

Friends' School Lisburn



Examinations Contingency Plan

Rationale

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the management and administration of the exam process at Friends' School Lisburn. Actions and procedures outlined are designed to mitigate the impact these disruptions have on the examinations process. This plan complies with JCQ general regulations (section 5) in that:

The centre agrees to "have in place a written examination contingency plan/examinations policy which covers all aspects of examination administration. This will allow members of the senior leadership team to have a robust contingency plan in place, minimising risk to examination administration, should the examinations officer be absent at a crucial stage of the examination cycle;"

Causes of potential disruption to the exam process

Contingency plans are in place for the following eventualities:

1. Absence of Examinations Officer during the examinations cycle
2. Absence of SENCO during the examinations cycle
3. Absence of HoD
4. Invigilation
5. Examination rooms
6. Malpractice and maladministration
7. Failure of IT systems
8. Disruption of teaching time, where the centre closed for an extended period
9. Candidates are unable to take examinations because of a crisis, but the centre remains open
10. Centre unable to open as normal during the examinations period
11. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers
12. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts
13. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked
14. Centre is unable to distribute results as normal

1. Absence of the Examinations Officer

The Examinations Officer has a key role to play at all stages of the examinations cycle, including the following:

Planning

- collating information on qualifications and awarding body specifications being delivered
- identifying essential key tasks, dates and deadlines
- overseeing the allocation and training of invigilators

Centre action in case of absence: these roles will be overseen by the Senior Teacher (timetable) and the Vice-Principal (Curriculum). In the case of a longer absence, a member of staff will be appointed temporarily to the role of Examinations Officer.

Entries

- informing Awarding Bodies of estimated entries
- entering candidates for external examinations and assessments prior to published deadlines

Centre action in case of absence: these roles will be overseen by the Senior Teacher (timetable) and the Vice-Principal (Curriculum). In the case of a longer absence, a member of staff will be appointed temporarily to the role of Examinations Officer.

Pre-examination period

- issuing exam timetables, organising rooming and drawing up invigilation schedules
- briefing candidates on exam timetables and Awarding Body information
- organising storage of examination and assessment materials and candidates' work under required secure conditions
- overseeing the submissions of internal assessment marks and samples of candidates' work

Centre action in case of absence: these roles will be assumed by the Senior Teachers with responsibility for Key Stages 4 and 5. In the case of a longer absence, a member of staff will be appointed temporarily to the role of Examinations Officer.

Examinations period

- ensuring examinations are taken under the conditions prescribed by Awarding Bodies
- in consultation with Heads of Key Stage and the SENCO, submitting reports and requests to Awarding Bodies, including very late arrival, suspected malpractice, maladministration and Special Consideration
- dispatching candidates' scripts to Awarding Bodies

Centre action in case of absence: Senior Teachers (Head of Key Stage 4 and Head of Sixth Form) will ensure that examinations are taken under correct conditions and will assume responsibility for room reports. The Chief Invigilator, under the supervision of the Senior Teacher (Timetable), will oversee the dispatch of scripts to Awarding Bodies.

Results and post-results

- downloading results
- distributing results to candidates
- facilitating post-results services

Centre action in case of absence: The Senior Teacher (Timetable) will oversee the downloading and distribution of results. Senior Teachers (Head of Key Stage 4 and Head of Sixth Form) will facilitate post-results services.

2. Absence of the SENCO

The SENCO is also involved throughout the examinations cycle, as follows:

Planning

- testing and assessing candidates to identify potential access arrangement requirements
- collating evidence of need and evidence to support normal way of working

Centre action in case of absence: Year Teachers will work with Heads of School; if the absence is prolonged, a member of the teaching staff will be appointed temporarily to the role of SENCO. Alternative arrangements for testing can currently be arranged in school (HP); if this proves not to be possible, advice will be sought from the EA.

Pre-examination period and examination period

- applying to the Awarding Body for approval for access arrangements
- identifying modified paper requirements to enable ordering to meet external deadline
- training staff to provide support to candidates with access arrangement
- liaising with the Examinations Officer in relation to support for candidates with Access Arrangements

Centre action in case of absence: these roles will be assumed by the Senior Teachers with responsibility for Key Stages 4 and 5.

3. Absence of Head of Department

Heads of Department fulfil the following roles:

- providing provisional and final entry information to the Examinations Officer on time
- submission of internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet submission deadlines

Centre action in case of absence: a person will be designated in the relevant subject department and arrangements will be overseen by the Vice-Principal (Curriculum).

4. Invigilation

The following problems may arise with invigilation:

- 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 action: a list of trained invigilators will be kept; internal support staff, if appropriately trained, will be available to invigilate in emergencies. Invigilators are trained at the beginning of the examination period, and should follow the procedures outlined in guidance issued to them from the centre and from JCQ's ICE.

5. Exam rooms

The Examinations Officer will liaise with the Senior Teacher with responsibility for cover in allocating rooms for the examination period, and will inform staff and pupils of classes which need to be re-located.

If there is a shortage of appropriate rooms at short notice, the cover manager will re-locate classes and allocate rooms as required. In the event of the Gym becoming unavailable at short notice, examinations can be moved to the Sports Hall.

6. Suspicion of Malpractice or Maladministration

Any incidents of suspected malpractice should be reported to the Examinations Officer, who will contact the Head of Centre as soon as possible. In the event of maladministration, a full disclosure should be made to the Examinations Officer, who will alert the Head of Centre as soon as possible. In either case, either the Head of Centre or the Vice-Principal (Curriculum) will seek advice from the relevant Awarding Body.

7. Failure of IT systems

In the event of a MIS (SIMS) failure, final entries and release of results could be affected. In the first instance, the C2k helpdesk will be contacted.

In the event of a general IT failure, back-up laptops will be used for pupils who require the use of computers. The C2k helpdesk will be contacted in order to find a solution to the problem.

8. Disruption of teaching time

In the event of unavoidable disruption to teaching time, the centre will communicate with parents, carers pupils about plans to address this. Where pupils have to be kept off school, every attempt will be made to minimise the impact on examination classes.

9. Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open

The centre will communicate with relevant Awarding Bodies to make them aware of the issue, and will communicate with parents, carers and candidates regarding solutions.

10. Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period

The centre will communicate with relevant Awarding Bodies to make them aware of the issue, and will communicate with parents, carers and candidates regarding solutions.

11. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers

The Examinations Officer will check that papers have been delivered by the expected date. Where this is not the case, the centre will communicate with Awarding Bodies as soon as possible and organise alternative delivery of papers, or to print papers if these can be delivered electronically.

12. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

The Examinations Officer will communicate with relevant Awarding Bodies in the event that there is a delay in collection, or a failure in the collection service.

13. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked

If there is large-scale damage to completed examination scripts or assessment evidence before it can be marked, the Head of Centre will communicate this immediately to the relevant Awarding Body and subsequently to students and their parents or carers. In the case of staff absence, the Vice-Principal (Curriculum) will liaise with subject departments and arrange for work to be marked and returned.

14. Centre unable to distribute results as normal

The centre will contact the Awarding Bodies about alternative options and will inform pupils, parents and carers.

In points 8 -14, guidance has been taken directly from JCQ's *Joint contingency plan in the event of widespread disruption to the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*.

JCQ documents

General regulations

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>

Guidance on *alternative site arrangements*

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/forms>

Instructions for conducting examinations

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>

A guide to the special consideration process

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance>

Ofqual

<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>