




CANSFIELD
ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE TOGETHER

Exam Contingency Plan

<u>Approval Date</u>	23 rd September
<u>Policy Review Date</u>	September 2022
<u>Chair of Governors</u>	
<u>Headteacher</u>	

1. Key Staff Involved in Contingency Planning

Role	Name(s)
Head of Centre	Dr G Baker
Exams Manager	Miss L Archer
SLT member(s)	Mr C Lomas
SENCo	Mrs H Cashman

2. Purpose of the Plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exams process at Cansfield High School. 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 Ofqual 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 and the JCQ Joint Contingency Plan in the event of widespread disruption to the Examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. This plan also confirms Cansfield High School is compliant with the JCQ regulation (section 5.3, General Regulations for Approved Centres 2019-2020) 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.

3. Possible Causes of Disruption to the Exam process

3.1 Exam Officer 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 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

- Senior Assistant Headteacher/ Exams Officer Trained Admin Staff will step in with the running of exams. Invigilators informed of the EM absence. Senior Assistant Headteacher together with the Exams Officer Trained Admin Staff will then run external examinations. Both have good knowledge of the procedures to follow during the exam cycle. Help also available from local schools.

3.2 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

- Senior Assistant Headteacher to cover period of absence. EM to work closely with Senior Assistant Headteacher to ensure regular testing of students continues.

3.3 Teaching Staff Extended Absence at Key Points in the Exam Cycle

CRITERIA FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

Key tasks not undertaken including:

- All deadlines are calendared with flags raised 4 weeks prior to the deadlines to ensure key dates are not missed
- 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

- EM to issue own internal deadlines, which if not met are referred to teaching staff's line manager. Senior Assistant Headteacher will also will take ownership of requests from EM in the event of subject leader's absence.
- Class teachers are required to advise students of their centre assessment marks two weeks prior to the exam board deadline.

3.4 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

- EM to review, in September, numbers and quality of invigilators on an annual basis, recruiting and providing training as necessary.

3.5 Exam Rooms – Lack of Appropriate Rooms of Main Venues Available 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

- With our current numbers on role we have enough accommodation, other rooms that can be used when required in an emergency
- Rooms are planned 3 months prior to the examination season
- A designated contingency room is allocated if needed on the day

3.6 Failure of IT Systems – including due to potential Cyber Attack

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 – any point

CENTRE ACTIONS

- All deadlines are calendared with flags raised 4 weeks prior to the deadlines to ensure key dates are not missed
- Entries are never left to deadline day. EM sets internal deadline in advance of the exam board deadline day. EM & SLT are aware of the key results dates in August.
- The EM, in consultation with SLT, will make the entries from another venue direct to the Awarding Bodies. Results may also be accessed directly from the Awarding Bodies. At all times during the system failure the EM will liaise with the Awarding Boarding to minimise the disruption.
- Any cyber-attack will be reported to the NCSC and RPA. The school will contact local law enforcement and Action Fraud. We will also inform the DfE by emailing: sector.securityenquiries@education.gov.uk

3.7 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

- Follow the Centre Emergency Evacuation Procedure.

3.8 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 ACTIONS

- Where there is disruption to teaching time and students miss teaching and learning, Cansfield High School would use creative methods (remote learning to take place via google classrooms) to prepare students to the usual high standards for examinations.

- In the case of modular courses, Cansfield High School may advise candidates to sit examinations in an alternative series.
- Cansfield High School has in place plans to facilitate alternative methods of learning.

3.9 Candidates Unable to Take Examinations Because of a Crisis – Centre Remains Open

<u>CRITERIA FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidates are unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal
<u>CENTRE ACTIONS</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise Exam Boards of reason for crisis and obtain documentary proof • Cansfield High School would seek advice from Exam Boards of procedure to seek alternative site for candidate affected

3.10 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)

<u>CRITERIA FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations (including centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency)
<u>CENTRE ACTIONS</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EM to liaise with Headteacher and Site Manager as to the suitability of the site. Advise Exam Boards where necessary and seek advice on alternate site and/or next steps

3.11 Disruption in the Distribution of Examination Papers

<u>CRITERIA FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruption to the distribution of examination papers to the centre in advance of examinations
<u>CENTRE ACTIONS</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exam boards always send papers at least a week in advance so Exams officer to keep checking centres log and inform Awarding Bodies if papers have not arrived • Awarding organisations to provide Cansfield High School with electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network. Cansfield High School would need to ensure that copies are received, made and stored under secure conditions and should have plans in place to facilitate such an action. Awarding organisations would provide guidance on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances. • As last resort, and in close collaboration with Cansfield High School and regulators, awarding organisations to consider scheduling of the examination on an alternative date)

3.12 Disruption to the Transportation of Completed Examination Scripts

<u>CRITERIA FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts
<u>CENTRE ACTIONS</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where examinations are part of the national 'yellow label' service or where awarding organisations arrange collections, Cansfield High School would seek advice from awarding organisations and will not make their own arrangements for transportation unless told to do so by the awarding organisation. • For any examinations where Cansfield High School make their own arrangements for transportation, Cansfield High School would investigate alternative dispatch options that comply with the requirements detailed in the JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations. • Cansfield High School would ensure secure storage of completed examination papers until collection.

3.13 Assessment Evidence is not Available to be Marked

<u>CRITERIA FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN</u>

- Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked

CENTRE ACTIONS

- Provide full report to Exam Boards on the reasons for the damage/destruction
- Cansfield High School to contact awarding organisations to generate candidate marks for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement as defined by the awarding organisations
- Where marks cannot be generated by awarding organisations candidates may need to retake affected assessment in a subsequent assessment series

3.14 Centre Unable to Distribute Results as Normal or Facilitate Post Results Services (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

- Make arrangements to access its results at an alternative site, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation
- Make arrangements to coordinate access to post results services from an alternative site
- Share facilities with other centres if this is possible, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation.
- Make arrangements to make post results requests at an alternative location
- Contact the relevant awarding organisation if electronic post results requests are not possible)

4. Further Guidance to Inform Procedures and Implement Contingency Planning

4.1 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, will share timely and accurate information, as required, with awarding organisations, government departments and other stakeholders. The Department for Education in England 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 above 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 30 September 2021) <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>

4.2 JCQ

15.1 The qualification regulators, awarding bodies 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 will designate a 'contingency day' for examinations, summer 2022. This is consistent with the qualification regulators' document *Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland*: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-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. **The designated 'contingency day' is 29th June 2022.**

In the event of national disruption to a day of examinations in summer 2022, 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 following 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, the awarding bodies will not insist upon candidates being available throughout the entire timetable period as a matter of course.

(JCQ guidance above taken directly from **Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2021-2022** <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>, section 15, Contingency planning)

JCQ Joint Contingency Plan www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/other-documents

<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>)

This Notice is based on guidance provided within the JCQ Joint Contingency Plan, which is available from the JCQ website: www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/other-documents/jcq-joint-contingency-plan

In the event of widespread disruption to the examination system, all centres **must** have contingency plans in place. There are three main categories of disruption, which are outlined below.

Candidates at risk of being unable to take examinations – centres remain open

Centres' contingency plans should focus on options that enable candidates to take their examinations. As part of these preparations, centres should take into account the guidance provided in the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations: <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>

- consider moving the starting times of the examination for all candidates (see **section 6.2** of the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations)
- being aware of the rules for very late arrivals (see **section 21** of the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations).

Wherever possible, it is always in the best interest for candidates to sit the examination. However, if candidates who are unable to sit the examination meet the criteria, special consideration through absence for acceptable reasons is an option (see **Chapter 4** of the JCQ publication A guide to the special consideration process: <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance>

Please do not hesitate to call the relevant awarding body if you require additional support or guidance in the event of disruption to examinations.

Centres at risk of being unable to open as normal during the examination period

As above, centres' contingency plans must focus on enabling candidates to take their examinations if the centre is at risk of being unable to open as normal.

The responsibility for deciding whether it is safe for a centre to open lies with the head of centre who is responsible for taking advice or following instructions from relevant local or national agencies.

Information on what centres should do if examinations or other assessments are seriously disrupted can be found in the three country regulators' exam system contingency plan:

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

Special consideration through absence for acceptable reasons is also available as an option if all other avenues have been exhausted and candidates meet the relevant criteria.

Please do not hesitate to call the relevant awarding body if you require additional support or guidance in the event of disruption to your examinations.

Disruption to transporting completed examination scripts

If there is a delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts:

- where examinations are part of the national 'yellow label' service or where awarding bodies arrange collections, centres should **contact the relevant awarding bodies** for advice and instructions.
- for examinations where centres make their own collection arrangements, they should **investigate alternative options** that comply with the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations

- completed scripts **must** be stored securely until they are collected.

Summary of centre and awarding body responsibilities

Examination centres are responsible for:

- preparing plans for any disruption to examinations as part of centres' general emergency planning • deciding whether the centre can open for examinations as scheduled and informing relevant awarding bodies if the centre is unable to open
- exploring the opportunities for alternative arrangements if the centre cannot open for examinations and agreeing such arrangements with the awarding bodies
- judging whether candidates meet the requirements for special consideration because of any disruption and submitting these requests to the relevant awarding bodies
- assessing their circumstances and liaising with awarding bodies in the event of disruption to the transportation of papers.

Awarding bodies are responsible for:

- ensuring centres receive examination materials for scheduled examinations
- advising centres on possible alternative examination arrangements and declining/approving proposals for alternative examination arrangements
- evaluating and declining/approving requests for special consideration.

Contacting the awarding bodies

In all cases, if there are any concerns, please contact the relevant awarding body for advice:

AQA

08001977162

EMs@aqa.org.uk

CCEA

02890261212,02890261293,02890261425

centresupport@ccea.org.uk

OCR

01223553998

support@ocr.org.uk

Pearson

0344 463 2535

WJEC

02920265077

exams@wjec.co.uk

(JCQ guidance above taken directly from the notice - **Preparing for disruption to examinations** effective from 11 October 2021 www.jcq.org.uk/preparing-for-disruption-to-examinations/)

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

Guidance notes on alternative site arrangements www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms

Guidance notes for transferred candidates www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms

Instructions for Conducting Examinations www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations

A guide to the special consideration process www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance

GOV.UK

Emergency planning and response: Severe weather; Exam disruption; Coronavirus (COVID-19)

www.gov.uk/guidance/emergencies-and-severe-weather-schools-and-early-years-settings

School organisation: local-authority-maintained schools

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

Guidance - Bomb Threats www.gov.uk/government/publications/crowded-places-guidance/bomb-threats