

Key staff involved in Contingency Plan:

Role	Name(s)
Head of Centre	Doug Thomas
Exams Officer Line Manager (Data and Communication Manager)	Rebecca Newey
Exams Officer	Angela Poleykett & Carla Allen
SENDCo	Lois Hook
SLT Member(s)	Doug Thomas, Helen Ellis, Ben Thomas, Sam Channon
ICT Manager/Technicians	Lisa Stevens, Mina Wahaba

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 West Sussex APC. By outlining actions/procedures to be followed in case of disruption, it is intended to mitigate the impact these disruptions have on our exam process.

At all times the Data and Communications Manager, the Data and Examinations Officers, and Senior Leadership Team will liaise with the relevant Awarding Body to ensure any contingency plans meet with its requirements and that JCQ regulations are adhered to.

This plan also confirms West Sussex APC compliance with the JCQ’s General Regulations for Approved Centres (section 5.3) 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 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.

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** for the Examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Causes of potential 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 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*
 - 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 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:

- Data and Communication Manager to liaise with Head Teacher, over responsibilities should absence of Data and Exams Officer have the potential to affect meeting of deadlines.

2. SENDCo 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:

- Head Teacher responsible for ensuring position is filled should absence have the potential to disrupt exam preparation.

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 centres marking.

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

Centre actions:

- The Examinations Officer to liaise with Assistant Heads and Subject Leads, 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.

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:

- The Data and Communication Manager and Data and Examinations Officers will review the invigilation staffing at the start of each Exam Period to ensure sufficient staff are available and trained in a timely fashion.
- The Data and Exams Officer will liaise with Assistant Heads if outside invigilators are required.

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

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Data and Exams Officers 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 Data and Exams Officers will liaise with Assistant Heads to ensure there are adequate rooms available for examinations.
- Alternative venues to be made available by Assistant Heads in the event of an unexpected incident.

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:

- The Data and Exams Officers to contact awarding bodies directly to arrange alternative methods of information exchange.
- Data and Communication Manager and ICT Manager/Technicians to be informed.

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:

- Head Teacher to manage all such incidents.
- Priority given to exam cohort.
- Data and Exams Officers to contact awarding bodies for advice regarding special consideration.
- Centres to communicate with parents.

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:

- Head Teacher to manage all such incidents.
- Priority given to exam cohort.
- Data and Exams Officers to contact awarding bodies for advice regarding special consideration.
- Centres to communicate with parents.
- Where there is disruption to teaching time and students miss teaching and learning, it remains the responsibility of WSAPC to prepare students, as usual, for examinations.
- In the case of modular courses, WSAPC may advise candidates to sit examinations in an alternative series.
- WSAPC has plans in place to facilitate alternative methods of learning.

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

- The Data and Exams Officers will contact the relevant Awarding Body to discuss alternative arrangements and liaise with the SENDCOs to take appropriate action.

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

**In the event that the Head Teacher 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.*

Centre actions:

- The Data and Exams Officers will contact the relevant Awarding Body to discuss alternative arrangements and liaise with the Head Teacher and Data and Communications Manager to take appropriate action.
- Open for Exam candidates only if possible.

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:

- The Data and Exams Officers will communicate with awarding bodies to ensure delivery is taken in time or an alternative arrangement is in place (secure download etc)
- Awarding bodies to provide The Data and Exams Officers with electronic access to exam papers via secure external network. Data and Exams officers to ensure that copies are received, made and stored under secure conditions and should have plans in place to facilitate such action. Awarding bodies to provide guidance on the conduct of exams in such circumstances.
- As a last resort, and in close collaboration with The Data and Exams officers and regulators, awarding bodies to consider scheduling of the exams on an alternative date.

12. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts /assessment evidence

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts

Centre actions:

- Where exams are part of the national 'yellow label' service or where awarding bodies arrange collections, The Data and Exam officers should seek advice from awarding bodies and should not make their own arrangements for transportation unless told to do so by the awarding bodies.
- For any examination where centres make their own arrangements for transportation, Data and Exams officers will investigate alternative dispatch options that comply with the requirements detailed in JCQ Instructions for Conducting examinations.
- Data and Exams Officers to ensure secure storage of completed examination papers until collection.

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 examinations script/assessment evidence does not reach organisations.

Centre actions:

- The Data and Exams Officers will contact the awarding bodies immediately to notify them of any such incidents and act upon advice given.
- Awarding bodies 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 body candidates may need to retake affected assessment in a subsequent assessment series.

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:

- The Data and Communications Manager and Data and Exams Officers to assess alternative arrangements for issuing results with regulators, and act upon advice given.
- Head Teacher to inform students and parents about delay.
- Distribution of results at an alternative site, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisations,
- The Data and Communications Manager and Data and Exams officers to make arrangements to co-ordinate access to post results service from an alternative site
- The Data and Exams Officers to share facilities with other centres if this is possible, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisations.

- Facilitation of post results service: The Data and Communications Manager and Exams Officers to plan to make post results requests at an alternative location.
- The Data and Exams Officers to contact the relevant awarding organisation if electronic post results are not possible.

*information taken from the *Joint contingency plan for the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*

Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning

Ofqual

What schools and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted.

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.

Covid specific guidance:

- [actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak](#) from the Department for Education in England.
- [actions for FE colleges and providers during the coronavirus outbreak](#) from the Department for Education in England
- [responsibility for exams](#) from the Department for Education in England
- [vocational, technical and other general qualifications in 2022](#) from Ofqual (regulator)
- [GCSE, AS and A level qualifications in 2022](#) from Ofqual (regulator)

General contingency guidance

- [emergency planning and response](#) from the Department for Education in England
- [school organisation: local-authority-maintained schools](#) from the Department for Education in England

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

See also [JCQ Joint Contingency Plan for the Examination System](#)

Steps you should take

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.

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 exams or timetabled assessment can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisations, ensuring the secure transportation of question 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.

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.

Steps the awarding organisation should take**Exam planning**

1. Establish and maintain, and at all times comply with, an up-to-date, written contingency plan.
2. 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.

In the event of disruption

- Take all reasonable steps to mitigate any adverse effect, in relation to their qualifications, arising from any disruption.
- Provide effective guidance to any of their centres delivering qualifications.

- 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).
- Promptly notify the relevant regulators about any event which could have an adverse effect on students, standards or public confidence.
- Coordinate its communications with the relevant regulators where the disruption has an impact on multiple centres or a wide range of learners.

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.

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, 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 to the taking of examinations / assessments

The government's view across England, Wales and Northern Ireland is education should continue in 2021/22 with schools remaining open and that examinations and assessments will go ahead in both autumn 2021 and summer 2022.

As education is devolved, in the event of any widespread sustained national disruption to examinations or assessments, national 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>)

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.

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.

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>

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 (COVID19)

<https://www.gov.uk/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/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-guide>

National Counter Terrorism Security Office

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

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually.

ISSUED	April 2016
ADOPTED BY WSAPC	April 2016
RATIFIED BY GB	May 2016
REVIEWED	October 2021
NEXT REVIEW DATE	October 2022