# Exam Contingency Plan

## 2023/2024

| Approved by |
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| Title: Headteacher |

| Date of next review | Sep 2024 |
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# Contents

## 1    Purpose of the plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the management and administration of the exam process at Regent Independent 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 scenarios contained in the Joint contingency plan in the event of widespread disruption to 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."*

## 2    Causes of potential disruption to the exam process

### 2.1    Examinations' Officer's extended absence at key points in the exam process (cycle)

<u>Criteria for implementation of the plan</u>

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
    - candidates not briefed on exam timetables and awarding body information for candidates
    - exam timetabling, rooming allocation; and invigilation schedules not prepared
    - 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
    - exam papers unavailable/delayed start to the exam.
    - access arrangement student not having correct support/rooming during exam

- Results and post-results
    - access to examination results affecting the distribution of results to candidates
    - the facilitation of the post-results services

<u>Centre actions:</u>

- Head of Centre to nominate a 'deputy' to cover the role / tasks. This would usually be the Exams' Assistant or nominated Senior Staff member. Extra help could be called on from the Invigilators.
- Extra hours should be allocated to the deputy to ensure there are sufficient hours to cover the extra work required.
- Exams' Officer and Academic Manager have two set of keys for the exam cupboard and safe.
- Exams' Assistant has the access to the exam seating plan and access arrangements.
- Exams' day to day plan document will be given to all relevant staff before exam season starts.

- Extra help could be sought from other Regent Group entities (sister colleges – Holborn & Wembley)
- Always report long term absence to the exam boards, so they are aware of the situation.

## 2.2 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
  - 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

Centre actions:

- Head of Centre to nominate a 'deputy' to cover the role / task.
- Head of Centre to appoint qualified assessor to test candidates in place of the SENCO.
- Approval from exam boards and exam arrangements could be passed to the Exams' Office – with sufficient warning and planning time.
- Headteacher to arrange student support during all exams.

## 2.3 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
- Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet submission deadlines

Centre actions:

- Head of Department, working closely with Exams' Officer, should take responsibility for any missing entries, coursework marks and any assessment marks in the absence of a member of teaching staff.
- Entries must be made on time to meet deadlines and avoid late fees. Amendments can always be made at a later date to confirm final entries.

## 2.4 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: |
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| <ul><li>First check availability of other invigilators who may be available for that slot already.</li><li>Check for free staff using the SIMS timetable, who can be deployed for invigilating.</li><li>See if it is possible to amalgamate any of the access arrangement rooms to release an invigilator.</li><li>As a last resort, call the Headteacher to invigilate</li></ul> |

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

| Criteria for implementation of the plan |
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| <ul><li>Exams' Officer unable to identify sufficient/appropriate rooms during exam timetable planning</li><li>Insufficient rooms available on peak exam days</li><li>Main exam venues unavailable due to an unexpected incident at exam time</li></ul> |
| Centre actions: |
| <ul><li>A clear room plan for exams should be determined before the start of the exam session.</li><li>Room bookings should be made early enough in advance to ensure there are sufficient rooms for exam students.</li><li>If there is an emergency on the day, the SIMS free room timetable must be checked first and moves made accordingly.</li><li>Check the possibility of using classes at Holborn Campus</li><li>If no possibility of any free rooms, refer to Headteacher/ Head of Centre for advice.</li></ul> |

## 2.6 Failure of IT systems

| Criteria for implementation of the plan |
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| <ul><li>MIS/A2C system failure at final entry deadline</li><li>MIS/A2C system failure during exams preparation</li><li>MIS/A2C system failure at results release time</li></ul> |
| Centre actions: |
| <ul><li>All exam entries should be made well in advance of the deadline to avoid this issue in the first place. If the entries are left to the last minute and there is an IT failure, firstly ring the relevant exam boards to explain (they may give you an extension, but get that in writing).</li><li>Try to access SIMS, A2C, or exam board websites from a different computer or use a different username.</li><li>Contact the IT department well in advance to make them aware of the exam results days to ensure smooth running of downloads.</li></ul> |

## 2.7 Fire during the exam

| Criteria for implementation of the plan |
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| <ul><li>Lives endangered</li><li>Spoiled exam scripts</li><li>Evacuation of the room</li></ul> |
| Centre actions: |
| <ul><li>Follow the Centre Emergency Evacuation Procedure</li><li>Exams' Officer/Academic Manager and invigilators are aware of exam fire procedure and the meeting point. This information is reminded to the candidates at the start of each examination.</li><li>Fire alarms are regularly checked and monitored by the Site Manager.</li><li>Once the Exam Room is evacuated, inform the examination board/s and maintain security of exam papers at all times.</li></ul> |

## 2.8  Disruption of teaching time – centre closed for an extended period

<u>Criteria for implementation of the plan</u>

- 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

<u>Centre actions:</u>

- Where there is disruption to teaching time and students miss teaching and learning, it remains the responsibility of the Centre to prepare students, as usual, for examinations.
- The Centre should have plans in place to facilitate alternative methods of learning, or use an alternative site.

## 2.9  Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open

<u>Criteria for implementation of the plan</u>

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

<u>Centre actions:</u>

- Centre will publish an official Contingency Day for each series, where candidates will be expected to make themselves available, up to and including the contingency day. This is in case of national disruption to a day of examinations and need to reschedule the examinations.
- Centre to liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat an alternative venue (Contingency Day) in agreement with the relevant awarding bodies.
- Centre to offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series.
- Centre to apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements. 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.

## 2.10  Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period

<u>Criteria for implementation of the plan</u>

- 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.*

<u>Centre actions:</u>

- Centre to open for examinations and examination candidates only, if possible.
- Centre to use alternative venues in agreement with relevant awarding organisations (e.g. use other Centre's sites, closest location is **Holborn Campus at 2-10 Princeton St, London WC1R 4BH**, share facilities with other Centres, or use other public buildings, if possible).
- Centre may offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series.
- Centre to apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements.

## 2.11  Examinations papers not arrived on time / Students issued with wrong examination papers

<u>Criteria for implementation of the plan</u>

- Wrong entry made, incorrect paper sent
- Candidates are unable to sit exam due to wrong paper being delivered.
- Examinations papers not delivered to college on time.

Centre actions:

- Checks by student on personal statement of entry/timetable. Entry list checked by subject teachers and Exams' Officer and signed off well before exam board deadlines.
- Centre will check all exam papers upon arrival in college and will alert the appropriate awarding body of any discrepancies.
- If this happens on the day of the exam, contact the exam board immediately. The awarding body may provide centres with an electronic access to examination papers via secure external network.
- Awarding body to fax examination papers to centre, if an electronic transfer is not possible.
- The Examinations' Officer would need to ensure that copies are received, made and stored under secure conditions.

## 2.12 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:

- In the first instance Centre to seek advice from normal collection agency regarding collection. Regent Independent College should **not** make their own arrangements for transportation without approval from awarding organisations.
- Centre must ensure secure storage of completed examination papers until collection. All exam scripts must be stored in the safe in the lockable storage room.

## 2.13 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:

- Notify awarding body/bodies immediately.
- Awarding organisations to generate candidate marks for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement as defined by the awarding organisations.
- Candidates to retake affected assessment at subsequent assessment window.

## 2.14 Centre unable to distribute results as normal

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:

- Notify awarding body immediately.
- Centre to make arrangements to access its results at an alternative site (access from sister site, Holborn Campus, home)
- Centre to make arrangements to coordinate access to post result services from an alternative site.

## 2.15 Cyber attack

Criteria for dealing with cyber attack

- Where it is identified that a cyber attack has taken place which may compromise any aspect of the delivery of examinations

> Centre actions:
> - The Exams Officer will work with IT and make contact with the relevant Awarding Body to seek further guidance.
> - The SLT will monitor the situation and take any action as required by the examination board.

## 3    Further guidance to inform and implement contingency planning

[Notice to Centres - exam contingency plan - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#)

### 3.1    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

### 3.2    JCQ

*General regulations* http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations

*Notice to Centres – examination contingency plan* *https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/notice-to-centres--exam-contingency-plan*

Guidance on *alternative site arrangements*  *https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/online-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

### 3.3    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;*
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-yellow-label-service/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-guide

### 3.4    Contacting the awarding bodies

**AQA**

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**OCR**

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support@ocr.org.uk


**Pearson**

0344 463 2535