students whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned.
5. In the event of an evacuation during an examination please refer to JCQ's '[Centre emergency evacuation procedure](#)'.
6. Communicate with parents, carers and students any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue.
7. Communicate with any external assessors or relevant third parties regarding any changes to the exam or assessment timetable.

3.3 After the exam

1. Consider whether any students' ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration.
2. Advise students, where appropriate, of the opportunities to take their exam or assessment at a later date.
3. Ensure that scripts are stored under secure conditions.
4. Return scripts to awarding organisations in line with their instructions. Never make alternative arrangements for the transportation of completed exam scripts, unless told to do so by the awarding organisation.

4. Steps the awarding organisation should take

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

1. Take all reasonable steps to mitigate any adverse effect, in relation to their qualifications, arising from any disruption.
2. Provide effective guidance to any of their centres delivering qualifications.
3. 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).
4. Promptly notify the relevant regulators about any event which could have an adverse effect on students, standards or public confidence.
5. 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.

5. 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](#)
- [FAB's guidance on special considerations](#)

6. Wider communications

The regulators, [Ofqual](#) in England, [Qualifications Wales](#) in Wales and [CCEA](#) in Northern Ireland, will share timely and accurate information, as required, with awarding organisations, government departments and other stakeholders.

The [Department for Education](#) in England, the [Department of Education](#) in Northern Ireland and the [Welsh Government](#) will inform the relevant government ministers as soon as it becomes apparent that there will be significant local or national disruption; and ensure that they are kept updated until the matter is resolved.

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.

7. Widespread national disruption

In the event of widespread sustained national disruption, the government departments will communicate with regulators, awarding organisations and centres prior to a public announcement. Regulators will provide advice to government departments on implications for exam timetables.

[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*, (updated 23 January 2018) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland/what-schools-and-colleges-should-do-if-exams-or-other-assessments-are-seriously-disrupted>]

JCQ

15.1 The qualification regulators, JCQ and government departments responsible for education have prepared and agreed information for schools and colleges in the event of examinations being seriously disrupted. This jointly agreed information will ensure consistency of response in the event of major disruption to the examinations system affecting significant numbers of candidates.

Further information may be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland/what-schools-and-colleges-should-do-if-exams-or-other-assessments-are-seriously-disrupted>

15.2 In addition, awarding bodies have their own well-established contingency plans in place to respond to disruptions. It is important that exams officers who are facing disruption liaise directly with the relevant awarding body/bodies.

15.3 Centres should prepare plans for any disruption to examinations as part of their general emergency planning. It is important to ensure that relevant centre staff are familiar with the plan. Consideration should be given as to how these arrangements will be communicated to candidates, parents and staff should disruption to examinations occur.

15.4 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.

15.5 The awarding bodies have designated **Wednesday 26 June 2019** as a 'contingency day' for examinations. This is consistent with the qualification regulators' document Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/examsystem-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland>

The designation of a 'contingency day' within the common examination timetable is in the event of national or local disruption to examinations. It is part of the awarding bodies' standard contingency planning for examinations.

Centres must therefore remind candidates that they must remain available until Wednesday 26 June 2019 should an awarding body need to invoke its contingency plan.

[JCQ guidance taken directly from JCQ *Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2018-2019*

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>, section 15, **Contingency planning**]

General Regulations for Approved Centres <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>

Guidance on *Alternative Site* arrangements and *Transferred Candidate* arrangements

Accessed through secure login to the Centre Admin Portal (CAP) or through the JCQ training site <http://jqc.training.jcq.org.uk/CAP/Home/Training>

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

Emergency planning and response: Severe weather; Exam disruption

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/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>

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>

Statutory guidance on school closures <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools>

Wales

School closures – opening schools in extreme bad weather

<http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/publications/guidance/schoolclosuresfaq/?lang=en>

Northern Ireland

Exceptional closure days <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/exceptional-closure-days>

Checklist for Principals when considering Opening or Closure of School <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/checklist-exceptional-closure-schools>

School closures <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/school-closures>