Isaac Newton Academy

Exam Contingency Plan

2017/2018

A.Rothnie
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Contents

Key Staff

Role	Names
Head of Centre	Rachel Macfarlane
Exams Officer line manager (Assistant Principal (data and assessment)	Mark Crowther-Green
Exams Officer	Aidan Rothnie
SENCo	David Wilson
SLT Members	Jo Spencer; Sugra Alibhai; Helen Chamberlain; Tam Broadway; Eva McEvoy; Leanne Abbott-Jones; Gareth Marshall-Jones; Nichola West; Alex Clift-Matthews

Purpose of the plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exams process at Isaac Newton Academy. 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 *Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland* which provides guidance in the publication *What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted.*

This plan also confirms Isaac Newton Academy is compliant with the JCQ regulation (section 5.3, *General Regulations for Approved Centres 2017-2018*) 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.*

Possible causes of 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

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 and rooming allocation 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, 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

Planning
- Data collection exercise will be undertaken by Assistant Principal (data and assessment) and supported by the ops team
- Annual exams plan will be adapted from the previous year's plan by the Assistant Principal (data and assessment) and supported by the ops team

Entries
- Assistant Principal (data and assessment) will have logins set up for awarding body extranet sites to allow early/estimated entries
- Assistant Principal (data and assessment) will consult MIS guidance and liaise with HoDs and make entries via the centre's MIS
- Assistant Principal (data and assessment) will ensure that all staff involved in exams, in particular HoDs, have been made aware of the deadline and of the importance of sticking to the deadline
- Assistant Principal (data and assessment) notify the Awarding Bodies of the Exams Officer's absence, so that additional support can be provided

Pre-exams
- Assistant Principal (data and assessment) will consult MIS guidance to generate exam timetables
- Assistant Principal (data and assessment) will continue role in briefing students on exam timetables and awarding body information for candidates
- Secondary key holder to the Secure Exams room will store exam/assessment materials and candidates' work in the Secure Exams room
- Assistant Principal (data and assessment) will consult MIS guidance to submit internal assessment marks and samples of candidates' work to awarding bodies/external moderators
- Assistant Principal (data and assessment) notify the Awarding Bodies of the Exams Officer's absence, so that additional support can be provided

Exam time
- All staff involved in exams will refer to the ICE booklet and relevant centre exams policies, to ensure that exams are conducted according to the conditions prescribed by awarding bodies and that the integrity of the exams is not compromised
- Assistant Principal (data and assessment) will take the role of exams officer for the duration of the absence, liaising with the lead invigilator and awarding bodies as required. The exams officer will ensure that the Assistant Principal has the required logins for awarding body extranet systems
- Required reports/requests will be signposted to relevant staff, e.g. very late arrival, suspected malpractice, special consideration, etc.
- Assistant Principal (data and assessment) must contact Parcelforce yellow label service and arrange the collection of completed scripts in advance of exams. The exams policy details procedure for the dispatch of scripts
- Assistant Principal (data and assessment) notify the Awarding Bodies of the Exams Officer's absence, so that additional support can be provided

Results and post-results

- The centre will ensure that the Assistant Principal (data and assessment) has access to A2C and awarding body extranet sites from which to download examination results
- Assistant Principal (data and assessment) is trained to generate examination result reports for students
- Assistant Principal (data and assessment) has access to awarding body extranet sites with which to access post-results services
- Assistant Principal (data and assessment) notify the Awarding Bodies of the Exams Officer's absence, so that additional support can be provided

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 arrangements requirements
- Centre fails to recognize 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
- Staff (facilitators) providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained

Exam time
- Access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

Planning
- Lead LA will identify students who may benefit from access arrangements
- Lead LA will support the Exams Officer in sourcing qualified individuals to assess candidates for potential access arrangements
- Lead LA and Exams Officer will work together to ensure that disabled candidates are given the necessary support under the Equality Act 2010
- Lead LA will gather evidence of need and evidence to support normal way of working and ensure it is kept in the access arrangements folder

Pre-exams
- Exams Officer will apply for access arrangements, liaising with SEND team as necessary
- Exams Officer and Lead LA will liaise to ensure centre-delegated arrangements are in place
- Lead LA will gather evidence and notify the Exams Officer of requirements for modified papers in time for the external deadline
- Exams Officer will meet with the Lead LA to ensure that trained staff are allocated to provide support for access arrangement candidates, and provide support where necessary

Exam time

- Exams Officer maintains the folder of access arrangement data, and will therefore lead the SEND team in ensuring that the support that has been approved is put into place

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, and 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 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 ensure that staff are made aware of deadlines of early/estimated entries and final entry information well in advance, to ensure that departments have sufficient time to gather the necessary data and make the appropriate decisions for entries
- SLT and HoDs will support departments where teachers are absent at key points. Temporary staff may need to be employed to ensure that the necessary work is completed for the deadlines
- The centre may find it necessary to liaise with others within the ARK network or employ temporary supply teachers, to bring in additional teaching staff to support departments in setting/issuing/taking/marking NEAs
- If it is unlikely that deadlines will be met, the awarding bodies must be notified

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The HR department is aware of the importance of hiring invigilators, and will always seek to employ more than the minimum required by JCQ regulations to account for absences
- Operational staff will be trained as invigilators and will fill in if the number of invigilators falls below the threshold of one per thirty candidates

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption
- Exams officer will liaise with the SLT member responsible for cover, and if necessary move or consolidate timetabled classes to free rooms to be used for exams. Such rooms must then be prepared for exam use according to JCQ requirements
- The centre has identified a number of areas to use within the centre premises to serve as the main exam venue should it be deemed unsuitable for use at short notice. These venues include the Sports Hall and the Primary Dining Hall
- The Head of Centre will find venues outside of the centre building should it be unusable, such as another school or a hall

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption
- Awarding bodies will be notified of MIS system failure at these critical points
- The exams officer must notify the IT and ARK Data Team immediately of MIS system failure, and the urgency of the centre's need for the system to be restored will be emphasised
- Final entries may need to be entered via awarding body extranet sites if MIS systems cannot be restored in time
- The exams officer will perform exams preparation with the aid of the ARK data team using alternative software
- The exams officer will access results from the awarding bodies' extranet and use that data to develop the necessary reports and results slips

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

Criteria for implementation of the plan
- 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 disruption
- All staff involved with the exams process must be familiar with the exams emergency evacuation plan and the exams lock down policy, and will execute those plans
- Awarding bodies must be notified of this disruption

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 to mitigate the impact of disruption
- The Head of Centre will organise temporary venues to continue to provide teaching and study support, using contacts within the ARK network and schools within the borough
- Teachers will notify students of changes to lesson venues

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption
- If the candidate is unable to attend examinations according to the timetable, special consideration will be applied for from the relevant awarding bodies
- The candidate must be made aware of this option, and that evidence may need to be gathered to support the application

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 (including centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency)

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption
- The Head of Centre will organise temporary venues to continue to provide teaching and study support, using contacts within the ARK network and schools within the borough
- Candidates will be notified of changes to the examination venues
- Disruption must be kept to a minimum
- The exams officer must notify the awarding bodies of any potential disruption or security risk that may occur as a result of the change in venue, and advice sought if necessary
- It may be necessary to apply for special consideration

11. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers

Criteria for the 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
- The centre recognises its responsibility in maintaining the security and integrity of examination papers
- The Exams Officer must be aware of the quantity of each examination paper that is required for the examinations, and of the time they are due to arrive. The Exams Officer will use the awarding bodies extranet sites to monitor this
- If the examination papers have not arrived by the expected time, the Exams Officer will notify the awarding bodies

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The centre recognises that in accordance with JCQ *Instructions for Conducting Examinations* that it must dispatch completed scripts to the awarding bodies within one working day of the scheduled examination time
- The centre has procedures in place to set up Parcelforce 'Yellow Label' service for daily collection of examinations
- If the collection service has been disrupted, the Exams Officer must ensure that the completed scripts are stored securely, and notify the awarding bodies of a potential delay

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Where possible, back-ups of work done on computers will be done regularly to ensure work is not lost
- If irreparable damage to or destruction of work has taken place, the awarding bodies must be notified as soon as possible, and advice sought
- It may be necessary to apply for special consideration

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The centre will contact the awarding bodies and/or ARK Central data support in the event of technical issues preventing the access of results, and proceed accordingly
- The creation and distribution of examination result slips is considered the main priority for results day, and as such the Exams Officer will ensure that the student database is prepared accordingly