



**Title:** Exam Contingency Plan

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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 Thomas Rotherham College. 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.

Alongside internal processes, this plan is informed by information contained in the *Joint contingency plan for the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* where it is stated that “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”

## Causes of potential disruption to the exam process

### 1. Exam 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 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
- 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:

- Line Manager of Exams Officer to take over responsibilities should absence of Exams Officer have a potential to affect the meeting of deadlines. Another member of the administrative staff/temporary member of staff to be appointed to the department

## 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 arrangement 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

- SENCO deputy to liaise with Exams Officer during SENCO absence

## 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 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

- Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet submission deadlines

#### Centre actions

- Line Manager and Exams Officer to liaise with remaining teaching staff

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

#### 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

- Recruitment and training is done well in advance
- Head of Centre to be informed if recruitment is necessary
- Senior Management Team, Senior Invigilators and Exams to cover absences, although Thomas Rotherham College's policy is not to work to the minimum ration requirements

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

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Exams Officer unable to identify sufficient/appropriate rooms during exams timetable planning
- Insufficient rooms available on peak exam day
- Main exam venues unavailable due to an expected incident at exam time

#### Centre actions

- Exams Officer responsible for ensuring planning of rooms is completed by the end of the Spring term to identify potential rooming issues
- Alternative venues within the college to be made available by teaching staff in the event of an unexpected incident
- Head of Centre to liaise with Exams Officer to ensure no disruptions due to room shortages

#### 6. Failure of IT system

#### 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

#### Centre actions

- Line Manager of Exams Officer and IT Manager to liaise with awarding bodies to arrange alternative method of information exchange
- Head of Centre to be informed

#### 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

- Head of Centre and SMT responsible for finding alternative venues/methods of learning
- Priority given to exam cohort
- Centre to communicate with parents/carers and students

#### 8. \*Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations
- *\*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*

#### Centre actions

- Open for candidates only if possible
- Use alternative venue, in agreement with awarding organisations

#### 9. Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open

#### \*Criteria for implantation of the plan

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

#### Centre action

- Procedure for absence is outlined in the Exams and Controlled Assessment Policy and Procedure document

- Exams Officer to liaise with student and parents/carers to find alternative venue/advise on the next opportunity to sit the examination/apply for special considerations if required

## 10. \*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

- Exams Officer to communicate with awarding bodies for approval of alternative delivery arrangements

## 11. \*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

- Exams Officer to communicate with awarding bodies immediately for advice

## 12. \*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 action

- Exams Officer to contact awarding bodies for advice
- Head of Centre and SMT to assess alternative arrangements for issuing results
- Centre to communicate with parents/carers and students

*\*Information taken from Joint contingency plan for the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*