

Brandles School

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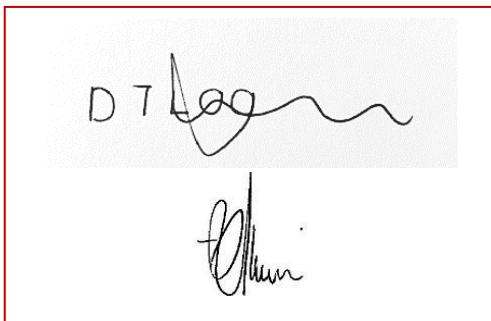
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EXAM CONTINGENCY PLAN



Policy Number: 32
Review Committee: Standards
Type of Policy: Statutory
Review Period: Annually
Approved: June 2025
Next Review: June 2026

Registered office:

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Version Control

V1.1	July 2023	New Policy
V1.2	July 24	New Layout
V1.2	July 24	No Changes

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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 Brandles School.

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' and the JCQ Joint Contingency Plan for the Examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

This plan details how Brandles School 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 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 ABSENCE AT KEY POINTS IN THE EXAM PROCESS (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

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- 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

The centre will:

- All staff trained as invigilators (as part of school's professional development schedule).
- N Wilsher - Deputy Head to act as exams officer in the absence of I Reid - exams officer.
- Logs kept for movement and control of secure documents in the school office and exams cupboard.

2. ALS LEAD/SENCo EXTENDED ABSENCE AT KEY POINTS IN THE EXAM PROCESS (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

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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 listed above

The centre will:

- In the long-term absence of the SENDCo the Exams Officer will complete online access arrangements where necessary.

3. TEACHING STAFF EXTENDED ABSECE AT KEY POINTS IN THE EXAM PROCESS (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 listed above

The centre will:

- The Senior Leadership team, with final digression from Head of Centre will make entries on behalf of staff absent.
- Staff held accountable for non-examination assessment tasks not set/issued/taken by candidates as scheduled via staff appraisal and conduct processes.
- IV checks to identify that centre assessed marks and submission deadlines are met according to JCQ and Exam Board regulations.

4. INVIGILATORS – LACK OF APPROPRIATELY TRAINED INVIGILATORS OR INVIGILATOR ABSECE

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Failure to recruit and train sufficient invigilators to conduct exams

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

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

The centre will:

All teaching staff and learning support staff to undertake annual invigilator assessment as part of the school's professional development schedule. The exams office - online portal will be used to facilitate, certify and maintain accurate logs of trained invigilators.

5. EXAM ROOMS – LACK OF APPROPRIATE ROOMS OF 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

The centre will:

- (where main exam venue(s) 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
- identify whether the exam or timetabled assessment can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding body
- (where main exam venue(s) unavailable due to an unexpected incident at exam time) where possible, move to alternative venue, prioritising candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned

Alternative venue details:

Larwood School - Stevenage. This is the primary provision in the Trust. There will be space available in the Trust offices that are suitable to conduct exams.

- communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or venue
- communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue

Communication details:

Candidate, parents/carers will be contacted by phone and by email as soon as possible when a change has been made.

- 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

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6. 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 listed above

The centre will:

- External Help Desk Support (HfL Silver Subscription)
- Use IT facilities at Larwood School

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

The centre will:

- Exam Boards accessed off-site using Web Apps
- Utilise IT systems at Larwood School

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

The centre will:

- refer to and invoke its (exams) emergency evacuation policy/procedure in line with JCQ's 'Centre emergency evacuation procedure' (or its (exams) lockdown policy)
- contact the relevant awarding body as soon as possible and follow its instructions
- where accommodation is limited, prioritise candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they

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do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned

- (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

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 listed above

The centre will:

- recognise it remains the responsibility of the centre to prepare students, as usual, for examinations
- facilitate alternative methods of learning
- communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) information relating to alternative methods of learning Communication details

Candidate, parents/carers will be contacted by phone and by email as soon as possible when a change has been made.

- take advice offered by the awarding body regarding alternative arrangements for conducting examinations that may be available
- take advice offered by the awarding body on the options for candidates who have not been able to take scheduled examinations
- advise candidates, where appropriate, of the opportunities to take their exam or assessment at a later date

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 to take examinations as normal

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

The centre will:

- take advice offered by the awarding body on the options for candidates who have not been able to take scheduled examinations
- discuss alternative arrangements with the awarding body if a candidate misses an exam or loses their assessment due to an emergency, or other event, outside of the candidate's control
- identify whether the exam or timetabled assessment can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding body, ensuring the secure transportation of questions papers or assessment materials to the alternative venue
- communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or

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assessment timetable or to the venue
Communication details:

Candidate, parents/carers will be contacted by phone and by email as soon as possible when a change has been made.

- consider whether any candidates' ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration

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 UNFORSEEN 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 listed above

The centre will:

- take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether the centre is able to open
- contact the relevant awarding body as soon as possible and follow its instructions
- discuss alternative arrangements with the awarding body if the exam or assessment cannot take place
- follow guidance provided by the awarding body on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances
- where accommodation is limited, prioritise candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned
- communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue

Alternative venue details:

Larwood School – Stevenage

Communication details:

Candidate, parents/carers will be contacted by phone and by email as soon as possible when a change has been made.

- consider whether any candidates' ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration

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

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Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

The centre will:

- liaise with awarding bodies regarding the provision of electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network and will ensure when copies are received/made these are stored under secure conditions
- follow guidance provided by the awarding body on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances
- understand that as a last resort, and in close collaboration with centres and regulators, awarding organisations will consider scheduling of the examination on an alternative date
- communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue

13. DISRUPTION TO TRANSPORTING COMPLETED EXAMINATION SCRIPTS

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts/assessment evidence Other criteria:

No other criteria identified.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

The centre will:

- where examinations are part of the national 'yellow label' service or where awarding bodies arrange collections, contact the relevant awarding bodies for advice and instructions and will not make its own arrangements for transportation unless told to do so by the awarding body
- for any examinations where the centre makes its own collection arrangements, investigate alternative options that comply with the requirements detailed in the JCQ publication 'Instructions for Conducting Examinations'
- ensure the 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 listed above

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- liaise with the awarding body to determine if candidate marks for affected assessments may be able to be generated based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement as defined by the awarding body
- where marks cannot be generated by awarding body, inform candidates they may need to retake the affected assessment in a subsequent assessment series

15. 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

The centre will:

- make arrangements to access its results at an alternative venue/share facilities with another centre if this is possible, in agreement with the relevant awarding body
- make arrangements to coordinate access to post results services from an alternative venue

Alternative venue details:

Larwood School - Stevenage

- make arrangements to make post results requests at an alternative location
- contact the relevant awarding body if electronic post results requests are not possible
- inform candidates of any alternative arrangements in place for the distribution of results and the facilitation of post-results services

Communication details:

Candidate, parents/carers will be contacted by phone and by email as soon as possible when a change has been made

CHANGES 2022/2023

(Added) Under **Purpose of the plan**: new heading 'Operating across more than one centre' and field for completion

(Added) Under **Possible causes of disruption to the exam process**: new cause '6. Cyber-attack' and fields for completion. This means that causes 6-15, have now changed to causes 7-16

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(Added) Under cause **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)**: new field for completion 'Alternative venue details'

(Amended/added) Under **Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning**: guidance and links to current Information

UPDATED December 2022 (in the section of the template – **Further guidance to inform and implement contingency planning**) to reflect Ofqual's update to the Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland where information related to pandemic disruption for 2021 to 2022 has been removed, links to newly published guidance added and existing links updated.

UPDATED January 2023 (in the section of the template – **Further guidance to inform and implement contingency planning**) to reflect Ofqual's update to the Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland (Updated 'General contingency guidance' to include 'Handling strike action in schools from the Department for Education in England'. Updated 'Widespread national disruption to the taking of examinations or assessments' section to notify that the Department for Education has updated its guidance on handling strike action in schools.)

(Added March 2023) Under cause **7. Failure of IT systems**: example added to 'Other criteria' prompt as follows: Add any criteria not listed above for implementation of the plan (an example could be: Power outage immediately prior to or during an on-screen test) or add - No other criteria identified

UPDATED April 2023 (in the section of the template – **Further guidance to inform and implement contingency planning**) added links to DfE cyber security standards and guidance.

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