



# Exam Contingency

## 2020-2021

This policy is updated and approved by the Governing Body every year

This version was approved December 2020

The next update will be Sept 2021

Approved: Mr P. Brown – Chair of Governors

Approved: Mr N. Pledger – Headteacher

*Signed copies held on school file*

## Examination Contingency Plan

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	<b>Neale pledger</b>
Exams officer line manager (Senior Leader)	<b>Emma Windsor</b>
Exams officer	<b>Chloe Jones</b>
SENDCo	<b>Katie Owens</b>
SLT member(s)	<b>Andrew Simpson, Kayleigh Shaw, Nick O'Connell, Leah Martindale, Matt Pike</b>

### Purpose of the plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the management and administration of the examination process at Sir Thomas Fremantle 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 that Sir Thomas Fremantle School complies with JCQ general regulations (section 5, General Regulations for Approved Centres 2019-2020) 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 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.

### Possible causes of potential disruption to the examination process

## **Extended absence of Examinations Officer at key points in the examination process (cycle):**

### **Criteria for implementation of plan:**

Key tasks in the management and administration of the examination cycle not undertaken, including:

#### a) Planning

- Annual data collection exercise not undertaken to collate information on qualifications and awarding body specifications being delivered.
- Annual examinations plan not produced identifying essential key tasks, key dates and deadlines.
- Insufficient invigilators recruited and trained.

#### b) Entries

- Awarding bodies not informed of early/estimated entries (which prompt release of early information required by teaching staff).
- Candidates not entered with awarding bodies for external examinations/assessments.
- Awarding body entry deadlines missed or late or other penalty fees incurred.

#### c) Pre-exams

- Examination timetabling, rooming allocation and invigilation schedules not prepared.
- Candidates not briefed on examination timetables and awarding body information for candidates.
- Confidential examination/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.

#### d) Examination time

- Examinations/assessments not taken under the conditions prescribed by awarding bodies.
- Required reports/assessments not submitted to awarding bodies during examination/assessment periods, e.g. very late arrival, suspected malpractice, special consideration.
- Candidates' scripts not dispatched as required to awarding bodies.

#### 3) Results and post-results

- Access to examination results affecting the distribution of results to candidates.
- The facilitation of the post-results services.

### **Centre actions:**

- Designate Deputy Examinations Officer (LW – previous EO)
- Produce STFS Examinations Officer Handbook, incorporating calendar showing due dates for required tasks – to be updated annually.

- Key information (student candidate numbers/UCI's, exam board website login details, etc.) securely stored on Examinations Officer's laptop.
- Originals of all policies, handbooks, etc. kept on file in both hard copy and electronic formats.
- Half termly/termly briefing sessions with Head of Centre/SLT link/SENCo.
- Links with Examinations Officers in other local schools – available for help & advice where needed.
- Centre maintains membership of The Exams Office as a source of help, support and advice for Examination Officers and administrative staff.

### **Extended absence of SENDCo at key points in the examination cycle:**

#### **Criteria for implementation of plan:**

##### a) Planning

- Candidates not tested/assessed to identify potential access arrangement requirements.
- Evidence of need and evidence to support normal way of working not collated.

##### b) Pre-exams

- Approval for access arrangements not applied for with the awarding body.
- Modified paper requirements not identified in a timely manner to enable ordering to meet external deadline.
- Staff providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained.

##### d) Examination time

- Access arrangement candidate support not arranged for examination rooms.

#### **Centre actions:**

- Awareness of access arrangements, evidence requirements, etc. shared between SENCo (KO), designated Access Arrangements Co-Ordinator (LM) and Examinations Officer (CJ).
- Deputy Examinations Officer (LW) given overview of above.
- Evidence securely stored in agreed location.
- Teaching staff made aware of need to gather evidence and correct method of doing so.

### **Extended absence of teaching staff at key points in the examination cycle:**

#### **Criteria for implementation of plan:**

##### Key tasks not undertaken including:

- Early/estimated entry information not provided to the Examinations Officer on time, resulting in pre-release information not being received.
- Final entry information not provided to the Examinations Officer on time, resulting in:

- candidates not being entered for examinations/assessments or being entered late
  - late or other penalty fees being charged by awarding bodies
- Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet submission deadlines.

**Centre actions:**

- All teaching staff to be made aware of the timetable for examination-related information-gathering as laid out in the STFS Examinations Policy.
- Entry-making timetable to allow for sufficient checking time whilst still meeting deadlines.
- Examinations Officer to liaise with awarding bodies to ensure that all candidates are properly entered for the correct examinations.
- Directors of Studies to assume responsibility for missing entries.
- Examinations Officer to seek the assistance of Directors of Studies and/or SLT in instances where the required information is not being provided in a timely fashion.
- SLT to ensure departmental continuity by requesting alternative teacher to take responsibility.

**Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence:**

**Criteria for implementation of plan:**

- Failure to recruit and train sufficient invigilators to conduct examinations.
- Invigilator shortage on peak examination days.
- Invigilator absence on the day of an examination.

**Centre actions:**

- Examinations Officer to commence invigilator recruitment process at the beginning of the Spring term.
- Examinations Office to recruit and train sufficient numbers of invigilators (including 'spares' who can be called on at short notice)
- All prospective invigilators to provide details of their availability by completing the STFS Invigilator Availability and Information Form.
- Original of Invigilator Handbook to be filed in both hard copy and electronic format.
- Contact details of invigilators to be stored securely on Examinations Officer's laptop.

**Examination rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice:**

**Criteria for implementation of plan:**

- Examinations Officer unable to identify sufficient/appropriate rooms during examinations timetable planning.
- Insufficient rooms available on peak examination days.
- Main examination venues unavailable owing to an unexpected incident at examination time.

**Centre actions:**

- Examinations Officer to plan examinations timetable far enough in advance to enable alternative arrangements to be made if necessary.
- Examinations Officer to compile 'bank' of alternative sites for use in an emergency.
- Examinations Officer to liaise with JCQ/awarding bodies in such an instance.

**Failure of IT systems:**

**Criteria for implementation of plan:**

- *MIS system failure at final entry deadline*
- *MIS system failure during exams preparation*
- *MIS system failure at results release time*

**Centre actions:**

- Examinations Officer to liaise with awarding bodies with a view to agreeing a resolution.
- Examinations Officer to liaise with technical support (10-100) and Bromcom with a view to achieving a speedy resolution.

**Disruption of teaching time in the weeks before an exam – centre closed for an extended period**

**Criteria for implementation of plan:**

- Centre is 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:**

- Centre to communicate with parents/carers and students about the potential for disruption and discuss plans for how to address this.

- Examinations Officer to apprise awarding organisations of situation.
- SLT to facilitate alternative methods of learning, e.g. virtual teaching, Teams.

### **Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open:**

#### **Criteria for implementation of plan:**

- Candidates are unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal.

#### **Centre actions:**

- Centre to liaise with candidates via telephone/email, website and Facebook to identify whether examinations can be sat at an alternative venue.
- Examinations Officer to liaise with relevant awarding organisations to obtain agreement for use of alternative venue, as described above.
- Centre to keep with parents, carers and candidates fully informed at all times.
- Examinations Officer to apply for special consideration for the affected students, where appropriate.
- Centre to offer candidates the opportunity of sitting their examinations during the next available series, where appropriate.

### **Centre unable to open as normal during the examination period:**

#### **Criteria for implementation of plan:**

- Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations.

*A centre which is unable to open as normal for examinations must inform each awarding organisation with which examinations are due to be taken as soon as is possible. [JCP scenario 5]*

#### **Centre actions:**

- Examinations Officer to plan examinations timetable far enough in advance to enable alternative arrangements to be made if necessary.
- Examinations Officer to liaise with JCQ/awarding bodies in such an instance.
- Centre to open for examinations only if this is feasible.
- Centre to apply for special consideration, where minimum requirements have been met.

## **Disruption to the distribution of examination papers:**

### **Criteria for implementation of plan:**

- Disruption to the distribution of examination papers to the centre in advance of examinations.

*The centre to communicate with awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of papers. [JCP scenario 3]*

### **Centre actions:**

- Examinations Officer to liaise with awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of examination papers and/or secure download.

## **Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts:**

### **2.12.1 Criteria for implementation of plan:**

- Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts/assessment

*The centre to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to resolve the issue. [JCP scenario 4]*

### **Centre actions:**

- Examinations Officer to contact the courier (Parcel Force) to arrange an ad hoc collection.
- Completed scripts to be held in centre's secure storage whilst awaiting collection.
- Examinations Officer to contact the relevant awarding organisation if delay is longer than anticipated.



## **Assessment evidence is not available to be marked:**

### **Criteria for implementation of plan:**

- Large-scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked.
- Completed examination scripts/assessments evidence does not reach awarding organisations

*It is the responsibility of the Head of Centre to communicate this immediately to the relevant awarding organisation(s) and subsequently to students and their parents or carers. [JCP scenario 6]*

### **Centre actions:**

- Examinations Officer to notify awarding organisations as soon as possible.
- Candidate marks to be submitted for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence, as defined by the awarding organisations.

## **Centre unable to distribute results as normal:**

### **Criteria for implementation of plan:**

- Centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post-results services.

*Centres to contact awarding organisations about alternative options. [JCP scenario 11]*

### **Centre actions:**

- Make arrangements to access its results at an alternative site, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation; Share facilities with other centres if this is possible, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation.
- OR – distribution of results online only
- Facilitation of post results services: To make arrangements to make post results requests at an alternative location and to contact the relevant awarding organisation if electronic post results requests are not possible

**Causes 7-13** – all scenarios, criteria and specific communications have been taken directly from the *Joint contingency plan in the event of widespread disruption to the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*

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

### **Ofqual**

*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>

### **JCQ**

*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>

***The awarding bodies have designated Wednesday 24 June 2020 as a ‘contingency day’ for examinations.*** 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 local disruption to examinations. It is part of the awarding bodies’ standard contingency planning for examinations.***

***In the highly unlikely event that there is national disruption to a day of examinations in summer 2020, the awarding bodies will liaise with the qualification regulators and the DfE 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 on 24 June 2020. Centres will be alerted if it was agreed to reschedule the examinations and the affected candidates will be expected to make themselves available in such circumstances. The decision regarding the re-scheduling 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.***

## **GOV.UK**

*Emergencies and severe weather: schools and early years settings*

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

*Teaching time lost due to severe weather conditions*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-time-lost-due-to-severe-weather-conditions/teaching-time-lost-due-to-severe-weather-conditions>

*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>