



**Ormiston  
RIVERS  
Academy**

# CONTINGENCY PLAN

2025/26

This plan is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
Date of next review	

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## Purpose of the plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the examination/assessment process Ormiston Rivers 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 processes

Alongside internal processes, this plan is informed by the Ofqual (and Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment) **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 and the **JCQ Joint Contingency Plan** for the Examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the JCQ document **Preparing for disruption to examinations** (Effective from 1 September 2024).

This plan also confirms Ormiston Rivers Academy's compliance with JCQ's **General Regulations for Approved Centres** (GR 5.3) that the centre has in place for inspection that must be reviewed and updated annually:

- a written contingency plan which covers all aspects of examination/assessment administration and delivery.

## Contingency arrangements

In accordance with the regulations (GR 3.17-19), Ormiston Rivers Academy **must** have an up to date written contingency plan.

The contingency plan **must** cover all aspects of examination/assessment administration and delivery. Senior leaders **must** have robust contingency arrangements in place that will minimise the risk to examination/assessment administration and delivery and any adverse impact on candidates.

The plan must cover the following scenarios:

- the head of centre, relevant senior leader(s) with oversight of examination and assessment administration, SENCo (or equivalent role), examinations officer or any other key staff essential to the examination process being absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle
- the potential impact of other events such as flooding which could lead to all or parts of the centre becoming unavailable
- potential issues with the centre's IT systems

As part of the contingency plan the centre **must** identify an alternative site if examinations cannot be conducted at the registered address. Larger centres may require more than one potential alternative site or different sites for different Year Groups.

Ormiston Rivers Academy **must** have at least one senior member of staff (senior designated contact) who is available to manage emergency requests from awarding bodies that are results related during the summer holidays. However, a number of contacts can be provided to reduce the risk of this falling on one individual throughout the summer holidays.

Ormiston Rivers Academy **must** ensure that candidates' work is backed-up and should consider the contingency of candidates' work being backed-up on two separate devices, including one off-site back-up. Appropriate security arrangements must be implemented which protect candidates' work in the event of IT system corruption and cyber-attacks.

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## National Centre Number Register and other information requirements

In accordance with the regulations (GR 5.3), the head of centre will ensure that Ormiston Rivers Academy responds to the National Centre Number Register annual update by the end of October every year which includes providing senior designated contact details (this might include a personal mobile number and/or email address). These must be the contact details of someone who can be reached in an emergency if the centre is closed over the summer and who can mobilise resources to respond to the issue.

## Head of centre absence at a critical stage of the exam cycle

Where the head of centre is absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle main duties and responsibilities will be escalated in accordance with the centre's written escalation process.

### Possible causes of disruption to the exam process

#### 1. Exam officer extended absence

##### 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

##### 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

- Centre employs deputy to the Exams Officer to be trained in all areas of exams management. Centre employs a Data and Exams assistant to handle exam papers where deputy is prevented from doing so due to conflict of interest.
- Exams Officer to recruit and train invigilators on an on-going basis through the year
- Awareness of the Exams Office manual

#### 2. SENCo (or equivalent role) extended absence at a critical stage of 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
- 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

- Centre employs deputy to SENCo to be trained in all areas of SEND management
- SENCo arranges testing of students at the end of yr.9
- SENCo and Exams office work together to apply for access arrangements
- Exams office staff and SENCo staff work as a team to ensure that all approved requirements are in place
- Staff providing support to access arrangements candidates are provided and trained by the Exams office
- Exams office staff organise the rooming of all exams including SEN arrangements.

### **3. Teaching staff extended absence at a critical stage of 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 assessments (including controlled assessments and coursework) 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 submits early/estimated entry information to AB's based on the subject/class lists and knowledge of syllabus
- Exams Officer to request final entry information well in advance of entry deadline to allow time for any possible delays  
Each subject has more than 1 teacher ensuring that Exams Officer can obtain information as required. This also ensures that internal assessment marks and candidates' work are available as required by the Exams Officer.

### **4. SLT (Exams) extended absence at critical stage of the exam cycle**

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Assistant Principal with responsibility for exams absent during examination season.

#### Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Exams Officer to report to the Principal
- In the absence of the Principal, Exams officer will report to Vice Principal
- Assistant Principals to provide SLT support to Exams if Principal or Vice are absent

#### 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Centre recruits and trains invigilators on an on-going basis
- Invigilator planning is carried out over a 2 month period prior to the exam season
- Centre support staff are trained to invigilate as cover/absence at short notice

#### 6. 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 timetabling 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

- Exam room planning takes place over 2 months prior to the exams period allowing time for any rooming issues to be resolved
- Exams Officer will advise SLT well in advance of any issue with rooming exams allowing alternative venue's to be allocated to exams
- School has more than 2 large exam venue's able to hold all candidates. If main venue and alternative are unavailable, candidates to be split between alternative rooms and additional invigilators employed.
- Students to sit exams at the Plume School, Maldon if situation can't be resolved.

#### 7. Cyber-attack

##### Criteria for implementation of the plan

*Where a cyber-attack may compromise any aspect of delivery*

##### Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- (This will include the required arrangements for cyber security)  
(GR 3.21) Ensure there are procedures in place to maintain the security of user accounts by:
  - a) providing training for authorised staff on the importance of creating strong unique passwords and keeping all account details secret
  - b) providing training for staff on awareness of all types of social engineering/ phishing attempts
  - c) enabling additional security settings wherever possible
  - d) updating any passwords that may have been exposed
  - e) setting up secure account recovery options
  - f) reviewing and managing connected applications
  - g) monitoring accounts and regularly reviewing account access, including removing access when no longer required
  - h) ensuring authorised members of staff securely access awarding bodies' online systems in line with awarding body regulations regarding cyber security and the JCQ document *Guidance for centres on cyber security*

Authorised staff will have access, where necessary, to a device which complies with awarding bodies' multi-factor authentication (MFA) requirements.

- i) reporting any actual or suspected compromise of an awarding body's online systems immediately to the relevant awarding body

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Where a cyber-attack may compromise any aspect of delivery

#### Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- AB's to be advised immediately
- Exams staff to work from home using AB's secure sites to manage entries/amendments
- Results statements to be obtained directly from AB's to ensure timely release to students
- Use of alternative site/IT system if required

### **8. Failure of IT systems**

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

- IT system corruption affecting candidate's work
- MIS system failure at final entry deadline
- MIS system failure during exams preparation
- Power outage immediately prior to or during an on-screen test
- MIS system failure at results release time

#### Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Centre to submit all exam entries 1 week prior to deadline to allow time to deal with any potential issues
- Exam preparation is carried out over a 2 month period prior to exam season. MIS failure to be dealt with by in-house ICT Technicians, ensuring that any system failure would not affect ability to conduct exams
- Exams office to ensure spare IT equipment available at each on-screen exam in case of equipment failure
- IT system back-up servers in place and managed by ICT Technicians
- Exams office to re-arrange on-screen tests in the event of power failure
- Statements of result can be obtained directly from AB's and prepared for students on 'download' day ensuring that students receive results on the designated day
- If necessary downloading of results statements to be carried out on alternative IT system/site
- Results statistics preparation would be carried out on the reinstatement of the MIS system
- Ensure that candidates' work is backed up on two separate devices, including one off-site back up, to protect candidates' work in the event of IT system corruption and cyber-attacks.

### **9. Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lockdown)**

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Whole centre evacuation (or lockdown) 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

- Centre to advise all AB's of the issue immediately
- Centre to find alternative venue for students to take examinations (The Plume School, Maldon) (alternative site arrangement application)
- Centre to advise parents/carers of alternative arrangements by text/email
- Centre to keep website updated
- Centre to apply for special consideration for affected students

## 10. 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

- Centre to advise parents/carers and students regarding the potential disruption to teaching time and plans to address situation by text/email
- Centre to move to online 'teams' learning to deliver lessons
- Centre to consider using alternative site (local hall)
- Centre to keep website updated
- Centre to apply for special consideration where appropriate

## 11. Candidates may not be able to take examinations - centre remains open

### Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Candidates may not be able to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal because of a crisis

### Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Centre to advise AB's of the issue immediately
- Centre to advise parents/carers and students of alternative arrangements by text/email and keep website updated
- Centre to find alternative venue for students to take examinations (The Plume School, Maldon) (alternative site arrangement application)
- Centre to apply for special consideration for all affected students

## 12. Centre may not be able 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 may not be able to open as normal for scheduled examinations

### Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Centre to remain open for exam candidates only
- Centre to advise parents/carers and students that examinations will take place as normal (text/email) and keep the website updated
- School buses in place as normal
- School staff/Exams staff to supervise students on arrival at school and before leaving school
- Students to leave school on completion of exam
- Students to sit exams at The Plume School, Maldon if centre unable to open for exams.

## 13. 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

- Centre to liaise with all AB's to organise alternative delivery of papers

- AB's to provide centre with electronic access to exam papers via secure external network
- Centre to ensure copies are made and stored under secure conditions
- AB's to provide centre with guidance on the conduct of exams under these circumstances
- AB's to consider re-scheduling exam to alternative date/time as a last resort

#### **14. Delay in collection arrangements for 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

- Centre to liaise with all AB's on acceptable alternative script despatch method
- Centre to ensure secure storage of completed exam papers until collection as close to the original collection time as possible

#### **15. 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

- Head of centre to inform AB's immediately
- AB's to generate marks for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement
- Where marks cannot be generated, candidates may need to retake affected assessments

#### **16. 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

- Centre contact AB's regarding alternative options
- Centre to access results from alternative site (agreement from AB's required)
- Students result statements to be downloaded directly from AB's
- Centre to coordinate post results services/requests from alternative site
- Centre to advise students, parents/carers of alternative site arrangements by text/email
- Centre to keep website updated