

# ST. ANNE'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS



## EXAM CONTINGENCY PLAN 2021-2022

Autumn 2021

Next Review: Autumn 2022

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## PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exams process at St. Anne's Catholic High School for Girls. 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 St. Anne's Catholic High School for Girls is compliant with the JCQ regulation (section 5.3, General Regulations for Approved Centres 2020-21), 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. 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 Exam Officer is familiar with JCQ guidance and, if necessary, how to access clarification and further guidance.

### 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 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*

##### *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

- ▶ School Business Manager (SBM)) takes charge
- ▶ Contact Staffing Agencies to engage a temporary Exams Officer
- ▶ Data Assistant and Data Manager to be diverted to some exam duties as required
- ▶ SBM to contact Exam Boards to gather user IDs for on-line systems
- ▶ All to make use of SIMS support company's (SMS) helpdesk and SBM to call off contractual consultancy as required
- ▶ SBM to contact Enfield Schools via the Exam Officers' network to determine if any support and/or secondment is available

## **2. Inclusion Manager 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

- ▶ Assistant Inclusion Manager to take on tasks with support from appropriate Senior Leadership Team (SLT) colleague
- ▶ Exam Officer to liaise with Assistant Inclusion Manager
- ▶ Should the Exam Officer also be absent the SBM will liaise with the Assistant Inclusion Manager

### **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

- ▶ Exam Officer to list deficiencies, if known
- ▶ Subject Leader to liaise with her/his team
- ▶ Should the Subject Leader be absent the Key Stage Curriculum Leader to assume responsibility
- ▶ In the event of there being no Key Stage Curriculum Leader the Subject Leader's SLT Manager will assume responsibility and seek out a colleague from another team to assist
- ▶ Exam Officer to provide support and training, should it be necessary

### **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

- ▶ Exam Officer to maintain invigilator pool
- ▶ Exam Officer to liaise with SBM if it becomes apparent before the season commences there are not enough invigilators or shortages on particular days. Assessment to be made whether agencies need to be contacted and/or support staff redeployed to invigilator duties
- ▶ In the event of absence(s) on the day support staff to be redeployed.
- ▶ In the unlikely event of no availability of support staff on the day, non-timetabled teachers to be directed to invigilator duties

**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

- ▶ Move taught classes to free up rooms; exams to take priority
- ▶ Contact Hazelwood Infant and Primary Schools to see if space is available
- ▶ Plan to hold some exams at the Lower Site Campus
- ▶ Contact Hindu and Muslim Community Centres to see if rooms can be booked. Liaise with exam boards to clear this.
- ▶ Liaise with nearest secondary schools: Winchmore, Broomfield and Aylward

**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

- ▶ Plan so that all entries are made at least five working days before the deadline
- ▶ ICT Team to be made aware that any ICT issue affecting exam entries, preparations or conduct must be an absolute priority to solve

- ▶ Hard copy results to be taken directly from Exam Board portals from another site if necessary and collated for student collection. If there is time families to be texted so students' arrival time is deferred

## **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

- ▶ Invigilators to be made aware of procedures as part of their training
- ▶ SLT to be made aware of procedures and necessity to maintain the security of the exam
- ▶ If lockdown, students to be moved to PE Store, PE changing room and Hall stage in silence and be kept separate from all other students
- ▶ If the site has to be evacuated exam students to be moved to an area at the Muslim Community Centre separate from all other students
- ▶ Exam Board(s) to be contacted as soon as is feasible

## **8. Disruption of teaching time – in the weeks before an exam - 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 actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ Exam, teaching and study to be moved to the Lower Site or other school or other alternative site.

## **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

- ▶ School to arrange transport if that can solve the problem
- ▶ Families to be asked to provide evidence of failure to attend – e.g., written explanation from GPs or hospital

- ▶ Exam Officer to submit special consideration with evidence

10. **Centre 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)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

*Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ Alternative venue(s) to be sought. Possible options subject to availability are: Lower Site Campus, Hindu and Muslim Community Centres and other schools
- ▶ Exam Desks to be moved by Premises Team (note: There are 100 exam desks stored at the Lower Site Campus which are used for KS3 exams)
- ▶ Exam Boards to be kept informed

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

- ▶ Contact Exam Board if Exam Boards has not made contact
- ▶ Make preparations to copy exam papers in house supervised by Exam Officer under strict conditions if the Exam Board decides to email exam paper files.

12. **Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts**

Criteria for implementation of the plan

*Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts/assessment evidence*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ Exam papers to be sent via the School's normal daily postal collection
- ▶ Failing collection parcels to be taken to the Post Office by at least two people

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*

*Completed examination scripts/assessment evidence does not reach awarding organisations*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ All scripts and papers stored in the exam store
- ▶ Exam Board(s) to be contacted
- ▶ Special Consideration to be sought as necessary

**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

- ▶ If hard copies are available results' distribution to be switched to the Lower Site Campus. Families to be notified by email and text
- ▶ If unable to access hard copies on Upper Site campus, administration to be moved to Lower Site Campus. If the results cannot be accessed via the management Information System they are to be accessed directly from the Exam Boards' secure websites
- ▶ In the event of the Lower Site Campus being unavailable then an alternative venue with Broadband access to be used. For example, Hazelwood Infant and Junior Schools, the Muslim Community Centre or other local Secondary Schools

**Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning**

**Ofqual guidance**

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 02 March 2020)

<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>

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 and make sure 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](#)

#### **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.

## JCQ guidance

Taken directly from JCQ *Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2020-2021*

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

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 a 'contingency day' for examinations during Summer 2021. 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 significant local disruption to examinations. It is part of the awarding bodies' standard contingency planning for examinations.

In the event of national disruption to a day of examinations in Summer 2021, the awarding bodies will liaise with the qualification regulators and government departments to agree the most appropriate option for managing the impact. As a last resort the affected examinations will be rescheduled. Although every effort would be taken to keep the impact to a minimum, it is possible that there could be more than one timetable date affected during the disruption, up to and including the contingency day. Centres will be alerted if it is agreed to reschedule the examinations and the affected candidates will be expected to make themselves available in such circumstances. The decision regarding the rescheduling of examinations will always rest with the awarding body. The centre must conduct the examination on the scheduled date unless instructed to do otherwise by the awarding body.

Where candidates choose not to be available for the rescheduled examination(s) for reasons other than those traditionally covered by special consideration, they will not be eligible for enhanced grading arrangements. Centres must therefore ensure candidates and parents are aware of this contingency arrangement so that they may take it into account when making their plans for the summer. However, awarding bodies will not insist upon candidates being available throughout the entire timetabled period as a matter of course.

JCQ Joint Contingency Plan [www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/other-documents](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/other-documents)

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

Guidance on *Alternative Site* arrangements [www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms)

Guidance notes for *Transferred Candidate* arrangements [www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms](http://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>

## **GOV.UK**

*Emergency planning and response: Severe weather; Exam disruption*

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/emergencies-and-severe-weather-schools-and-early-years-settings>

*Opening and closing local-authority-maintained schools*

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools)

*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>

## **National Counter Terrorism Security Office**

*Procedures for handling bomb threats:* [www.gov.uk/government/publications/bomb-threats-guidance/procedures-for-handling-bomb-threats](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bomb-threats-guidance/procedures-for-handling-bomb-threats)