

# BRIXHAM COLLEGE

# EXAM CONTINGENCY POLICY

March 2026

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| Prepared by  | C.Slater Exams Officer |
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# **BRIXHAM COLLEGE**

## **EXAM CONTINGENCY PLAN**

### **Purpose of the plan**

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exam process.

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 at BRIXHAM COLLEGE.

Alongside internal processes this plan is informed by the Ofqual **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', 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 details how BRIXHAM COLLEGE complies with the JCQ's **General Regulations for Approved Centres** (section 5.3, Centre management) by having 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 where the head of centre, examinations officer or SENCo is absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle. 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.

### **National Centre Number Register and other information requirements**

The head of centre will also ensure that as a contingency to enable the prompt handling of urgent issues only, responds to the awarding bodies' request for information regarding the contact details of a senior member of staff (which might include a personal mobile number and/or email address). This will ensure that any urgent matters which might adversely affect candidates which arise outside of term time, and which potentially put qualification awards at risk, can be addressed by awarding bodies with the support of that member of staff. Heads of centre should ensure that this member of staff has the necessary authority to mobilise resources to provide this support, which might include resolving issues within the centre itself. (GR 5.3)

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

When the head of centre may be absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle, main duties and responsibilities will be escalated to Vice Principals.

## **Possible causes of disruption to the exam process**

### **1. Exams officer 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 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 post-results services

### **Centre actions:**

- Have trained members of SLT/Vice Principal or Exams Assistant and Specialist Assessor for SEND & EAA available to action exam procedures.

## **2. ALS lead/SENCo 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:**

- Member of SEND trained to test and implement EAA arrangements for exams

### **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 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:**

- SLT to organise cover for absent staff with appropriately trained teachers/supply teachers. Re-arrange classes to cover exam classes with subject teachers.
- SLT V.P. for Teaching and Learning to oversee entries and notification to students regarding NEA marks.
- Seek advice from Awarding Bodies if NEA not fully/partially completed.

### **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:**

- Utilise support staff and available non-teaching staff, including SLT. Printed Invigilator Training notes always available for untrained invigilators.

## **5. Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venue(s) 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:**

- In event of Sports Hall not being available on day of exam, site team will be asked to move furniture to Lower Gym or Main Hall – E.O. and invigilators to check exam conditions appropriate
- *(unavailable due to an unexpected incident at exam time) where possible, make use of other available rooms within the centre, prioritising candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned)*
- In the event of Dance Drama Studio not being available for EAA students on day of exam, students will be moved to free classrooms. Extra invigilation arranged to cover additional rooms if needed.
- In the event that Brixham College site cannot accommodate any exam venues – we will relocate to alternative site – BRIXHAM RUGBY CLUB events room OR Brixham Community Centre, and seek approval from awarding bodies. TO BE AGREED WITH ALTERNATIVE VENUES
- Communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue.
- Ensure the secure transportation of question papers or assessment materials to the alternative venue.
- After the exam - consider whether any candidate's ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration.

## **6. Cyber-attack** (Cyber Security Policy in place)

### Criteria for implementation of the plan

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

### **Centre actions:**

- Back ups are taken regularly of the MIS and data stored offline
- Systems for restoring data are reliable and robust
- School will make contact with all relevant parties: Action Fraud, Police, NCSC, DofE and Awarding Bodies

## **7. Failure of IT systems**

### Criteria for implementation of the plan

- MIS/IT system failure at final entry deadline
- MIS/IT system failure during exams preparation
- MIS/IT system failure at results release time

### **Centre actions:**

- The Centre has a team of technicians, and support from the Trust, who would be able to assist with technical issues and contact MIS supplier.
- We have a bank of Chromebooks for students (plus extras) to use for computer readers. In the event the Trelson system failed to work for computer readers – trained human readers would be utilised.
- Communicate with the exam boards for alternative methods to send entries or receive results.

## **8. 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:**

- Centre to follow Lockdown Policy and evacuation policy. Copies in exam room.
- Integrity of the exam paper will be maintained – but left on desks for students to return to at end of incident. Exam conditions will be applied during evacuation.
- Contact the relevant awarding body as soon as possible and follow its instructions.
- If incident continues, papers will be collected when appropriate. They will be sent to the board as they are, and special consideration applied for.
- After the exam - consider whether any candidate's ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration
- Parents will be informed.

## **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 action:**

- SLT to meet and identify a course of action.
- Organise work to be sent home via online system – all students have their own chrome book.

## **10. 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

### **Centre actions:**

- Make contact with the relevant Awarding Body to discuss alternative arrangements and liaise with SLT.

## **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:**

- Exam Officer to ensure all exam papers are received and stored in secure conditions.
- Exam Officer to liaise with Awarding Bodies to arrange electronic copies of papers not received.

## **12. Disruption to transporting completed examination scripts**

### Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts/assessment evidence

### **Centre action:**

- If part of 'Yellow Label' service, and papers not collected – advise Awarding Bodies and follow their instructions.
- All papers will remain in secure storage until despatched.

### **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
- Completed examination scripts/assessment evidence does not reach awarding organisations

#### **Centre actions:**

- Exams Officer to contact Awarding Bodies to notify of any such incidents and act upon their advice.

### **14. Centre unable to distribute results as normal (including in the event of the centre being unavailable on results day owing to an unforeseen emergency) or facilitate post-results services**

#### 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:**

- Exam Officer to liaise with SLT to make alternative arrangements to access result/post results service – depending on cause of disruption - site closure or IT faults.
- Site closure: Organise an alternative site for distribution – BRIXHAM RUGBY CLUB or arrange to send electronically. VENUE TO BE AGREED
- IT faults: organise hardcopies of results from exam boards, to be distributed to students