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**3.CONTINGENCY PLAN (Exams)**

2024/25

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

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| --- | --- |
| Approved/reviewed by | |
|  | |
| Date of next review | November 2025 |

Key staff involved in the policy

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Role | Name(s) |
| Head of centre | Stefan McHale |
| Exams officer | Lisa Gardner |

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Purpose of the plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exams process at Brymore Academy. 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 (andNorthern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment) **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**for the Examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. and the JCQ document Preparing for disruption to examinations (Effective from 1 September 2023).

This plan also confirms Brymore Academy compliance with JCQ’s **General Regulations for Approved Centres** (section 5.3)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 where the head of centre, examinations officer or SENCo is absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle. 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. The potential impact of a cyber-attack should also be considered.

# National Centre Number Register and other information requirements

The head of centre will also ensure that Brymore Academy has a contingency to enable the prompt handling of urgent issues only, responds to the awarding bodies’ request for information regarding the contact details of a senior member of staff (which might include a personal mobile number and/or email address). This will ensure that any urgent matters which might adversely affect candidates which arise outside of term time, and which potentially put qualification awards at risk, can be addressed by awarding bodies with the support of that member of staff. Heads of centre should ensure that this member of staff has the necessary authority to mobilise resources to provide this support, which might include resolving issues within the centre itself.

# Head of centre absence at a critical stage of the exam cycle

Where the head of centre may absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle, main duties and responsibilities will be escalated in accordance with the centre’s written escalation process.

Possible causes of disruption to the exam process

1. Exam officer extended absence at **a critical stage of the exam cycle**

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| 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*   *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*   * *invigilators not trained or updated on changes to instructions for conducting exams* * *exam timetabling, rooming allocation; and invigilation schedules not prepared* * *candidates not briefed on exam timetables and awarding body information for candidates* * *confidential 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, for example very late arrival, suspected malpractice, special consideration* * *candidates’ scripts not dispatched as required for marking 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption   * A replacement Exams Officer will be supplied under agreement by Bridgwater and Taunton College |

1. ALS lead/SENCo extended absence at **a critical stage of the exam cycle**

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| 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* * *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*   *Pre-exams*   * *approval for access arrangements not applied for to the awarding body* * *centre-delegated arrangements not put in place* * *modified paper requirements not identified in a timely manner to enable ordering to meet external deadline* * *staff (facilitators) providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained*   *Exam time*   * *access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms* |
| Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption   * AHT Inclusion to oversee the SENDCo role |

1. Teaching staff extended absence at **a critical stage of the exam cycle**

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| Criteria for implementation of the plan  *Key tasks not undertaken including:*  *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 or other penalty fees being charged by awarding bodies*  *Non-examination assessment tasks not set/issued/taken by candidates as scheduled*  *Candidates not being informed of centre assessed marks before marks are submitted to the awarding body and therefore not being able to consider appealing internal assessment decisions and requesting a review of the centre’s marking*  *Internal assessment marks and candidates’ work not provided to meet awarding body submission deadlines* |
| Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption   * The extended absence of any teaching staff will be covered by the Head of Department/ or line manager |

### Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence

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| Criteria for implementation of the plan  *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 actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption   * Admin staff and LSAs have been dual trained to step in, in case of an emergency or absence |

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| Criteria for implementation of the plan  *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 unexpected incident at exam time* |
| Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption   * Head of Centre to close the school to certain year groups if needed, due to unplanned incidents to free up space for the examinations * Head of Centre to prioritise rooming for examinations and have arranged for classes to be moved to other areas   Alternative venue details:  Across the Bridgwater College Academy there a number of alternative venues which if require could be freed up. |

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

### Cyber-attack

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| Criteria for implementation of the plan  *Where it is identified that a cyber-attack may compromise any aspect of the delivery of examinations & MIS System:*   * *Head of IT Services, SLT & Exams Officer will work with appropriate agencies and contact the relevant Awarding Body for guidance.* * *Enact the ‘Incident Management Plan’* * *Contact the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC)* * *Contact the local law enforcement and Action Fraud* * *Inform the DfE by emailing: securityenquiries@education.gov.uk* |
| Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption   * Constant review of risks and weak points in security measures * Increasing staff awareness of data security through training |

### Failure of IT systems

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| Criteria for implementation of the plan  *MIS system failure at final entry deadline*  *MIS system failure during exams preparation*  *Power outage immediately prior to or during an on-screen test*  *MIS system failure at results release time* |
| Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption   * The Exams officer should have means to access the internet at home and/or at Bridgwater & Taunton College so entries and preparation can be made using the internet * Exams Officer to use both One Drive and Exams H: so there is no reliance on the academy computer system * If there is a power outage   + IT & Premises to work with appropriate agencies.   + IT to see if services can be re-routed   + Identify rooms where laptops can work and re-room if possible   + SLT and Exams Officer to contact exam boards and communicate updated information   + Students that are affected by the outage at the start of the exam to be held in isolation until the outage is resolved or a solution found. * Exams Officer will contact awarding bodies in respect of re-sitting online exams affected by system failure, or to seek an alternative solution. |

### Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lockdown)

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| Criteria for implementation of the plan  *Whole centre evacuation (or lockdown) during exam time due to serious incident resulting in exam candidates being unable to start, proceed with or complete their exams* |
| Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption   * refer to and invoke its (exams) emergency evacuation policy/procedure in line with JCQ's 'Centre emergency evacuation procedure' (or its (exams) lockdown policy) * contact the relevant awarding body as soon as possible and follow its instructions * where accommodation is limited, prioritise candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned * (after the exam) consider whether any candidate's ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration |

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

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| 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption  The centre will:   * recognise it remains the responsibility of the centre to prepare students, as usual, for examinations * facilitate alternative methods of learning * communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) information relating to alternative methods of learning   Communication details:   * Candidates and their parents/carers will be informed about any relevant measures by email. * take advice offered by the awarding body regarding alternative arrangements for conducting examinations that may be available * take advice offered by the awarding body on the options for candidates who have not been able to take scheduled examinations * advise candidates, where appropriate, of the opportunities to take their exam or assessment at a later date |

### Candidates may not be able to take examinations - centre remains open

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| Criteria for implementation of the plan  *Candidates may not be able unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal* |
| * Communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to make them aware of the issue and seek advice. * Communicate with parents, carers and candidates regarding any possible solutions/options to the issue. * Liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with relevant awarding organisations. * Offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series. * Apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements. |

### Centre may not be able to open as normal during the examination period

(Including in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency)

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| Criteria for implementation of the plan  *Centre may not be able to open as normal for scheduled examinations* |
| Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption  Alternative venue details to the Main Venue - Sports Hall:   * Theatre & Dance Studio – other side of campus * Sports Hall & Rooms at Quantock School part of trust * Bridgwater & Taunton College – Trust Sponsor * Bridgwater Rugby Club - venue large – Next to Bridgwater & Taunton College * Inform relevant awarding organisations as soon as possible and seek advice. * Refer to emergency plans and/or health and safety policy, where appropriate. * Open for the centre for examinations and examination candidates only, if possible. * Use alternative venues (locally or within the trust) in agreement with relevant awarding organisations. SLT to work with the trust to source suitable exam venues where possible.   + Alternative venue to the Main Venue - Sports Hall:     - Theatre & Dance Studio – other side of campus     - Sports Hall & Rooms at Quantock School part of trust     - Bridgwater & Taunton College – Trust Sponsor     - Bridgwater Rugby Club - venue large and smaller rooms – Next to Bridgwater & Taunton College * Apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements. * Offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available examinations series, if possible. |

### Disruption in the distribution of examination papers

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| Criteria for implementation of the plan  *Disruption to the distribution of examination papers to the centre in advance of examinations* |
| Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption   * Communicate with awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of papers. * Arrange with exam boards for alternative means of receiving papers, e.g. electronically or alternative courier * understand that as a last resort, and in close collaboration with centres and regulators, awarding organisations will consider scheduling of the examination on an alternative date * communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue |

### Disruption to transporting completed examination scripts

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| Criteria for implementation of the plan  *Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts/assessment evidence* |
| Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption   * Where examinations are part of the national ‘yellow label’ service or where awarding organisations arrange collections, centres should seek advice from awarding organisations and should not make their own arrangements for transportation unless told to do so by the awarding body * For any examinations where centres make their own collection arrangements for transportation, centres should investigate alternative dispatch options that comply with the requirements detailed in the JCQ Instructions for conducting examinations. * Centres to ensure secure storage of completed examination scripts until collection. |

### Assessment evidence is not available to be marked

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| Criteria for implementation of the plan  *Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked*  *Completed examination scripts/assessment evidence does not reach awarding organisations* |
| Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption   * Liaise with the awarding body to determine if candidate marks for affected assessments may be able to be generated based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement as defined by the awarding body * Where partial assessments can be recovered these will be made available where appropriate. * Procedures to recover/re-complete work (e.g. IT data reconstruction for electronic work) will be employed where relevant. * Where marks cannot be generated by awarding body, inform candidates they may need to retake the affected assessment in a subsequent assessment series |

### Centre unable to distribute results as normal or facilitate post results services

(Including in the event of the centre being unavailable on results day owing to an unforeseen emergency)

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| 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption   * Centre to make arrangements to access its results at an alternative site, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation * Centre to make arrangements to coordinate access to post results services from an alternative site * Share facilities with other centres if this is possible, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation * Inform candidates of any alternative arrangements in place for the distribution of results and the facilitation of post-results services   Alternative venue details: Bridgwater and Taunton College |