



# Woolwich Polytechnic School

# Exam Contingency Plan

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# 2016/17

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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 Woolwich Polytechnic School. 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*.

This plan complies with JCQ general regulations (section 5) in that:

The centre agrees to “*have in place a written examination contingency plan/examinations policy which covers all aspects of examination administration. This will allow members of the senior leadership team to have a robust contingency plan in place, minimising risk to examination administration, should the examinations officer be absent at a crucial stage of the examination cycle;*”

## 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 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
  - 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:

- Examinations Assistant to assume responsibility for the above tasks with the support of the Senior Leadership Team.

- Examinations Assistant to work closely with the Examinations Officer during the academic year to ensure they are up to date with the exam cycle responsibilities at each point in time.

## 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:

- Head of Centre responsible for ensuring the position is filled should absence have the potential to disrupt exam preparation.
- The Examinations Officer to liaise with teachers to ensure access arrangements are in place by the spring term of Year 10 for all students where possible to meet the strict deadlines.
- The Examinations Officer to plan access arrangements for exam days in advance of the summer series, in consultation with SENCo.

## 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:

- The Examinations Officer to liaise with acting Head of Department and/or SLT, if necessary, to ensure all necessary deadlines are adhered to and liaise with the relevant awarding bodies and act upon advice received.
- Head of Centre responsible for ensuring the priority for teaching is the examination cohort and staff will be covered in good time, by trained professionals, in all circumstances.

## 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:**

- The Examinations Officer will review the invigilation staffing at the start of every academic year to ensure sufficient and suitable staff are recruited and trained in a timely fashion.
- Head of Centre to be informed if recruitment is necessary.
- Learning Support Assistants to also receive up to date exam training to ensure back up is available in case of invigilator absence.
- Agency Invigilators can be used.

## **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 days*
- *Main exam venues unavailable due to an unexpected incident at exam time*

### **Centre actions:**

- The Examinations Officer is responsible for the planning of rooms before every exam session as to identify potential rooming issues.
- 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.
- Head of Centre to liaise with the Examinations Officer to ensure that there is no disruption due to room shortages.

## **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*

### **Centre actions:**

- Head of Centre to be informed.
- The Examinations Officer, in consultation with SLT and IT technicians, will make entries from another venue direct to the awarding bodies.
- The Examinations Officer can access results directly from the awarding bodies.
- At all times during system failure the Examinations Officer will liaise with the awarding bodies to minimise disruption and costs incurred.

## **7. Emergency evacuation of the exam room**

### **Criteria for implementation of the plan**

Whole centre evacuation during exam time due to serious incident resulting in exam candidates being unable to return to exam rooms to start, proceed with or complete their exams.

### **Centre Actions**

- To follow the centre evacuation plan

Should the students not be able to return to the exam

- Make a full report of the time the exam was abandoned and the reasons why; report this to the exam boards as soon as possible

## 8. 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/SLT to be responsible for finding alternative venues/methods of learning.
- Priority given to exam cohort.
- Head of Centre to communicate with parents and students.

## 9. 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:

- Procedures for absence as outlines in the Examinations booklet information given each year.
- The Examinations Officer to liaise with the student and parents to find alternative venue/advice on next opportunity to sit the examinations or apply for special consideration as required.
- Examinations Officer with Head of Centre to liaise with Awarding body to seek approval for alternative venue.

## 10. 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

### Centre actions:

- The Examinations Officer to contact relevant awarding bodies to discuss alternative arrangements and liaise with Head of Centre/SLT to take appropriate action.
- Open centre for candidates only if possible.

## 11. 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 will contact awarding bodies for approval of alternative delivery arrangements.

## 12. 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 Officer to communicate with awarding bodies immediately for approval of alternative collection arrangements.

### 13. 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:**

- The Examinations Officer and Head of Centre to communicate with awarding bodies immediately.
- Student marks to be submitted based on appropriate evidence.

### 14. 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 Officer and Head of Centre to assess alternative arrangements for issuing results with the regulators and awarding bodies.
- Head of Centre to inform transition colleges, Post 16, students and parents about the delay as soon as possible.