

Exam contingency plan

This plan is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Reviewed By	David Smith / Andrea Whitehead
Last Reviewed	April 2018
Reviewed	April 2019
To be reviewed	April 2020

Contents

Contents

Purpose of the plan	2
Possible causes of disruption to the exam process.....	2
• Exam officer extended absence at key points in the exam process (cycle).....	2
• Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle	5
• Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice	6
• Failure of IT systems	7
• Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lock down).....	7
• Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open.....	7
• Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period (including in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency).....	8
• Disruption in the distribution of examination papers.....	8
• Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts	9
• Assessment evidence is not available to be marked.....	9
• Centre unable to distribute results as normal (including in the event of the centre being unavailable on results day owing to an unforeseen emergency)	9
Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning	10
Ofqual.....	10
JCQ	12
GOV.UK.....	13

Purpose of the plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exams process at the centre. 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 scenarios contained in the *Joint contingency plan in the event of widespread disruption to the examination system in England which provides guidance in the publication what school should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted*.

This plan also confirms Bolton Impact Trust is compliant with the JCQ regulation (section 5.3, General Regulations for Approved Centres 2018-19) 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 team to act immediately in the event of an emergency or staff absence.

Possible causes of disruption to the exam process

- **Exam officer extended absence at key points in the exam process (cycle)**

Key tasks required in the management and administration of the exam cycle not undertaken including:

Criteria for implementation of the plan	Bolton Impact Trust Strategy	Staff Involved
<p><i>Planning</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>annual data collection exercise not undertaken to collate information on qualifications, awarding body specifications being delivered and estimated entries</i> • <i>annual exams plan not produced identifying essential key tasks, key dates and deadlines</i> • <i>Review of exam policies</i> 	<p><i>The exam officer of part of a team of 4 people led by an experienced member of SLT. All member of the team have attended a planned training programme to ensure the absence of the exam officer is covered by those in the team and members of SMT</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information gathering & information sharing (internal) to be collated by the assistant head and data manager • Annual exam plan (key tasks checklist – see contingency folder) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bolton Impact Trusts Senior Leadership Team (SLT) • Academy Lead (AL) • Exam officers (EO) • Teachers (T)

<p><i>Entries</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>awarding bodies not being informed of early/estimated entries which prompts release of early information required by teaching staff</i> • <i>candidates not being entered with awarding bodies for external exams/assessment</i> • <i>awarding body entry deadlines missed or late or other penalty fees being incurred</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exam hub meeting to update policies if required • Confirm from awarding body administrative guidance how early/estimated entries should be submitted • In the contingency folder is a step by step 'how to' guide on entering candidates EO to over see • Identify the key dates in September relating to any qualification being taken at Bolton Impact rust (AL) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bolton Impact Trusts Senior Leadership Team • Academy Lead • Exam officers • Teachers
<p><i>Pre-exams</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>invigilators not trained or updated on changes to instructions for conducting exams to include staff providing support to access arrangement</i> • <i>exam timetabling, rooming allocation; candidates not briefed on exam timetables and awarding body information for candidates</i> • <i>confidential exam/assessment materials and candidates' work not stored under required secure conditions</i> • <i>internal assessment marks and samples of candidates' work not submitted to awarding bodies/external moderators</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eos or ALs within the trust will diary training before the start of the summer series (April) • Eos or ALs to send out exam timetables by Easter. In the contingency folder is a step by step 'how to' guide on timetables for the candidates • Eos or ALs will allocate rooms and invigilators within the daily sheet/morning briefing • All Teachers are aware of the requirements for securing exam/assessment materials. The key holders will have access to the examination room Eos or ALs • In the contingency folder is a step by step 'how to' guide on entering assessment marks for candidates Teachers to oversee • The SENCO team would apply for all access arrangements and modified papers. In the contingency folder is a step by step 'how to' guide on applying for access arrangements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bolton Impact Trusts Senior Leadership Team • Academy Lead • Exam officers • Teachers • SENCO leads

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>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</i> 		
<p><i>Exam time</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>exams/assessments not taken under the conditions prescribed by awarding bodies</i> • <i>required reports/requests not submitted to awarding bodies during exam/assessment periods, for example very late arrival, suspected malpractice, special consideration</i> • <i>candidates' scripts not dispatched as required for marking to awarding bodies</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The exams rooms will be set out by Eos or Teachers as prescribed by the awarding bodies. Each room will have a box with all the relevant posters, equipment, etc. • The lead invigilator (ALs) will submit any reports during the exam period. All reporting documents are kept in a folder in the exam room for easy access • During the summer series the postman makes daily collections, until the office inform them of the last examination. For any other series contact https://collections.parcelforce.net/dfe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bolton Impact Trusts Senior Leadership Team • Academy Lead • Exam officers • Teachers • Office staff
<p><i>Results and post-results</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>access to examination results affecting the distribution of results to candidates</i> • <i>the facilitation of the post-results services</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the contingency folder is a step by step 'how to' guide on downloading results EOs to oversee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bolton Impact Trusts Senior Leadership Team • Academy Lead • Exam officers • Teachers

- **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 including:

Criteria for implementation of the plan	Bolton Impact Trust Strategy	Staff Involved
<p><i>Planning</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms - SENCO team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils are identified using the WRAT 4 testing in March/April. The AA tester is Lesley Bolton and Maria Brierley (office@sencatt.co.uk) overseen by SENCo and Exam Officer • Bolton Impact has a disability policy for exams, all staff are aware of the policy and the roles they have. • Teacher complete AA monitoring forms and WRAT 4 testing from year 7 onwards to help collate the information needed. All evidence is kept in the exam room to show normal way of working • ALs will allocate rooms and invigilators within the daily sheet/morning briefing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SENCo • SENCo Assistants • Academy Leads • Exam Officer

- **Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle**

Key tasks not undertaken including:

Criteria for implementation of the plan	Bolton Impact Trust Strategy	Staff Involved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early/estimated entry information not provided to the exams officer on time; resulting in pre-release information not being received 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ALs and EOs should be informed immediately if a teacher is planning to change exam board. Within Bolton Impact Trust, most subject areas have hubs, this is where information regarding exam entries are discussed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bolton Impact Trusts Senior Leadership Team

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>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</i> • <i>Non-examination assessment tasks not set/issued/taken by candidates as scheduled</i> • <i>Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet awarding body submission deadlines</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Within Bolton Impact Trust, most subject areas have hubs, and this is where information regarding exam entries is discussed. The final decision will be the Academy Lead or SMT</i> • <i>The SLT of the trust will arrange supply cover or a member of the teaching staff within the trust to complete any assessment tasks missing</i> • <i>Exam Officer to contact the awarding body to seek advice.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academy Lead • Exam officers • Teachers
---	---	---

• **Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice**

Criteria for implementation of the plan	Bolton Impact Trust Strategy	Staff Involved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Exams officer unable to identify sufficient/appropriate rooms during exams timetable planning</i> • <i>Insufficient rooms available on peak exam days</i> • <i>Main exam venues unavailable due to an unexpected incident at exam time</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The planning of exams will be discuss with the SMT at least a month before the exam series.</i> • <i>If the exam block is full, a whole Academy trip will be organised, enabling more rooms to be available</i> • <i>Bolton Impact Trust is made up of several academies. It has been agreed that the other academies would house exams if our venue is unavailable</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bolton Impact Trusts Senior Leadership Team • Academy Lead • Exam officers • Teachers

- **Failure of IT systems**

Criteria for implementation of the plan	Bolton Impact Trust Strategy	Staff Involved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIS system failure at final entry deadline • MIS system failure during exams preparation • MIS system failure at results release time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exam Officer to entry pupils 1 week before the deadline to ensure the system can be fixed if broken. School to contact SICT. • Contact SICT • Contact SICT, access results via the exam board online systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALs • SICT (332034) • Exam officers

- **Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lock down)**

Criteria for implementation of the plan	Bolton Impact Trust Strategy	Staff Involved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidates would be transported to one of the Academics in Bolton Impact Trust. Special consideration would be applied for all candidates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bolton Impact Trusts Senior Leadership Team • Academy Lead • Exam officers • Teachers

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

Criteria for implementation of the plan	Bolton Impact Trust Strategy	Staff Involved
<p>Candidates are unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidates would be transported to one of the Academics in Bolton Impact Trust. Special consideration would be applied for all candidates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bolton Impact Trusts Senior

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The centre to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to make them aware of the issue. The centre to communicate with parents, carers and candidates regarding solutions to the issue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff across the trust who have been trained can invigilate 	<p>Leadership Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academy Lead Exam officers Teachers
---	---	--

• Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period (including in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency)

Criteria for implementation of the plan	Bolton Impact Trust Strategy	Staff Involved
<p>Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Candidates would be transported to one of the Academics in Bolton Impact Trust. Special consideration would be applied for all candidates. Staff across the trust who have been trained can invigilate any exams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bolton Impact Trusts Senior Leadership Team Academy Lead Exam officers Teachers

• Disruption in the distribution of examination papers

Criteria for implementation of the plan	Bolton Impact Trust Strategy	Staff Involved
<p>Disruption to the distribution of examination papers to the centre in advance of examinations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The centre to communicate with awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of papers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exam Office to inform all relevant exam bodies and arrange the delivery to Youth Challenge Bolton Impact Trust Smithills Dean Rd Bolton BL1 6JT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bolton Impact Trusts Senior Leadership Team Academy Lead Exam officers

- **Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts**

Criteria for implementation of the plan	Bolton Impact Trust Strategy	Staff Involved
<p>Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The centre to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to resolve the issue.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Exam Officer to contact Parcel Force Worldwide on 0344 561 7998, also the relevant awarding bodies</i> • <i>All Scripts must be locked in the safe until collection has been arranged</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academy Lead • Exam officers

- **Assessment evidence is not available to be marked**

Criteria for implementation of the plan	Bolton Impact Trust Strategy	Staff Involved
<p>Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>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]</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Academy Lead and Exam office to inform relevant awarding bodies, to students and parents. The exam office will apply for special consideration</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bolton Impact Trusts Senior Leadership Team • Academy Lead • Exam officers • Teachers

- **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	Bolton Impact Trust Strategy	Staff Involved
<p>Centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post-results services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Centres to contact awarding organisations about alternative options. [JCP scenario 11]</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>After contacting the awarding bodies, results will be available from Youth Challenge (part of Bolton Impact Trust) Bolton Impact Trust Smithills Dean Rd</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bolton Impact Trusts Senior Leadership Team • Academy Lead

	<p><i>Bolton BL1 6JT Alternatively staff on the summer programme or Andrew Knott (connexions) will be available to delivery their results to home addresses</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exam officers • Teachers
--	---	---

Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning

Ofqual

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

1. Contingency planning

You should prepare for possible disruption to exams and other assessments as part of your emergency planning and make sure your staff are aware of these plans...

2. Disruption to assessments or exams

In the absence of any instruction from the relevant awarding organisation, the school or college should assume that any exam or timetabled assessment should take place if it is possible for it to do so. This may mean having to locate alternative premises.

If the exam or assessment cannot take place, or if a student misses an exam or loses their assessment due to an emergency or other event outside the control of the school or college, you should discuss alternative arrangements with your awarding organisation.

3. Steps you should take

3.1 Exam planning

Review your contingency plan well in advance of each exam series. Consider how, if the contingency plan is invoked, you will comply with the awarding organisation's requirements

3.2 In the event of disruption

3.3 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 organization's 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.

4. Steps awarding organisation should take

Exam planning

4.1 Exam planning

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

Ensure that the arrangements in place with centers and other third parties enable them to deliver and award qualifications in accordance with their conditions of recognition.

4.2 In the event of disruption

- 1. Take all reasonable steps to mitigate any adverse effect, in relation to their qualifications, arising from any disruption.**
- 2. Provide effective guidance to any of their centres delivering qualifications.**
- 3. 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).**
- 4. Promptly notify the relevant regulators about any event which could have an adverse effect on students, standards or public confidence.**
- 5. Coordinate its communications with the relevant regulators where the disruption has an impact on multiple centres or a wide range of learners.**

4.3 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.

5. 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
- FAB's guidance on special considerations

6. Wider communications

The regulators, Ofqual in England, Qualifications Wales in Wales and CCEA in Northern Ireland, will share timely and accurate information, as required, with awarding organisations, government departments and other stakeholders.

The Department for Education in England, the Department of Education in Northern Ireland and the Welsh Government 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

In the event of widespread sustained national disruption, the 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.

JCQ

Contingency planning

15.1 The qualification regulators, JCQ 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 have designated **Wednesday 26 June 2019** 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.

Centres must therefore remind candidates that they must remain available until Wednesday 26 June 2019 should an awarding body need to invoke its contingency plan.

General Regulations for Approved Centres <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>

Guidance on Alternative Site arrangements and Transferred Candidate arrangements

Accessed through secure login to the Centre Admin Portal (CAP) or through the JCQ training site <http://jqc.training.jcq.org.uk/CAP/Home/Training>

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>

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>