

Ballyclare Secondary School



Contingency planning for examinations

“Every child deserves a rewarding educational experience.”

<i>Date of last review</i>	<i>March 2023</i>
<i>To be reviewed by</i>	<i>March 2025</i>

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This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the management and administration of the exam process at Ballyclare Secondary School. By outlining actions/procedures to be followed in case of disruption it is intended to mitigate the impact these disruptions have on our exam process.

1. Exam officer extended absence at key points in the exam process (cycle)

Key tasks required in the management and administration of the exam cycle:

- *Planning*
 - Annual data collection undertaken to collate information on qualifications and awarding body specifications being delivered
 - Annual exams plan produced identifying essential key tasks, key dates and deadlines
 - Sufficient invigilators recruited and trained
- *Entries*
 - Awarding bodies need informed of early/estimated entries which prompts release of early information required by teaching staff
 - Candidates need entered with awarding bodies for external exams/assessment (c2k help sheets available)
 - Awarding body entry deadlines need met
- *Pre-exams*
 - Exam timetabling, rooming allocation; and invigilation schedules need prepared
 - Candidates briefed on exam timetables and awarding body information for candidates
 - Exam/assessment materials and candidates' work stored under required secure conditions
 - Internal assessment marks and samples of candidates' work submitted to awarding bodies/external moderators
- *Exam time*
 - Exams/assessments taken under the conditions prescribed by awarding bodies
 - Required reports/requests submitted to awarding bodies during exam/assessment periods e.g. very late arrival, suspected malpractice, special consideration
 - Candidates' scripts 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:

Head of Centre to appoint a suitable Deputy Examinations Officer as rapidly as possible, who will follow procedures and practices within the Examinations Officer remit. In the interim, the Head of Centre is to ensure all key examination tasks are completed.

2. SENCo extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

Key tasks required in the management and administration of the access arrangements process within the exam cycle:

Planning

- Candidates need tested/assessed to identify potential access arrangement requirements
- Evidence of need and evidence to support normal way of working collated

Pre-exams

- Approval for access arrangements applied for to the awarding body
- Modified paper requirements identified in a timely manner to enable ordering to meet external deadline
- Staff providing support to access arrangement candidates allocated and trained
- Timetable created to include where the pupils with access arrangements are complete exams and who is to invigilate these

Centre actions:

Assistant SENCo will follow procedures and practices within the SENCo remit. SENCo and Assistant SENCo work closely together in the organisation of access arrangements.

3. Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

Centre actions:

- In the event of a period of extended absence of a member of the teaching staff, the Senior Teacher (Head of Learning) would arrange appropriate cover where possible.
- The co-ordinator for the curriculum area would oversee the hand-over to the new teacher to ensure a smooth transition and to support pupils in completing required assessments.
- New staff providing cover would be briefed by the subject coordinator as part of their induction process on arrangements for assessment and examinations.

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

Centre actions:

- New invigilators undergo training by the Exams Officer and are carefully monitored by the Chief Invigilator. They are permitted to work independently once they, and the Exams Officer are happy that they are competent and confident in processes and procedures.

- Annual training sessions are held for all invigilators in order to refresh their knowledge and communicate JCQ regulation changes and update local information.
- Ballyclare Secondary School retains a pool of approximately 8 invigilators. Minor absence issues (such as an invigilator calling in sick) are covered by a member of BSS staff or attempts are made to contact another invigilator from the pool.

5. Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis

Plan implemented when candidates are unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal.

Centre actions:

- The Exams Officer to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to make them aware of the issue.
- The Exams Officer to communicate with parents, carers and candidates regarding solutions to the issue.
- Centre to liaise with Exam Boards to sit exams at a different venue in extremis. Ballyclare Presbyterian church halls is an agreed alternative venue if BSS cannot be used. E.g. If school was flooded.
- Exams Officer to apply for Special Consideration for those affected to the appropriate Boards.

6. Evacuation of exam rooms

If rooms have to be evacuated due to fire or bomb alert, the Chief Invigilator will follow the procedures on the evacuation of the building. These can be found in full in the 'Centre Emergency Evacuation Procedure' policy.

- The invigilator will lift the attendance register and instruct the candidates to leave all examination materials on their desks and proceed to the assembly point, *staying with the invigilator at all times*.
- Candidates must remain supervised separately from other pupils within the school and should not engage in conversation with each other. They go to the far side of the hockey pitches.
- If and when it is safe to return to the building, the examination will re-commence and candidates will be given extra time to account for the disruption.
- All details should be recorded in the incident book and a report should be sent to the relevant Awarding Body. If the examination cannot continue the Awarding Body should be contacted immediately.

7. Centre unable to distribute results as normal

Plan implemented when centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post-results services

Centre actions:

- Centres to contact awarding organisations about alternative options.
- Arrange to access results at an alternative site.
- Inform staff, students and parents as soon as possible of the change in distribution of results.

8. Failure of ICT systems / Cyber attack

Ballyclare Secondary School endeavors to minimise any ICT disruption via resilient design and preventative maintenance. In the event of an issue this would be dealt with by the Head of ICT, ICT technicians and support from C2K who test and update the systems on a regular basis. In the unlikely event that systems failure or a cyber attack impacts scheduled exams, steps would be taken to resolve the problem as quickly as possible. This will include using an alternative provision within the school and making contact with the Awarding Body to seek advice. The Exams Officer would be responsible for applying for Special Consideration for any disruption caused to the pupils.

Exams Day Contingency plan

Exam Item	Location/ Holders Name
Keys to Secure Storage for exam papers and exam stationery	2 spare sets of keys: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- with Mr Rea (Vice Principal)- In the key safe
Exams Office – Centre Timetable	Timetable widely published.
Seating plans	With D. Kirkland, Chief Invigilator
Exam cards / setting out of exam rooms / notices etc.	Can be found within secure room. Exam cards will be with D. Kirkland.
Invigilators	D. Kirkland to organise.
Access Arrangements (incl. Cover sheets)	All information is within Examinations book. Spare copies with the office and SLT members.
Script envelopes / Examiner address labels	With D. Kirkland.
Exam clashes	All information within Examinations booklet.
Collation of scripts	Invigilators. Checked off on official attendance registers. Official attendance sheets completed before posting