GEORGE ABBOT SCHOOL

Policy Title:	**Exams Contingency Policy**
Author:	**Examinations Manager**
Date of most recent review:	**October 2026**
Date of next review:	**October 2027**

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 (Centre). 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, Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Head of Departments (HODs) will liaise with the relevant Awarding Body to ensure any contingency plans meet their 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	• 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	• 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	• 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
During Exams	• 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, e.g. very late arrivals, suspected malpractice, special considerations
Results & Post Results	• Access to exam results affecting the distribution of results to candidates • Post result service not delivered
Certificate Distribution	• Certificates not recorded, distributed or made available for collection
Centre Actions	
• Assistant Examinations Officer to assume responsibility for the above tasks with the support of the named member of 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	• 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	• Candidates for short courses not identified and approved before entry deadline • Resource shortages for access arrangement requirements not identified
During Exams	• 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	
• 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 the SLT named member (who has oversight for examinations) for alternative site and separate invigilation requirements • Examinations Manager will in conjunction with Heads of Department (HODs) ensure entries for courses are signed off to meet awarding body deadlines • Faculty TAs and Progress Mentors 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	• 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 JCQ deadline • Staff providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained
During Exams	• Access arrangements for candidate support not arranged for exam venues

Centre Actions

- The Deputy SENCos, Specialist Assessors, Progress Mentors and Teaching Staff to work with SLT to identify candidates 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:

- 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:
    - 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

- The Examinations Manager to liaise with SLT, Directors of English, Music & Performance and Science and HODs, 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:

- 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

- 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/SEN Team/Technicians will be released from their normal duties to assist with agreement from HODs/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:

- 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
• 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 to always work with the Examinations Manager during such emergencies.

7. 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 during exams • MIS system failure at results release time
Centre Actions
• Examinations Manager, in consultation with SLT and Learning Partners IT Director, 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 Director 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 during a system failure liaise with the awarding bodies to minimise disruption and costs incurred • Learning Partners IT Director 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 Director to ensure there are blocks to potentially dangerous sites, and where possible, preventing the downloading of potentially dangerous files • Learning Partners IT Director to conduct a full security check and monitoring of the schools' ICT systems on a regular basis • Schools' network is protected by cyber security software, and the cyber security 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 • Network Team to remove staff access when no longer required to school systems

8. Cyber Security Breaches

Criteria for Implementation of the Plan:
• MIS system failure due to Cyber-attack during the examination cycle • Exams processes not delivered during the examination cycle
Centre Actions
• Learning Partners IT Director will manage any system failure in conjunction with SLT and Examinations Manager following a cyber-attack • Learning Partners IT Director in conjunction with SLT will report all incidents to the National Cyber Security Centre • Examinations Manager to liaise with awarding bodies for guidance and support relating to exam processes not undertaken due to a cyber attack • Centre staff must report any suspected security incidents or concerns to the Network Team immediately via networkhelpdesk@georgeabbot.surrey.sch.uk • Incident Response Team will consist of the on-site Network Team, Learning Partners IT Director and SLT

- All staff will receive relevant information/training at the start of the academic term or on induction for IT security during the Inset Days with sign off through SAMPeople managed and tracked by HR
- All staff will complete the annual National Cyber Security Centre training which will include a certificate of achievement and any refresher training as directed by the Centre and adhere to the staff code of conduct for ICT use
- Records of cyber security training will be stored in SAMPeople. HR will provide the Examinations Manager a spreadsheet with a list of completed cyber security training of all staff
- Examinations Manager to review and maintain staff access for logins to awarding bodies secure systems
- This policy to be used in conjunction with the JCQ Guidance for centres on cyber security
- Learning Partners Trust has a trust wide Cyber Security Policy in place but is it not published due to sensitive data contained within it. If requested at inspection, it will be provided.

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

Criteria for Implementation of the Plan:

- 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

- This policy will be used in conjunction with the school policy for Suspected Candidate Malpractice and AI policy
- This policy will be used in conjunction with the school policy for 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 HODs 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 except for Microsoft Copilot
- Learning Partners IT Director 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

10. 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 and Learning Partners Estates Manager to manage all such incidents
- Remote learning will be put into operation; this will include utilising Teams for all lessons delivered to students
- All work to be shared for candidates on Student Learning Environment (SLE) and Student Portal
- NEA work will be submitted via the SLE, this will include evidence from practical subjects to be part of the NEA submission
- Head of Centre/SLT to communicate to all staff via Teams and Email with relevant instructions
- Contact awarding bodies and act upon advice received
- The Centre will adhere to the examinations NEA policy

11. 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
• 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 action • The nominated alternative site for George Abbot will be Kings College, Guildford part of the Learning Partners Trust • The Examinations Manager will liaise with the relevant awarding bodies to discuss using the exam contingency day • The Examinations Manager will use the Centre Admin Portal (CAP) for Alternative Site Arrangements

12. 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 Manager will contact the relevant awarding bodies to discuss alternative arrangements and liaise with SLT and Learning Partners Estates Manager to take appropriate action • The Examinations Manager will liaise with the relevant awarding bodies to discuss using the exam contingency day • The Examinations Manager will use the Centre Admin Portal (CAP) for Alternative Site Arrangements

13. 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
• The Examinations Manager will contact the relevant awarding bodies to notify them of any such difficulties and put in place suitable alternative arrangements • The Examinations Manager will contact Parcel Force (Yellow Label Service) to seek alternative measures for the collection of scripts

14. Non-Examination Assessment (NEA) and Practical Assessment evidence is not available for marking and submission to awarding bodies

Criteria for Implementation of the Plan:
• Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked • NEA 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 • HODs to ensure written NEA data is stored electronically on the schools' network and SharePoint • HODs to ensure practical assessment material is captured and stored electronically on the Student Learning Environment (SLE) Coursework Hand-in • Storing NEA data and practical assessment material electronically supports our resilience arrangements for gathering evidence of candidate performance with the published guidance (Ofqual Resilience Guidance).

15. 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
• 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 Director 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 student 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 including AI
https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/
Guidance on non-examination assessments
https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/non-examination-assessments/

George Abbot/Learning Partners Trust

https://georgeabbot.surrey.sch.uk/policies/