



Trinity Multi Academy Trust

Policy: Examination Contingency Policy

Date or review: March 2018

Date of next review: March 2021

Lead professional: The Exams Officer

Status: Exam Board Requirement

Note: This policy is part of a suite of policies which include:

1. Exam Policy, which includes emergency evacuation protocols
2. Controlled Assessment Policy
3. Examination Contingency Plan
4. Malpractice, Maladministration and Plagiarism Policy

This policy is a trust wide policy

1. Purpose of policy and guiding principles

- 1.1. This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the management and administration of the exam process at trust sites and examination centres. By outlining actions and procedures to be followed in case of disruption it is intended to mitigate the impact these disruptions have on our exam process.
- 1.2. In each academy there will be an appointed 'Exams Officer'. This role may undertake other duties, but will report to a Senior Leader and be responsible for the administration and management of the exams processes.
- 1.3. In each academy there will be a 'Deputy Exams Officer' or equivalent. This will be someone who has sufficient knowledge to undertake the role of 'Exams Officer during their absence. Support will be provided from trust resources to ensure that, in the absence of an Exams Officer, sufficient knowledge of the process is available from other trust sites.
- 1.4. In each academy there will be an appointed Senior Leader who has within their duties and responsibilities management of the exams processes.
- 1.5. In each academy there will be an appointed Senior Leader who has within their duties, responsibility for the curriculum. This isn't necessarily the same Senior Leader as 1.4.
- 1.6. At all times, the centre Examinations Officer and Senior Leader responsible will liaise with the relevant Awarding Body to ensure any contingency plans meet with its requirements and that JCQ regulations are adhered to where possible.
- 1.7. Alongside internal processes, this plan is informed by information contained in the joint contingency plan for the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland where it is stated that *"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."*

2. Causes of potential disruption to the exam process

- 2.1. Examinations Officer (EO) extended absence at key points in the exam process (cycle)
 - 2.1.1. Criteria for implementation of the plan
Key tasks required in the management and administration of the exam cycle not undertaken including:
 - 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.

2.1.2. Centre actions

- Produce documented procedures manual.
- Senior leaders will appoint Deputy/Alternative Examination Officers to undertake the running of exams under the supervision of the Senior Leader responsible for the curriculum.
- Across the trust additional resource will be provided by experienced Exams Officers.

2.2. SENCO extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

2.2.1. 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.
 - 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.

2.2.2. Centre actions

- The EO and SENCO support team to work with Senior Leaders to identify students where applications for access arrangements may be required. The employment of outside agencies/professionals may be required.

2.3. Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

2.3.1. 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.
- Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet submission deadlines.

2.3.2. Centre actions

- The EO to liaise with their Senior Leader link to ensure all necessary deadlines are adhered to. Where this is not possible, the EO will liaise with the relevant awarding body and act upon advice received.

2.4. Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence

2.4.1. 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.

2.4.2. Centre actions

- The EO will review the invigilation staffing at the start of each academic year to ensure sufficient staff are recruited and trained in a timely fashion.
- The EO will liaise with the Administration Manager/Principals PA to identify staff available for invigilation duties at short notice and for peak exam days.
- The EO will inform their Senior Leader link, who will support identify and allocate invigilation duties to staff. Where necessary the academy may need to arrange external resources to support this (e.g. engaging qualified staff through a recruitment agency)

2.5. Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice

2.5.1. Criteria for implementation of the plan

- EO 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.

2.5.2. Centre actions

- The EO will organise rooming for examinations before the Easter holidays ensuring sufficient time is available to identify appropriate rooms and plan appropriately.
- In the event of a room not being available at very short notice, sufficient staff will be made available to ensure the security of the examination is not compromised whilst alternative rooming is sourced. The Senior Leader responsible will work with the EO at all times during such emergencies.
- The Senior Leader will resource alternative rooms/curriculum arrangements to free additional rooms.

2.6. Failure of IT systems

2.6.1. 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.

2.6.2. Centre actions

- The EO, in consultation with the IT Manager and Senior Leader link will send entry information online (from another venue if necessary) directly to the awarding bodies (AB). Results may also be accessed directly from the AB. At all times during the system failure the EO will liaise with the AB to minimise disruption and costs incurred.

2.7. Disruption of teaching time – centre closed for an extended period

2.7.1. 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.

2.7.2. Centre actions

- Investigate use of alternative facilities, preference given to local trust sites. Contact to be made with the Health and Safety Manager and the Compliance Manager for the trust to co-ordinate: email M.Rhodes@trinitymat.org and A.Holdsworth@trinintymat.org
- Prioritise teaching of candidates who are facing exams
- Communicate with parents, carers and students about the potential for disruption and how this is to be addressed
- Students to be taught at alternative venue
- All information on academy website.

2.8. Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open

2.8.1. Criteria for implementation of the plan

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

2.8.2. Centre actions

- The EO will contact the relevant AB to discuss alternative arrangements and liaise with their senior leader link to take appropriate action.

- 2.9. Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period
- 2.9.1. Criteria for implementation of the plan
- Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled 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.*
- 2.9.2. Centre actions
- The EO will contact the relevant AB to discuss alternative arrangements and liaise with their Senior Leader link to take appropriate action.
- 2.10. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers
- 2.10.1. Criteria for implementation of the plan
- Disruption to the distribution of examination papers to the centre in advance of examinations.
- 2.10.2. Centre actions
- Contact exam board to arrange alternative distribution
 - Access electronic copy prior to exam
 - Secure reprographic copying of exam paper.
- 2.11. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts
- 2.11.1. Criteria for implementation of the plan
- Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts.
- 2.11.2. Centre actions
- Seek advice from relevant awarding body
 - Securely store scripts until collection.
- 2.12. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked
- 2.12.1. Criteria for implementation of the plan
- Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked.
- 2.12.2. Centre actions
- The EO will contact the AB to notify them of any such incidents and act upon advice given.
- 2.13. Centre unable to distribute results as normal
- 2.13.1. 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.
- 2.13.2. Centre actions
- EO will contact awarding organisations about alternative options available
 - Arrange to distribute results from another centre, preference given to an alternative local trust site
 - Inform parents, carers and students
 - Alternative details and information on academy website. Where possible communication made to parents/carers via text or email.

3. 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

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland/joint-contingency-plan-in-the-event-of-widespread-disruption-to-the-examination-system-in-england-wales-and-northern-ireland>

JCQ

General regulations

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>

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>

A guide to the special consideration process

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance>

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: Ensuring the service runs smoothly; Contingency planning

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-yellow-label-service/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-guide>