Reading Girls' School

Succeeding Together

Name of Policy	Examination Contingency Plan
Scope of Policy	Exams at Reading Girls' School
Approved by	Principal
Date of Approval	October 2026
Review period	Annually
Review Date	October 2027

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1. Aims

This plan aims to:

- Examine potential risks and issues that could disrupt the management and administration of exams or assessments
- Mitigate the impact of disruptions to exam/assessment administration and to candidates, by providing actions or procedures to follow

2. Legislation and guidance

This plan complies with the Joint Council for Qualifications' (JCQ) general regulations for approved centres, which require all Centre's to have an up to date and written examination contingency plan.

It's also based on:

- Ofqual's guidance on contingency planning
- JCQ's guidance on preparing for disruption to examinations and guidance for centres on cyber security

This plan also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Responsibilities

3.1 Head of Centre

The head of Centre is Marika Farrugia

They are responsible for making sure that:

- A written examination contingency plan/examinations policy is in place, and covers all aspects of exam/assessment administration
- Staff are aware of these plans
- There are procedures in place to maintain the security of user accounts (see section 4)

3.2 Senior designated contact(s)

The senior designated contact(s) must be available to manage emergency requests from awarding bodies that are results-related during the summer holidays. Mr. R Haywood

3.3 Examinations officer

The examinations officer is a distinct/separate role to the head of Centre and is responsible for:

- Appointing and training a member of staff as an examinations assistant who can take over their responsibilities in the event of their absence

3.4 Staff and invigilators

Staff and invigilators involved in the centre's exam/assessment process are responsible for reading, understanding and implementing the contingency plan.

4. Cyber security arrangements

Exam/assessment planning includes appropriate preventive measure against issues relating to cyber security, for example, candidates' work is backed up on 2 separate devices, including 1 off-site backup

The head of centre is responsible for ensuring there are procedures in place to maintain the security of user accounts by:

- Providing training for authorised staff on the importance of creating strong unique passwords and keeping all account details secret
- Providing training for staff on awareness of all types of social engineering/phishing attempts
- Enabling additional security settings wherever possible
- Updating any passwords that may have been exposed
- Setting up secure account recovery options
- Reviewing and managing connected applications
- Monitoring accounts and regularly reviewing account access, including removing access when no longer required
- Ensuring authorised members of staff securely access awarding bodies' online systems, in line with awarding body regulations regarding cyber security and the JCQ guidance for centres on cyber security. (authorised staff will have access, where necessary, to a device which complies with awarding bodies' multi-factor authentication (MFA) requirements)
- Reporting any actual or suspected compromise of an awarding body's online systems immediately to the relevant awarding body

5. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually in the autumn term. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

6. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our:

- Assessment policy

7. Contingency plan

7.1 Alternative site(s)

If examinations/assessments cannot be conducted at the centre's registered address, the alternative site is: RGS 6th Form Centre

7.2 Scenarios

The table below sets out examples of scenarios where you may need a contingency plan to minimise risk of disruption to examination/assessment administration, and to candidates. These are based on guidance from Ofqual and the JCQ, linked above.

You **must** include the scenarios marked with an asterisk*. However, your contingency planning must cover **all** aspects of examination/assessment administration and delivery.

Amend this table where appropriate, and add or amend details specific to your centre. Further examples may include:

- Absence of exam officers, teaching staff and/or invigilators
- Lack of appropriately-trained invigilators
- Lack of appropriate exam rooms
- Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lockdown)
- Markers unable to mark papers according to a schedule
- Buildings being unavailable due to flooding or identification of reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC)
- The rest of the centre being closed due to strike action

SCENARIO	WHEN TO IMPLEMENT	ACTIONS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Disruption of teaching time in the weeks before an exam/assessment, due to the centre being closed for an extended period	When the centre is closed and candidates are unable to attend for an extended period during normal teaching or supported study time, interrupting the provision of normal teaching and learning	› Seek advice from relevant awarding organisations and the JCQ › Communicate with parents, carers and candidates about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plans to address this › Have a contingency plan to facilitate alternative methods of learning, alternative venues or both › Prioritise candidates who will be facing examinations/assessments shortly › Advise candidates, where appropriate, to sit examinations/assessment in the next available series › Communicate any changes to your plans with parents, carers and candidates	
The head of centre is absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle*	If the head of centre is absent due to illness or other unforeseen circumstances and unable to perform key tasks required for the management and administration of examinations/assessments	› Contact the relevant awarding organisation promptly and follow its instructions › Designated member of SLT will deputise for the head of centre	Mr. Haywood (Vice Principal)
Exams officer is absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle*	If the exams officer is absent due to illness or other unforeseen circumstances and unable to perform key tasks required for the management and administration of examinations/assessments	› Contact the relevant awarding organisation promptly and follow its instructions › The examinations assistant will deputise for the exams officer	Mr. Haywood (Vice Principal)
SENCO is absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle*	If the SENCO is absent due to illness or other unforeseen circumstances and unable to perform key tasks required for the management and administration of examinations/assessments	› Contact the relevant awarding organisation promptly and follow its instructions › Exams officer to work with deputy SENCO/member of the SLT to put access arrangements in place	

SCENARIO	WHEN TO IMPLEMENT	ACTIONS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Candidates are unable to take examinations/ assessments because of a crisis, but the centre remains open	If candidates are unable to attend examination centres to take examinations/assessments as normal, e.g. due to a sickness bug	› Communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset, to make them aware of the issue › Liaise with these candidates to identify whether the examination/assessment can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with relevant awarding organisations › Communicate with parents, carers and candidates regarding solutions to the issue › Offer candidates an opportunity to sit examinations/ assessments missed at the next available series, if possible › Apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates, where they've met the minimum requirements	
Centre is unable to open as normal during the examination period*	If the centre is unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations/assessments, e.g. it's forced to close due to a fire or flood	› Inform relevant awarding organisations as soon as possible › Refer to emergency plans and/or health and safety policy, where appropriate › Head of centre will decide whether the centre is safe to open, based on advice or instructions from relevant local or national agencies. Consider whether to open for examinations/assessments and candidates only, if possible › Use alternative venues in agreement with relevant awarding organisations › Communicate any changes to plans with parents, carers and candidates › Apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they've met the minimum requirements › Offer candidates an opportunity to sit examinations/ assessments missed at the next available series, if possible	

SCENARIO	WHEN TO IMPLEMENT	ACTIONS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Disruption to the centre's IT systems*	If a critical failure of the centre's IT systems significantly impacts the administration of exams, e.g. in the event of a cyber attack	› Initiate measures to protect candidates work from corruption/cyber-attacks (see section 4) › Contact the relevant awarding organisation promptly and follow its instructions (if digital communications aren't available, make contact by other means, e.g. phone call) › Take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether your centre is able to open › Identify whether the exam/assessment can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation, ensuring the secure transportation of question papers/assessment materials to the alternative venue › Where accommodation is limited, prioritise pupils whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam/assessment when planned › Communicate with pupils, parents and carers any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue › Communicate with any external assessors, invigilators or relevant third parties regarding any changes to the exam/ assessment timetable	
Disruption in the distribution of examination papers	If there is disruption to the distribution of examination papers to centres in advance of examinations	› Find out from the awarding organisation if they're able to organise an alternative courier and time to deliver hard copies › If the above isn't possible, organise receipt of electronic access to papers via a secure external network › Have plans in place to ensure the school is able to receive, make and store papers under secure conditions › As a last resort, the awarding organisation may consider rescheduling the examination	

SCENARIO	WHEN TO IMPLEMENT	ACTIONS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts	If there is a delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts	› If your examinations are part of the national 'yellow label service' or where your awarding organisation arranges collections, seek advice from awarding organisations and their normal collection agency regarding collection › Only make alternative arrangements after approval from the awarding organisation › Ensure secure storage of completed examination papers until collection › If your centre makes its own transportation arrangements, investigate alternative arrangements that comply with the JCQ's instructions for conducting examinations	
Assessment evidence isn't available to be marked	In the event of large-scale damage to, or destruction of, completed examination scripts or assessment evidence before it can be marked – e.g. a fire or flood at the centre destroys completed examination scripts	› Communicate this immediately to the relevant awarding organisation, candidates and their parents or carers › Where possible, the awarding organisation will generate candidate marks based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement › Where marks cannot be generated by awarding organisations, candidates may need to retake affected assessment in a subsequent assessment series	

SCENARIO	WHEN TO IMPLEMENT	ACTIONS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Centre is unable to distribute results as normal or facilitate post-results services*	If the centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post-results services – e.g. due to failure of IT systems or a cyber attack	› Contact awarding organisations about alternative options (if digital communications aren't available, make contact by other means, e.g. phone call) › Make arrangements to access results at an alternative site › Share facilities with other schools/colleges if possible › Co-ordinate access to post-results services from an alternative site › Contact the relevant awarding organisation if electronic post-results requests are not possible	