



LUX MUNDI

LIGHT OF THE WORLD ~ CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

Exams Contingency Policy **CARDINAL POLE CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

Status: Public 2025

APPROVED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY ON: 1st October 2025.....

CHAIR OF GOVERNORS SIGNATURE:.....

David Rhans

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Mission Statement

Cardinal Pole Catholic School is a community of **service** guiding young people on a path to **opportunity**, **aspiration** and **reward**, founded on Catholic values.

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 Cardinal Pole Catholic School. 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.

1 Exams Officer extended absence at key points in the examination cycle

The following are the key tasks involved in the management and administration of the examination cycle which would be at risk in the event of the Exams Officer being absent.

1.1 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.

1.2 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.
- Exam timetabling, rooming allocation; and invigilation schedules not prepared.
- Candidates not briefed on exam timetables and awarding body information for candidates.
- 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.

1.3 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.

1.4 Results and post-results

- Access to examination results affecting the distribution of results to candidates.

1.5 Options

- We have excellent working relationships with both St Aloysius and Our Lady's, both Hackney Catholic Schools, and have collaborated with each other in the absence of, or to support, the Exams Officer, both schools can be relied upon to provide assistance.
- The SLT Member responsible for Exams is Charlotte Brennan who is experienced in all aspects of running exams, and the Deputy Headteacher, Ellie Connolly, is also very experienced in all aspects of the Exam cycle should there be staff absence. A lead invigilator is also available for support.
- All procedures are documented.

There are products available via:

- The Key Tasks section of The Exams Office website.
- The Exams Oracle and Centre Support Service of the Examination Officers Association.
- The Exams Administration section of the DFE website.
- Examination Board helplines.
- The Exams Office section of the Joint Council for Qualifications website.

2 SENCO extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

Key tasks required in the management and administration of the access arrangements process within the exam cycle not undertaken.

2.1 Planning

- Candidates not tested/assessed to identify potential access arrangement requirements.
- 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.
- 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.

2.2 Exam time

- Access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms.

2.3 Options

- Request SENCO assistant to take over until SENCO returns.
- SENCO assistant to identify any candidates not yet approved by Awarding Bodies and make application(s).
- Exams Officer to identify any shortfalls in Invigilation requirements and ensure that gaps are filled.
- Once gaps are filled, Exams Officer to arrange suitable rooms and SENCO assistant to provide training.

3 Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

3.1 Key tasks

- 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 other penalty fees being charged by awarding bodies;
 - Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet submission deadlines.

3.2 Options

- Subject Head of Department or SLT member to provide Exams Officer with details of Estimated/Final entries.
- Subject Head of Department or SLT member to ensure Exams Officer is provided with Estimated Grades/Coursework Marks and that Coursework samples are transmitted to Moderators.

4 Lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence

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

4.1 Options

- Use provisional timetable and estimated entry information to determine invigilator numbers required.
- Where invigilators may be short, request permission to recruit additional invigilators.
- SLT member responsible for Cover to provide additional Invigilator resource in the event of a shortfall at short notice.
- Staff agencies to be contacted if none of the above is successful.

5 Disruption to Public Transport preventing students from reaching Exams Centre

- Candidates unable to take Exams due to planned lack of public transport.
- Candidates unable to take Exams due to sudden disruption to public transport.
- Candidates arrive late due to public transport problems.

5.1 Options

- Monitor news agencies on a regular basis to identify any potential transportation difficulties.
- Centre to utilise own bus facilities to transport candidates to centre.
- Latecomers to be permitted to take their Exams providing they are within the JCQ regulations.
- Centre to liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with the relevant awarding organisations.

6: Candidates unable to take Exams because of a crisis – centre remains open

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

6.1 Options

- Centres to offer candidates an opportunity to sit any Exams missed at the next available series.
- Centre to liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with the relevant awarding organisations.
- Centres to apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements. Candidates are only eligible for special consideration if they have a medical certificate or have been advised by their centre not to attend an examination.
- If a candidate chooses not to sit an examination they should be aware that special consideration rules will not apply.
- JCQ guidance on special consideration can be accessed through the JCQ website.

7 Candidates unable to take Exams because of a crisis – centre closed

- Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period.
- Centre closed or candidates are unable to attend for an extended period.
- The provision of normal teaching and learning is interrupted.
- Centre closed due to inaccessibility or risk of injury caused by severe weather.
- It remains the responsibility of centres to prepare students, as usual, for Exams.

Options

- Candidates to sit exams at alternative sites; St Aloysius' College, All Saints Catholic High School, local Church Hall.
- Centres to offer candidates an opportunity to sit any Exams missed at the next available series.
- Centres to apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements.
- Centre to liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with the relevant awarding organisations.
- In the event that the head of centre decides the centre cannot be opened for scheduled Exams, 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 Exams that may be available and the options for candidates who have not been able to take scheduled Exams.
- The centre to open for Exams and examination candidates only, if possible alternative centres should be considered in the event that candidates cannot come to school.
- Special Consideration can be used where candidates are unable to achieve a result due to one of the above factors.
- An exam result can be generated by the awarding body, based on factors such as a student's performance in other assessments in the same subject.

8 Failure of IT systems

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

- Cyber Attacks

8.1 Options

- Awarding bodies to be informed of the situation and an extension to the deadline should be requested.
- Entries made via the Exam Boards Secure Intranet i.e. eAQA, Edexcel Online etc.
- Application for Timetable Variation whilst awaiting fix by RM Unify/ICT Support.
- MIS contractor and ICT team on standby to repair damage quickly.
- Special Consideration can be applied for in the event of a serious disruption.
- Request for approval from Awarding Bodies to use alternative site provision of ICT.
- Results can be obtained at an alternative site.
- Download results from Awarding Bodies Secure Intranet for Results Day.
- Promptly reporting any incidents to the relevant awarding body/bodies which might compromise any aspect of assessment delivery such as a cyber-attack
- Where candidates produce work electronically, ensuring their work is backed-up regularly and stored securely on the centre's IT system / Ensuring protection of the candidates' work from corruption and considering the risks and implications of any cyber-attack
- Following and regularly reviewing National Cyber Security Centre advice for support in cyber security preparedness and mitigation work / Using the NCSC's free [Web Check](#) and [Mail Check](#) services to help protect from cyber-attacks

9 Lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice

- 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 expected incident at exam time.

9.1 Options

- Move pupils from normal classrooms for the duration of the Exams.
- Plan alternative accommodation for the duration of the incident.
- Request Timetable variation from Boards in order to stagger exams, ensuring adequate quarantine supervision.

10 Disruption to the distribution of examination papers.

- Disruption to the distribution of examination papers to centres in advance of Exams.

10.1 Options

- Awarding Bodies will have a contingency plan for this, possibly to download papers on the day of the exam and copying them on-site.

11 Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

- Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts.

11.1 Options

- In the first instance centres to seek advice from awarding organisations and normal collection agency regarding collection. Centres are not to make their own arrangements for transportation without approval from awarding organisations.
- Centres to ensure secure storage of completed examination papers until collection.

12 Assessment evidence is not available to be marked

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

12.1 Options

- Awarding organisations to generate candidate marks for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement as defined by the awarding organisations.
- Candidates to retake affected assessment at subsequent assessment window.
- Assessment evidence to be kept electronically and backed up.

13 Centre unable to distribute results as normal

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

13.1 Options

- Centre to make arrangements to access its results at an alternative site; e.g. St Aloysius' College, All Saints Catholic High School, Church Hall.
- Awarding organisations to provide centres with electronic access to results via a secure external network.
- Awarding organisations may be able to fax examination papers to centres if electronic transfer is not possible.
- The Exams Officer would need to ensure that copies are received, made and stored under secure conditions.
- Source alternative couriers for delivery of hardcopies to site.
- Centre to share facilities with other centres.

14 Further guidance to inform and implement contingency planning

JCQ guidance taken directly from JCQ Instructions for conducting Exams:

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-Exams>, page iv]

General regulations for approved centres:

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

Guidance on alternative site arrangements

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

Guidance on transferred candidate arrangements

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/entries>

Instructions for conducting Exams

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

A guide to the special consideration process

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

GOV.UK

Emergency planning and response: Severe weather; Exam disruption

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/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>

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>

Statutory guidance on school closures

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools>

APPENDIX 1 - Risk Assessment

A copy of our whole school risk assessment can be found on the shared drive or policy page of the school website. Further copy can also be obtained from the HR Officer.