



GEORGE ABBOT SCHOOL

Policy Title:	Exams Contingency Plan
Author:	Examinations Manager
Date of most recent review:	October 2024
Date of next review:	October 2025
School Mission Statement: Academic excellence within a strong community of equality and respect, where potential and opportunity are realised.	

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 George Abbot 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.

At all times, the Examinations Manager, Assistant Examinations Officer and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will liaise with the relevant Awarding Body to ensure any contingency plans meet with its requirements and that Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) regulations are adhered to where reasonably possible.

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 “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. Examinations Manager – 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 process not undertaken including:	
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual data collection exercise not undertaken to collate information on qualifications and awarding body specifications being delivered Exam key dates not produced identifying essential key tasks, dates and deadlines for input into Curriculum plans Sufficient invigilators not recruited and trained
Entries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awarding bodies not being informed of estimated entries which prompts release of early pre-release material required by teaching staff Candidates not being entered with awarding bodies for external exams/assessments Awarding body entry deadlines missed, or other penalty fees being incurred
Pre Exams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal assessment marks and samples of candidates' work not submitted to awarding bodies/external moderators
During Exams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure storage facility processes not carried out including preparation of exam crates, distribution of exam crates, running the exam venues and despatching of exam scripts Required reports not completed, ie very late arrivals, suspected malpractice, special considerations
Results & Post Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to exam results affecting the distribution of results to candidates Post result service not delivered
Certificate Distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certificates not recorded, distributed or made available for collection
Centre Actions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistant Examinations Officer to assume responsibility for the above tasks with the support of the named member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) that has been submitted to JCQ NCN Team Head of Centre to contact each awarding body on Centre headed paper to transfer secure website admin rights to the Assistant Examinations Officer in the period of absence of the Examinations Manager Should the Examinations Manager and the Assistant Examinations Officer be absent, the named member of SLT who has oversight of the exams process will assume responsibility supported by appropriate Centre Staff and External Invigilators 	

2. Head of Centre & Deputy Headteacher (for oversight of examinations/assessments) 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 not undertaken:	
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Centre annual declarations not completed for awarding bodies Access arrangements not reviewed for resource planning to support alternative site and separate invigilation requirements
Pre-Exams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Candidates for short courses not identified and approved before entry deadline Resource shortages for access arrangement requirements not identified
During Exams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access arrangements for candidate support not arranged for exam venues Oversight of all special consideration submissions not signed off Malpractices not signed off
Centre Actions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examinations Manager will seek guidance from the awarding bodies regarding Head of Centre absence for annual declarations Examinations Manager will raise at 1:1 meeting in the autumn term with Deputy Headteacher (who has oversight for examinations) for alternative site and separation invigilation requirements Examinations Manager will in conjunction with Heads of Department ensure entries for short courses are signed off to meet awarding body deadlines Faculty TAs and SEN staff used to support access arrangement shortages Examinations Manager to seek guidance from awarding bodies for special consideration process and malpractice sign off SLT to work with the Examinations Manager under guidance from the awarding bodies to ensure all processes can be completed 	

3. 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 not undertaken:	
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
During Exams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access arrangements for candidate support not arranged for exam venues
Centre Actions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Deputy SENCos, Specialist Assessors, Teaching Assistants and Teaching Staff to work with SLT to identify students where applications for access arrangements may be required. The employment of outside agencies/professionals may be required • Centre to seek guidance and advice from the awarding bodies 	

4. Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

Criteria for Implementation of the Plan:
Key tasks not undertaken including:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early/estimated entry information not provided to the Examinations Manager on time; resulting in pre-release material not being received • Final entry information not provided to the Examinations Manager on time resulting in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Candidates not being entered for examinations/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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Examinations Manager to liaise with Heads of Faculties (HOFs), Head of Departments (HODs), and/or SLT to ensure all necessary deadlines are adhered to. If deadlines are not met, the Examinations Manager will liaise with the relevant awarding body and act upon advice received

5. Invigilators – Lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence

Criteria for Implementation of the Plan:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Examinations Manager and Assistant Examinations Officer will undertake a review of the invigilating staff at the start of each academic year to ensure sufficient staff are recruited and trained in a timely manner. • On peak exam days where there are invigilator shortages Faculty TAs/Technicians will be released from their normal duties to assist with agreement from HOFs/SLT • When required use external agency staff for critical invigilator shortages.

6. Exam Venues – Lack of appropriate venues or main venues unavailable at short notice

Criteria for Implementation of the Plan:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examinations Manager unable to identify sufficient/appropriate venues during the exams timetable planning • Insufficient venues available on peak days • Main exam venues unavailable due to an unexpected incident at exam time
Centre Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examinations Manager will commence the seating of the summer exam series after the February half term to ensure sufficient time is available to identify issues and plan appropriately with SLT • Use of Large Spaces document completed and distributed to key staff to ensure there are no clashes of large spaces and external lettings required in the exam season. Large spaces will be booked in advance. In the event of a venue not being available at very short notice, Centre staff will be made available to ensure the security of the examinations is not compromised whilst alternative rooming is sourced. SLT will work with the Examinations Manager at all times during such emergencies

7. Failure of IT Systems/Cyber Attack

Criteria for Implementation of the Plan:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MIS system failure at final entry deadline• MIS system failure during exams preparation• MIS system failure during exams• MIS system failure at results release time• MIS system failure due to Cyber-attack during the exam cycle
Centre Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Examinations Manager, in consultation with SLT and Learning Partners IT Manager, will decide the best and most effective process to ensure entries are made to the awarding bodies• Examinations Manager and Assistant Examinations Officer will be flexible in their working pattern to ensure exams preparation is completed• Examinations Manager and Assistant Examinations Officer will work with the Network Team and Learning Partners IT Manager to resolve MIS access during the exams• Results can be accessed directly from the awarding bodies secure systems via the secure accounts held by the Examinations Manager and Assistant Examinations Officer• Examinations Manager will always during the system failure liaise with the awarding bodies to minimise disruption and costs incurred• Learning Partners IT Manager to ensure the schools' IT systems are secure and protected against viruses and malware, and that such safety mechanisms are updated regularly• Learning Partners IT Manager to ensure there are blocks to potentially dangerous sites, and where possible, preventing the downloading of potentially dangerous files• Learning Partners IT Manager to conduct a full security check and monitoring of the schools' ICT systems on a regular basis• Schools' network is protected by anti-virus software and the anti-virus solution is configured so updates will occur when an Internet connection is available• All staff will use a multi authenticator for accessing school emails and SharePoint when working off site• Make awarding bodies aware of a possible Centre cyber-attack and follow guidance provided• All staff will receive relevant information/training at the start of the academic term or on induction for IT security and Cyber-attacks during the Inset Days with sign off through SAMPeople• Network Team to remove access when no longer required to school systems• Examinations Manager to review and maintain access for logins to awarding bodies secure systems• This policy to be used in conjunction with the JCQ Guidance for centres on cyber security

8. Student Malpractice/Data/System Breaches using Artificial Intelligence

Criteria for Implementation of the Plan:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student malpractice in exams, coursework, controlled assessments, and non-examination assessments• Personal and sensitive data breached• Cyber security systems breached• Student wellbeing not protected
Centre Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This policy will be used in conjunction with the school policy for Suspected Candidate Malpractice and AI policy• Centre will adhere to the JCQ Non-Examination Assessment and Suspected Candidate Malpractice policies and AI Use in Assessments guidance• Examinations Manager will provide Heads of Departments with the JCQ AI information sheet and presentation for teachers• Examinations Manager will provide SLT with the JCQ AI senior leader presentation for teachers• Data Privacy - Personal and sensitive data must be protected and therefore must not be entered into generative AI tools• Learning Partners IT Manager to manage all such incidents relating to cyber security risks• Centre will log all incidents of harmful AI impacts on students into CPOMS in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education Policy

9. Disruption of Teaching Time – Centre closed for an extended period

Criteria for Implementation of the Plan:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">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
<ul style="list-style-type: none">SLT and Learning Partners Estates Manager to manage all such incidentsRemote learning will be put into operation; this will include utilising Teams for all lessons delivered to studentsAll work to be shared for candidates on Student Learning Environment (SLE) and Student PortalHead of Centre/SLT to communicate to all staff via Teams and Email with relevant instructionsContact awarding bodies and act upon advice received

10. Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period

Criteria for Implementation of the Plan:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations <p><i>*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.</i></p>
Centre Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Examinations Manager will contact the relevant awarding bodies to discuss the alternative arrangements and liaise with SLT and Learning Partners Estates Manager to take appropriate actionThe nominated alternative site for George Abbot will be Kings College, Guildford part of the Learning Partners TrustThe Examinations Manager will liaise with the relevant awarding bodies to discuss using the exam contingency dayThe Examinations Manager will use the Centre Admin Portal (CAP) for Alternative Site Arrangements

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

Criteria for Implementation of the Plan:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Candidates are unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal
Centre Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Examinations Manager will contact the relevant awarding bodies to discuss alternative arrangements and liaise with SLT and Learning Partners Estates Manager to take appropriate actionThe Examinations Manager will liaise with the relevant awarding bodies to discuss using the exam contingency dayThe Examinations Manager will use the Centre Admin Portal (CAP) for Alternative Site Arrangements

12. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

Criteria for Implementation of the Plan:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts
Centre Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Examinations Manager will contact the relevant awarding bodies to notify them of any such difficulties and put in place suitable alternative arrangementsThe Examinations Manager will contact Parcel Force (Yellow Label Service) to seek alternative measures for the collection of scripts

13. NEA and Practical Assessment evidence is not available for marking and submission to awarding bodies

Criteria for Implementation of the Plan:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be markedNEA and practical assessment data evidence is not available
Centre Actions

- The Examinations Manager will contact the awarding bodies to notify them of any such incident and act upon advice given by the awarding bodies
- Heads of Departments to ensure written NEA data is stored electronically on the schools' network and SharePoint
- Heads of Departments to ensure practical assessment material is captured and stored electronically on the SLE Coursework Hand-in

14. Centre unable to distribute results as normal

Criteria for Implementation of the Plan:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post-results services
Centre Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Examinations Manager will contact the awarding bodies to notify them of any such incidents and act upon advice given • If Centre unavailable on restricted results day, Centre to consider another school liaising with Learning Partners IT Manager and Estates Manager to use their services to securely log onto the relevant awarding body websites to download candidate statements of results ready for distributing on results day • If Centre unavailable on results day, Centre to liaise with the Learning Partners Estates Manager for the distribution of results to students from an alternate site • Centre will distribute results electronically by using the schools' existing technology for publishing our progress monitoring reports and internal examination results to students/parents

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>

GOV.UK

Emergencies and severe weather: schools and early years settings:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/emergency-planning-and-response-for-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care-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 – Contingency Planning

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-yellow-label-service/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-guide>

JCQ

Instructions for conducting examinations

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

Guidance on access arrangements and special consideration

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

Guidance on malpractice

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

Guidance on non-examination assessments <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/non-examination-assessments/>