



Public Exams Contingency Plan 2025-2026

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Examinations Officer

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**MORE
HOUSE
SCHOOL**

KNIGHTSBRIDGE

Key staff involved

Role	Name
Head of Centre	Claire Phelps
Exams Officer line officer (Senior Leader)	Toby Robertson
Exams Officer	Jorge Rodriguez
SENDCo	Johnathan Roberts
Senior Leadership Team	Toby Robertson, Sinead O'Callaghan
Head of Operations	Mike Keeley
IT Manager	

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Purpose of the plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exams process at **More House 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 the JCQ Joint Contingency Plan for the Examination System in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland

This plan also confirms **More House School** 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 staff absence. 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.

Possible causes of disruption to the exam process

1. Exams 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 available

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

- SLT and Head of Operations (HO) to undertake any tasks required using the School's [Exams Policy](#) and JCQ Instruction for Conducting Examinations

2. SENDCo 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
- 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

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Exam Officer to work with Pastoral team, IT, HO and SLT to identify students where applications for access arrangements may be required.

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

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

- Exams Officer to liaise with Head of Department, HO and/or SLT to ensure all necessary deadlines are adhered to. If this is not possible, the EO will liaise with the awarding bodies and act upon advice received.

4. Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence

Criteria for implementation of the plan:

- Invigilators shortage on peak exam days
- Invigilator absence on the day of an exam

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Exam Officer and HO will review invigilation staffing at the start of each exam cycle to ensure sufficient staff are trained in a timely fashion
- School staff will be trained and ready for invigilation duties at short notice. Invigilation training to be included at the start training for new members of staff.

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

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Exams Officer and Head of Operations unable to identify sufficient/appropriate rooms during exams timetable planning
Insufficient rooms available on peak exam days

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Exams Officer and HO will organise rooming before Easter holidays, ensuring sufficient time is available to identify appropriate rooms.
- In the event of a room not being available at very short notice, HO, SLT and EO will work together to ensure that sufficient staff are available to ensure the security of the examination is not compromised, whilst alternative rooming is sourced.

6. Cyber-attack

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Where a cyber-attack may compromise any aspect of delivery

The EO will work with the HO, SLT and the IT Network manager, to make immediate contact with the Awarding Bodies to seek further guidance and support. The HO and SLT will work with the EO to take as action as determined by the relevant awarding bodies.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Back ups are taken regularly of the MIS and the data is stored offline
- The systems for restoring the data are reliable and robust
- The school will make contact with the police and Action Fraud
- The school will make contact with the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC)
- The school will inform the Department for Education

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 at results release time

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The EO, in consultation with HO and SLT, will make entries from another computer/venue direct to the awarding bodies.

8. Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lock down)

Whole centre evacuation (or lock down) 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

- Exam officer will liaise with the Awarding Boards to discuss alternative arrangements and liaise with HO and SLT to take appropriate action.

9. Disruption of teaching time in the weeks before an exam - 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- SLT and HO to manage all such incidents.

10. Candidates at risk of being unable to take examinations - centre remains open

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Candidates at risk of being unable to attend the examination centre (school) to take examinations as normal. This includes strikes on public transport.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The EO will contact the relevant Awarding Board to discuss alternative arrangements and liaise with SLT to take appropriate action.

11. Centre at risk of being unable to open as normal during the examination period (Including in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Centre at risk of being unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The EO will contact the relevant Awarding Board to discuss alternative arrangements and liaise with HO and SLT to take appropriate action.

12. 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Exams Officer to liaise with awarding organisations to get electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network.
- EO to ensure that copies are received, made and stored under secure conditions.
- Awarding organisations would provide guidance on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances. As a last resort, and in close collaboration with centres and regulators, awarding organisations would consider scheduling of the examination on an alternative date.

13. Disruption to transporting completed examination scripts

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 bodies arrange collections, the exams officer will contact the relevant awarding bodies for advice and instructions and will not make their own arrangements for transportation unless told to do so by the awarding body.
- For any examinations where we make our own collection arrangements, EO will investigate alternative options that comply with the requirements detailed in the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations.
- EO to ensure secure storage of completed examination scripts until collection.

14. 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.

Completed examination scripts/assessment evidence does not reach awarding organisations.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Exams officer will contact the Exam Board to notify them of any such incidents and act upon advice given.

15. 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)

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

- Exams officer will liaise with HO and SLT to make arrangements to access the results/post-results services at an alternative site, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation, or to send them electronically if appropriate. The EO will contact the Awarding Board to notify them where appropriate.

Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning

JCQ

JCQ Joint Contingency Plan

www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/other-documents

JCQ Notice to Centres - Examination contingency plan/examinations policy

www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/notice-to-centres--exam-contingency-plan/

General Regulations for Approved Centres

www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations

Guidance notes on alternative site arrangements

www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms

Guidance notes for transferred candidates

www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms

Instructions for conducting examinations

www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice

A guide to the special consideration process

www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance

GOV.UK

Emergency planning and response: Exam and assessment disruption

www.gov.uk/government/publications/emergency-planning-and-response-for-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care-settings

Dispatch of exam scripts guide: Ensuring the service runs smoothly; Contingency planning

www.gov.uk/government/publications/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-yellow-label-service

National Cyber Security Centre

The NCSC's free Web Check and Mail Check services can help protect schools from cyber-attacks. Two NCSC cyber security services, which are already helping thousands of organisations to protect their websites and email servers from cyber-attacks, are now available to all UK schools. Both tools are available free of charge, are quick to set up, and thereafter run automatically. More information is available from the NCSC website.

The Department for Education has been asking centres to review National Cyber Security Centre advice following the increasing number of cyber-attacks involving ransomware infections. The NCSC information supports centres in cyber security preparedness and mitigation work.

Ransomware attacks continue and the Department is reminding centres to review the NCSC advice and to take precautions. This includes ensuring that you have backups in place for your key services and data.

For ease of reference, the Department has highlighted key links relating to the NCSC cyber security guidance below:

1. [More ransomware attacks on UK education](#) - NCSC.GOV.UK
2. [Ransomware advice and guidance for your IT teams to implement](#)
3. [Offline backups in an online world](#)
4. [Practical resources to help improve your cyber security](#)
5. [Building Resilience: Ransomware and the risks to schools and ways to prevent it](#)

Related policies

[Public Exams Policy and Procedure](#)

[Safeguarding policy](#)

[Accessibility Plan](#)

[Critical Incidents Policy](#)

Risk Management

Example risks and issues	Possible remedial action		Staff
	Forward planning	Action	
Accommodation			
Insufficient space in classrooms for candidates	Once group sizes are known at the start of the year, flag instances where regular classroom space may not be suitable to conduct controlled assessment	Use more than one classroom or multiple sittings where necessary	Exams Officer Head
Absent candidates			
Candidates absent for all or part of assessment (various reasons)	Plan alternative session(s) for candidates	Liaise with Awarding Boards for alternative dates when possible	Heads of Department
Candidates have a scheduling clash for exams or assessment (possibly offsite on consortium teaching)	Always consider candidate timetables well ahead and decide on priorities in advance to scheduling clashes	Check before booking the date; provide alternative date where necessary, and consult awarding body procedures for dealing with timetabling clashes N.B. retakes of controlled assessment are limited	Exams Officer Heads of Department
Control levels for task taking			
Assessment is undertaken under incorrect level of control (time, resources, supervision and collaboration)	Ensure teaching staff/assessors know what level is applicable and understand what is involved. Provide training if required	Seek guidance from the awarding body	Heads of Department

Example risks and issues	Possible remedial action		Staff
	Forward planning	Action	
Supervision			
Student study diary/plan not provided or completed*	Ensure teaching staff/assessors are aware of the need for study diary/plans to be completed early in course	Ensure candidates start, continue and complete study diary/plans that are signed after every session	N/A
Task setting			
Teaching staff/assessors fail to correctly set tasks	Ensure teaching staff understand the task setting arrangements as defined in the awarding body specification. ICE and Document ‘Instructions for Invigilation’ present on every exam room	Seek guidance from the awarding body	HoDs Exams Officer
Assessments have not been moderated as required in the awarding body specification	Check specification and plan required moderation appropriately	Seek guidance from the awarding body	HoDs Exams Officer
Security of materials			
Assessment tasks not kept secure before assessment	Ensure teaching staff understand importance of task security	Request/obtain different assessment tasks	Exams Officer HoDs

Candidates' work not kept secure during or after assessment	Define appropriate level of security, in line with awarding body requirements, for each department as necessary	Take materials to secure storage	HoDs Exams Officer
Insufficient or insecure storage space	Look at provision for suitable storage early in the course	Find alternative spaces	HoDs Exams Officer
Deadlines			
Deadlines not met by candidates	Ensure all candidates are briefed on deadlines/penalties for not meeting them	Mark what candidates have produced by deadline and seek guidance from awarding body on further action.	Heads of Department
Deadlines for marking and/or paperwork not met by teaching staff/ assessors	Ensure teaching staff/assessors are given clear deadlines (prior to awarding body ones) to complete marking/paperwork so the exams office can process and send off marks ahead of AB deadlines	Seek guidance from awarding body	Heads of Department Exams Officer Head

Example risks and issues	Possible remedial action		Staff
	Forward planning	Action	
Authentication			
Teaching staff/assessors fail to complete authentication forms or leave before completing authentication	Ensure teaching staff/assessors understand importance of authentication forms and the requirement of a signature	Return form to staff for signature. Ensure forms are signed as work is marked, not at end of season	Heads of Department Exams Officer
Marking			
Teaching staff/assessors interpret marking descriptions incorrectly	Ensure appropriate training and practising of marking. Plan for sampling of marking during the practice phase.	Arrange for remarking. Consult awarding body specification for appropriate procedure	Heads of Department
National Emergency			
Due to some national emergency, examinations are unable to take place.	Prepare a contingency plan	Refer to contingency plan	Examinations Officer Head

Head of Centre:
Ms C Phelps

Examinations Officer:
Mr J Rodriguez

Date: August 2025 (updated)