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# Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School

## Examination Contingency Plan

Approved by:	Name: Full Governing Body	Date: November 2025
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### **Purpose of the plan**

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the management and administration of the examination process at Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School. By outlining the actions and procedures to be invoked in case of disruption, it is intended to mitigate the impact these disruptions have on our examination 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.

This plan complies with JCQ general regulations (section 5) in that the centre agrees to have in place a written examination contingency plan/examinations policy which covers:

- all aspects of examination administration which will allow members of the senior leadership team to have a robust contingency plan in place, minimising risk to examination administration, should the examinations officer be absent at a crucial stage of the examination cycle.

#### **Causes of potential disruption to the exam process**

- 1. Examination officer has extended absence at key points in the examination process (cycle).**

#### **Criteria for implementation of the plan**

Key tasks required in the management and administration of the exam cycle **not** undertaken including:



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**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-examinations**

- 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

**Examination 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

**Centre actions:**

- The examinations officer is part of a team of people led by an experienced member of SLT.
- All members of the team have attended a planned training programme to ensure that the absence of the examinations officer is covered by those in the team and members of SLT.



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## **2. SENCO has extended absence at key points in the examination cycle**

### **Criteria for implementation of the plan.**

Key tasks required in the management and administration of the access arrangements process within the examination 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 the external deadline
- staff providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained

#### **Examination time**

- access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms

### **Centre actions:**

- the absence of the SENCO would be covered by the assistant SENCO who is currently training for that role and a well-established and very experienced member of SLT who has line managed the SENCO.

## **3. Teaching staff have extended absence at key points in the examination cycle.**

### **Criteria for implementation of the plan**

#### **Key tasks not undertaken including:**

- Early/estimated entry information not provided to the examinations 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 or other penalty fees being charged by awarding bodies.
- Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet submission deadlines

### **Centre actions:**

- the extended absence of any teaching staff to be managed by the head of department/ second in department or line manager/ SLT



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#### **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:**

- In the event of the unavailability of invigilators, all members of staff and SLT are routinely trained in the regulations of invigilation and could be used.

#### **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:**

- the exam would be moved to available classroom spaced freed by Year 11 not being in class
- If availability on site is compromised then spare capacity at St Vincent's School for the Visually Impaired would be utilised.

#### **6. Failure of IT systems including cyber attacks**

##### **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
- Cyber attack at any time during the exam process

##### **Centre actions:**

- Liaise with network support in school.
- Contact exam board for advice
- Use IT facilities at alternative venue.
- Follow up with subject staff to identify candidates possibly affected by lost work
- Use exam board websites direct for entries and results.

#### **7. Disruption of teaching time – centre closed for an extended period**

##### **Criteria for implementation of the plan**



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- 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 actions:**

- The school would communicate with parents, guardians and students about the potential for disruption to teaching time and lessons would switch to be taught online.
- In the event that the site was closed during the exam period, alternative provision would be sought at St Vincent's.

**8. 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:**

- the centre to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to make them aware of the issue. The centre to communicate with parents, carers and candidates regarding solutions to the issue below:
- in the event that the main site was closed, Leyfield would be used. In the event of the whole site being closed, negotiations would take place to use Broughton/St Vincent's.
- offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series
- apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements

**9. Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period**

**Criteria for implementation of the plan**

- Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations

**Centre actions:**

- in the event that the main site was closed, Leyfield would be used. In the event of the whole site being closed, negotiations would take place to use Broughton/St Vincent's.
- apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements (see 8 above)
- offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series, if possible

**10. 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.



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**Centre actions:**

- The school would contact the exam board and arrange for the alternative receipt of papers electronically or permission to photocopy an original.

**11. 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:**

- The school would contact the exam board and arrange for the alternative collection of papers.

**12. 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:**

- The school would communicate immediately with the exam boards and to students and parents/ guardians.
- Exam board advice sought
- Candidates retake the assessment that has been affected at a subsequent assessment window, if possible

**13. 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 service.

**Centre actions:**

- Make arrangements to access results at an alternative site e.g. Leyfield, 6 Form Centre or Broughton.

Causes 7-13 – 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 and implement contingency planning**



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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>