



Dacorum Education  
Support Centre

<b>Policy Name</b>	Exam Contingency Policy and Plan
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DESC values the mental health and wellbeing of every member of its community.

Our policies reflect the core values of respect and support for each other in every aspect of life. Our aim is that all in our community, through working together, to feel safe and secure in an environment, which enables and equips every individual to thrive and be respectful of each other's strengths and differences.

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## 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 DESC. 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, Wales and Northern Ireland*.

The examination contingency plan covers all aspects of examination administration. It allows senior leaders to have a robust contingency plan in place, minimising risk to examination administration and any adverse impact on learners, should the head of Centre, relevant senior leaders, examinations officer or any other key staff essential to the examination process be absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle.

## Causes of potential disruption to the exam process

### 1. Examinations Officer extended absence at key points in the exam process (cycle)

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

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

- *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
- *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
- *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 (**being aware of the rules for very late arrivals – see section 21 of the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations**)
  - candidates' scripts not dispatched as required to awarding bodies
- *Results and post-results*
  - access to examination results affecting the distribution of results to candidates
  - the facilitation of the post-results services

#### Centre actions:

- Co-Heads of Centre to assume responsibility for the above tasks with support from the Business Support Team
- Co-Heads of Centre involved and aware of examination tasks throughout the exam cycle
- Co-Heads of Centre to publish examinations key dates and timetable at start of each academic year. Reference documents organised and available in exams office
- Maintain a well-trained invigilation team to ensure exams conducted as prescribe by JCQ and awarding body
- Co-Heads of Centre and the Business Support Team are able to secure and retrieve exam papers and material from secure exam storage

### **2. SENCo extended absence at key points in the exam cycle**

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

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

- *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
- *Exam time*
  - access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms

#### Centre actions:

- The Examinations Officer to work with SLT to identify learners where applications for access arrangements may be required. The employment of outside agencies/professionals may be required

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

#### Criteria for implementation of the 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 exams/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:

- The Examinations Officer to liaise with SLT, to ensure all necessary deadlines are adhered to. Where this is not possible, the Examinations Officer will liaise with the relevant Awarding Body and act upon advice received

### **4. Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence**

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

- *Invigilator shortage on peak exam days*
- *Invigilator absence on the day of an exam*

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#### Centre actions:

- The Examinations Officer will review the invigilation staffing at the start of each academic year to ensure sufficient staff are recruited and trained in a timely fashion
- In the event that members of invigilation team are unavailable Centre staff will be used in line with JCQ regulations (i.e. not subject teachers if that subject exam). Centre staff invigilation training kept up to date

### **5. Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice**

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

- *Examinations 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 unexpected incident at exam time*

#### Centre actions:

- DESC will use their KS3 Centre at Tenzing Road as an alternative site
- The Examinations Officer will apply to JCQ for this alternative site arrangement in a timely manner
- The Examinations Officer will plan exam rooming arrangements in advance of the exam season.
- Consider moving the starting times of the examination for all candidates (**see section 6.2 of the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations**)
- In the event of a room not being available at very short notice, sufficient staff will be made available to ensure the security of the examination is not compromised whilst alternative rooming is sourced. The SLT will work with the Examinations Officer at all times during such emergencies

### **6. Failure of IT systems**

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

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

#### Centre actions:

- The Examinations Officer, in consultation with the SLT, will work from home and make entries direct to the Awarding Bodies. Results may also be accessed directly from the Awarding Body. At all times during the system failure the Examinations Officer will liaise with the Awarding Body to minimise disruption and costs incurred
- Alternatively, the Examinations Officer, in consultation with SLT work from another local exam centre
- If a computer reader was due to be used for an exam during a cyber security incident, a paper exam with a reading pen would be used instead. Refer to the Cyber Incident Response Policy

### **7. Disruption of teaching time – Centre closed for an extended period**

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Centre 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:

- SLT to facilitate alternative methods of learning, alternative venues or both
- The Centre will communicate with parents, carers and learners about the potential for disruption to teaching time and the plans to address this

- In the event that both the Barncroft and Tenzing Road sites are unavailable SLT will implement alternative methods of learning. Priority will be given to learners at risk and those with examinations
- If appropriate candidates to sit examinations at the next available series
- Success Criteria: Learners continue to be taught either through an alternative method of learning or at an alternative venue

## 8. Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – Centre remains open

### Criteria for implementation of the plan

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

### Centre actions:

- The Examinations Officer will communicate with the relevant awarding body at the outset to make them aware of the issue. DESC will communicate with parents, carers and candidates regarding solutions to the issue.
- Centre to liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with the relevant awarding body.
- Candidates may be offered the opportunity to sit any missed examinations at the next available series if eligible.
- Apply to awarding body for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements.
- Success criteria: the candidate should be able to sit examinations with the minimum disruption or additional stress.

## 9. Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period

This outlines the procedures and steps to be followed in the event of a disruption to the scheduled examinations. It ensures that learners, staff, and other stakeholders are informed of the contingency plans, including the relocation of exams to the Tenzing Road site and the utilisation of additional classrooms at The Adeyfield Academy and Longdean School should they be required.

### Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations
- This applies to all learners, staff, and external examiners or invigilators involved in the administration and taking of examinations. It covers scenarios such as extreme weather, building closures, health emergencies, or any other situation that prevents the exams from taking place at the originally planned location.

### Centre actions:

- The Headteacher is responsible for deciding if it is safe for DESC to open.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- **Deputy Headteacher (Naomi Walker) and Examination Officer (Carole Hammond):** Responsible for communicating any changes to the examination schedule or location to all relevant parties
- **Site Manager and Deputy Headteacher (Clare Winters) (Tenzing Road):** Ensures the readiness of the Tenzing Road site for hosting exams, including the availability of necessary facilities and resources. This also includes coordinating with The Adeyfield Academy and Longdean School for additional space if required
- **Business Support Team:** Assist in the coordination of the relocation process and ensure that learners are informed and prepared for the change
- **Link Mentors:** Support contact of learners and ensure all are met and supported to adjust to the unexpected change

- **Learners:** Required to comply with the new arrangements and attend exams at the relocated site as instructed

### Trigger for Contingency Plan Activation

The contingency plan will be activated under the following circumstances:

- **Unavailability of the Original Exam Site:** Due to unforeseen circumstances such as fire, flood, or other emergencies that render the original site unusable
- **Severe Weather Conditions:** When travel to the original exam site is deemed unsafe or impossible
- **Health and Safety Concerns:** Including pandemics, outbreaks, or other situations that pose a health risk

### Notification Procedure

- **Initial Notification:**  
As soon as the need for a contingency plan is identified, the Deputy Headteacher (Naomi Walker) will issue an initial notification to all staff and invigilators. This will include communication with Primary and Key Stage 3 Leads to suspend all provision at Tenzing road for the required period
- The Admin Team will coordinate communication with all learners, families and Hertfordshire Transport Team via email, SMS, phone calls. This notification will inform them that the exams are being relocated to the Tenzing Road site and provide an estimated timeline for further updates
- The Examinations Officer will be responsible for relocating all examination material to Tenzing road and the setting up of Centre
- **Follow-Up Communication:**  
Detailed instructions, including the revised exam schedule, transportation options, and site-specific instructions, will be sent out within 24 hours of the initial notification. Information will also be posted on DESC's website and social media channels

### Relocation to Tenzing Road Site

- **Site Preparation:**  
The Site Manager in conjunction with Assistant Headteacher (Stephen Peach) and the Examinations Officer will ensure that all examination rooms are set up according to the required standards, with appropriate seating arrangements, exam materials, and invigilators in place:
  - **Primary Exam Location:**  
Exams will be moved to the Tenzing Road site, where primary exam rooms will be set up
  - **Additional Space Coordination:**  
The Site Manager at Tenzing Road will coordinate with The Adeyfield Academy and Longdean School to ensure that the additional classrooms are prepared and meet examination standards. This includes seating arrangements, exam materials, and the presence of invigilators
- **Transport Arrangements:**  
Where necessary, transportation will be arranged for learners and staff to travel to the Tenzing Road site. Information about pick-up points, times, and contact details for transport coordinators will be provided. This will be coordinated by Assistant Headteacher (Dustin King)
- **On-Site Support:**  
Upon arrival at Tenzing Road, learners will be directed to their respective examination rooms. Support staff will be available to assist with any issues related to the new location, including accessibility needs. This will be coordinated by Key Stage 4 Lead Jade Dixon.

### Examination Integrity

- **Security Measures:**  
The Examination Officer will ensure that all examination papers and materials are securely transported to the Tenzing Road site. Exam integrity protocols will be strictly followed to prevent any compromise of the examination process.

- **Learner Identification:**

Learners will be required to register directly with their Link Mentor for identification before being allowed to sit for the exams at the new location. For further details regarding learner identification please see appendix A P11)

### Support for Learners

- **Special Considerations:**

If any learners have difficulty attending the Tenzing Road site due to distance, disability, or other legitimate reasons, they should notify the Examination Officer as soon as possible. Alternative arrangements will be made where feasible.

- **Counselling and Guidance:**

DESC's Therapeutic Support Services and Learner Link Mentors will be available to support learners who may experience anxiety or stress due to the sudden change in exam location.

### Post-Examination Review

- **Feedback Collection:**

After the exams, feedback will be collected from learners, staff, and examiners regarding the contingency plan's effectiveness. This feedback will be used to improve future contingency planning.

- **Incident Report:**

The Examination Officer will compile an incident report detailing the reasons for the contingency plan activation, actions taken, and outcomes. This report will be submitted to DESC's senior management team and appropriate examining bodies.

Success Criteria: Learners were able to take examinations in alternative venues in a timely way

## 10. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers

### Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Disruption to the distribution of examination papers to the Centre in advance of examinations

### Centre actions:

- The Examinations Officer to ensure that copies are received in advance of the examination
- The Examinations Officer to communicate with awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of papers e.g. Awarding body to provide Centres with electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network
- The Examinations Officer will to ensure that copies are received, made and stored under secure conditions
- Success Criteria: Learners are able to proceed with taking examinations without having to reschedule examinations

## 11. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

### Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts

### Centre actions:

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- The Examinations Officer to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to resolve the issue
- The Examinations Officer, in the first instance, will seek advice from awarding organisations and their normal collection agency regarding collection and will not make own arrangements for transportation without approval from awarding organisations - ensure secure storage of completed examination scripts until collection
- Success Criteria: Scripts are stored 'securely' in line with JCQ guidance. Scripts are collected and delivered to awarding organisations with the minimum of delay

## **12. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked**

### Criteria for implementation of the plan

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

### Centre actions:

- It is the responsibility of the head of Centre to communicate this immediately to the relevant awarding organisation(s) and subsequently to learners and their parents or carers
- If possible:
  - awarding organisations generate candidate marks for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement, as defined by the awarding organisations in consultation with the regulators
  - candidates retake the assessment that has been affected at a subsequent assessment window
- Success criteria: Candidate marks are able to be generated (if possible) from existing assessment materials

## **13. Centre unable to distribute results as normal**

### Criteria for implementation of the plan

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

### Centre actions:

- Examinations Officer to contact awarding organisations about alternative options
- SLT to make arrangements to access results at an alternative site or share facilities with other schools and colleges if possible
- Success criteria: Candidates receive results in a timely way

**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>

### 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>

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### Identification of Candidates in Exams Procedure

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#### Purpose of Procedure

To verify the identity of all candidates entered for examinations and assessments, at Dacorum Education Support Centre (DESC) ensuring compliance with JCQ regulations. This procedure ensures that:

- All candidates are correctly identified before sitting an examination.
- Processes are in place to prevent impersonation or unauthorized access to exams.
- Written procedures are followed consistently by all staff involved in exam delivery.

#### Process to Check Identity

##### 1. Candidate Registration and Familiarity

- All learners are registered upon entry to the centre.
- Candidates are allocated to staff members who are familiar with them and escort them to the exam room.

##### 2. Photographic Identification

- Each candidate has a photographic ID card placed on their exam desk.
- Invigilators cross-reference the ID card with the room register to confirm identity.

##### 3. Non-Roll Candidates

- The centre does not accept private candidates.
- If a candidate is not on the roll, their identity must be verified using official photo ID (e.g., passport, driving licence).

#### Procedures to Verify Identity at the Time of Examination/Assessment

In accordance with JCQ ICE 16.1–16.4, DESC implements the following arrangements:

- Photo ID Cards on Desks: All candidates must have their photo ID card visible on their desk during the examination.
- SLT Identification: Members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) are present to identify students before they enter the exam room.
- Religious Clothing Considerations (ICE 16.3): Where a candidate's identity cannot be confirmed due to religious clothing (e.g., a veil), a same-gender staff member will discreetly verify identity in a private room. Two trusted staff members will be present to ensure cultural sensitivity.
- Access Arrangements (ICE 16.4): Invigilators are briefed on candidates with access arrangements and are made aware of the specific arrangements awarded. These candidates are clearly marked on seating plans.
- Seating Plans: Seating plans are prepared in accordance with JCQ and awarding body requirements, with access arrangement candidates clearly identified.

#### Roles and Responsibilities

Exams Officer:

- Ensure invigilators are trained and aware of identity verification procedures (ICE 16.1).
- Inform candidates in advance about the process for religious clothing identification (ICE 16.3).
- Brief invigilators before each exam session on candidates with access arrangements (ICE 16.4).

**Invigilators:**

- Verify each candidate's identity using photo ID and the room register.
- Follow procedures for identifying candidates wearing religious clothing.
- Ensure access arrangement candidates are seated appropriately and supported as required.

**SLT and Centre Staff:**

- Support the identification process at entry points.
- Assist with sensitive identity checks when required.