



## TALBOT HEATH SCHOOL “Honour Before Honours”

### EXAMINATION CONTINGENCY PLAN 2024/2025

**Date adopted:** 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024

**Date for next adoption:** Autumn Term 2025

**Reviewed by:** Exam Officer (SMN) & FGB

***As a school, we will make reasonable adjustments to this policy, in line with the SEND Code of Practice (2014) and the Equality Act (2010), for students with SEND.***

**Talbot Heath School Trust Ltd, Rothesay Road, Bournemouth BH4 9NJ  
Centre Number 55153**

#### Legal

- To meet the requirements of the Ofqual Joint Contingency Plan
- To meet the requirements of the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ)

#### Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Head of Centre
- The Head of Centre will undertake a formal annual review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and for the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than one year from the date shown below \*, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.
- The next official date for review: Autumn 2025
- Prepared by: SMA - Examinations Officer – July 2024
- Approved by: Senior Leadership Team

### Examination Contingency Plan

#### Contents

1. Aims of the Exam Contingency Plan p.2
2. Communications p.2
3. Disruption of teaching time – school closed for an extended period – p.3
4. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers - p.3
5. Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis - centres remain open – p.3
6. Centres are unable to open as normal during the examination period – p.3
7. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts - p.5
8. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked – p.5
9. Disruption to the scanning process – where completed examination scripts are being scanned in preparation for on-screen marking – p.5
10. Markers unable to mark examination scripts according to marking schedules – p.6
11. Difficulty in meeting planned schedule or unable to issue results - p.6
12. Awarding organisations unable to issue accurate results – p.6
13. Centres are unable to distribute results as normal – p.6
14. Summary of Talbot Heath School’s responsibilities in the event of disruption to examinations - p.7
15. Absence of the Head of Centre
16. Absence of the Examinations Officer – p.7
17. Useful information & links – p.7

### **1. Aims of the Exam Contingency Plan**

The Examination Contingency Plan is designed to ensure a consistent and effective response in the event of major disruption to the examination system at this centre affecting candidates across several awarding organisations. All awarding organisations are required to have their own well-established contingency plans in place to respond to such disruptions. This Examinations Contingency Plan takes into account these processes and procedures and is designed to complement them, not to replace them. This also applies to all other qualifications at this centre. This plan outlines procedures which are to be implemented in the event of major disruption to the system, such as widespread illness, travel disruption, severe inclement weather, power failures, or any other such force majeure. Any actions taken will be subject to the advice of the official agencies dealing with the specific circumstances being faced, for example the Police, Environment Agency or Health Protection Agency.

Implementing the plan will safeguard the interests of candidates while maintaining the integrity of the examination system and safeguarding qualification standards. The contingencies covered have been implemented on several occasions in response to localised issues in other centres. They would be applied on a larger scale in response to any widespread disruption at a national level. The priority when implementing contingencies will be to maintain three principles:

- delivering assessments to published timetables
- delivering results to published timetables
- complying with regulatory requirements in relation to assessment, marking and standards.

If the usual contingencies are no longer sufficient to maintain these outcomes, the Senior Leadership Team, along with the Examinations Officer will agree the additional actions required. If the situation cannot be resolved, the Senior Leadership Team will meet to agree further action as necessary

### **2. Communications** (Also see Point 6, below.)

In the event of local disruption, communication to teachers and students will take place through the Senior Leadership Team, Administration Team and Examinations Officer, following agreement with the Head. In the event of widespread national disruption, details of specific contingencies agreed across organisations involved in the examinations process will be confirmed on the Ofqual website and proactively communicated to relevant stakeholders. This includes communications between the organisations involved in the response and communications to stakeholders such as centres, candidates, parents or carers and the public.

[www.ofqual.gov.uk/](http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/)

The organisations involved in this Joint Contingency Plan are committed to:

- sharing timely and accurate information as required to meet the aims of the plan
- communicating with stakeholders so they are aware of disruption to the exams, the contingency measures being implemented and any actions required of them as a result
- ensuring that any messages to the public are clear and accurate.

### **3. Disruption of teaching time – school closed for an extended period**

If this centre is 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. It is the responsibility of the centre to prepare students, as usual, for examinations.

- The School will plan to facilitate teaching and learning by an alternative method, (i.e. using Zoom and Google Classroom) or alternative location.

Guidance on emergency planning, with advice on severe weather, is available on the Department for Education website.

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/emergencyplanning/a0069425/advice-on-severe-weather>

#### **4. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers**

If the distribution of examination papers to centres in advance of examinations is disrupted

- The awarding organisations to source alternative couriers for delivery of hardcopies.
- The awarding organisations would provide the school with electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network. Awarding organisations would fax examination papers to centres if electronic transfer is not possible. The Examinations Officer must ensure that copies are received, made and stored under secure conditions.

#### **5. Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis - centres remain open**

Dependent on circumstances; the Exams Officer will consider whether it is advisable to delay the start-time of an examination to the latest possible published time; an alternative venue on-site may be used for a group of late candidates (e.g. if their mini-bus was delayed).

The school can liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with the relevant awarding organisations, (if, for example, the candidate has a recognised condition which prevents them from sitting examinations at the centre). JCQ guidance on alternative site arrangements can be accessed through the JCQ website.

Additionally,

- The school can offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series
- The school can apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements. Candidates are only eligible for special consideration if they have been fully prepared and have covered the whole course but are affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control. Guidance on special consideration can be accessed through the JCQ website.

#### **6. Centres are unable to open as normal during the examination period**

If this centre is unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations it must inform each awarding organisation and specify which examinations are due to be taken as soon as is possible. The responsibility for deciding whether it is safe for the school to open lies with the Head of Centre.

The Head of Centre is responsible for taking advice, or following instructions from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether they are able to open.

- The school should open for examinations and examination candidates only if possible.
- The school should use alternative venues in agreement with relevant awarding organisations (e.g. share facilities with other centres or use other public building, if possible), ensuring the secure transportation of question papers or assessment materials to the alternative venue.

The School should have an alternative venue available if the centre is unable to open, (unless in the case of a national 'lockdown'). We do not currently have an arrangement with another school. However, in -line with the JCQ Inspector's suggestion from 2022, we are able to use alternative venues on-site: **The Junior School and the Boarding House** – these are at a significant distance from the usual examination venues (housed in the Senior School building).

In the event of a power outage, a portable generator will be provided; until that arrives:

- The Junior School and the Boarding House can be used as their electrical supply is on a separate circuit from the Senior School's.
- Any materials which are same-day downloads, (e.g. modified papers and MFL listening exams) can be accessed via Junior School computers and any relevant printing completed there
- If printers cannot be accessed wirelessly, or over the network, a USB printer can be provided
- Candidates using lap-tops will be transferred to a venue in the Junior School or the Boarding House to ensure that lap-tops remain charged
- The relevant awarding bodies will be notified of any issues and/or alternative arrangements as soon as possible

If venues or start-times need to be altered, candidates and parents will be contacted either through the School Office (email) or using wi-fi hotspots via school mobiles if necessary.

Cyber-attack:

- - Data is backed up to a separate location away from the servers to a 'Datto' backup appliance. The backup data is encrypted and then replicated into cloud storage (also encrypted).
- To protect from cyber-attack, we have a Fortinet Fortigate 1500D Firewall and Web Filter, BitDefender Internet Security, Encrypted Backups and proactive monitoring/scanning of our website and external IP address.
- In the event of a cyber-attack, for materials which are same-day downloads, a laptop will be used to download materials via a wi-fi hotspot set-up using a school mobile phone to connect to the internet

The school may offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series

- The school can apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements.
- JCQ has designated the afternoon of 11<sup>th</sup> June 2025 and the whole of 25<sup>th</sup> June 2025 as a 'contingency sessions' in the event of national or significant local disruption to examinations in the UK.

## **JCQ 'ICE' 2024/25:**

- In the event of national disruption to a day of examinations in summer 2025, the awarding bodies will liaise with the qualification regulators and government departments to agree the most appropriate option for managing the impact. As a last resort the affected examinations will be rescheduled. Although every effort would be taken to keep the impact to a minimum, it is possible that there could be more than one timetable date affected following the disruption, up to and including the last contingency day. Centres will be alerted if it is agreed to reschedule the examinations and the affected candidates will be expected to make themselves available in such circumstances. The decision regarding the rescheduling of examinations will always rest with the awarding body. The centre must conduct the examination on the scheduled date unless instructed to do otherwise by the awarding body.
- Where candidates choose not to be available for the rescheduled examination(s) for reasons other than those covered by special consideration, they will not be eligible for enhanced grading arrangements. Centres must therefore ensure candidates and parents are aware of the contingency arrangements so that they take them into account when making their plans for the summer.

### **7. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts**

If there is a delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts:

- The school will seek advice from awarding organisations and the normal collection agency (i.e. Parcel Force) regarding collection
- The school must not make arrangements for transportation without approval from awarding organisations
- The school must ensure secure storage of completed examination scripts until collection.

### **8. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked**

If due to large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked:

- The awarding organisations should generate candidate marks for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement as defined by the awarding organisations in consultation with the regulators.
- The candidates should retake affected assessment at the subsequent assessment window.

### **9. Disruption to the scanning process – where completed examination scripts are being scanned in preparation for onscreen marking**

If the examination boards scanning process is disrupted, resulting in a risk to the delivery of results by scheduled dates:

- The awarding organisations should implement their existing contingency plans for disruption to onscreen marking process
- The awarding organisations should revert to traditional form of marking
- The awarding organisations should recruit, train or re-standardise qualified new markers.

#### **10. Markers unable to mark examination scripts according to marking schedules**

If the awarding bodies' markers are unable to mark examination scripts resulting in a risk to the delivery of results by scheduled dates.

- The awarding organisations should re-allocate scripts to available markers
- The awarding organisations to recruit, train or re-standardise qualified new markers and prioritisation of marking to be based on results dates.

#### **11. Difficulty in meeting planned schedule or unable to issue results**

Inability of awarding organisation(s) to either meet the planned schedule for issue of results, or to issue results as planned due to a systems failure. If the awarding organisation(s) faces delays in meeting the planned schedule for issuing results:

- The awarding organisation should establish priorities for processing results, implement existing contingency plans for disruption to the schedule for issuing results.
- The awarding organisation should, in consultation with regulators, assess the level of disruption and consider alternative options for issuing results dependent upon the nature of the particular systems failure, the awarding organisations and regulators to liaise with relevant organisations (e.g. UCAS) process of candidate progression to further and higher education.

#### **12. Awarding organisations unable to issue accurate results**

If system error/failure or attack on systems means significant numbers of results cannot be validated as accurate or are issued and found to be inaccurate.

- The candidates, school and stakeholders will be informed of any incorrect results
- The awarding organisations will re-validate results
- The awarding organisations to re-issue results, via alternative format if necessary.

#### **13. Centres are unable to distribute results as normal**

If the school is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post results services.

The school should contact the awarding organisations about alternative options:

- The school will make arrangements to access its results at an alternative site.
- The school will make arrangements to coordinate access to post-results services from an alternative site.
- The school will share facilities with other centres where possible.

#### **14. Summary of Talbot Heath School's responsibilities in the event of disruption to examinations.**

- Preparing plans for any disruption to exams as part of the centre's general emergency planning.
- Preparing candidates for examinations.
- Ensuring examinations and assessments are taken under the conditions prescribed by awarding organisations.
- Ensuring, where relevant, that assessment materials and candidates' work are stored under secure conditions.
- Deciding whether the centre can open for examinations as scheduled and informing relevant awarding organisations if the centre is unable to open.
- Exploring the opportunities for alternative arrangements if the centre cannot open for examinations and agreeing such arrangements with the awarding organisations.

- Assessing and liaising with awarding organisations in the event of disruption to the transportation of papers.

### **15. Absence of the Head of Centre**

In the event that the Head of Centre is incapacitated and unable to fulfil her duties, the Head of Junior School and the Assistant Head will deputise as necessary.

### **16. Examinations Officer**

In the event that the Examinations Officer is incapacitated and unable to fulfil her duties, the following arrangements are in place:

Designated key holders are:

Sarah Magnusson (Examinations Officer)

Ian Cradick (Assistant Head; former Examinations Officer)

Anna Karanja (Head of Pastoral)

Ian Cradick will, in the first instance, act as the Examinations Officer.

Anna Karanja will deputise in the event that Ian Cradick is also incapacitated.

Full use will be made of JCQ advisory information when necessary.

### **GCE and GCSE: June 2025**

We anticipate the following:

48 A Level candidates and 59 GCSE candidates

In the event that they cannot be accommodated in the main school building (Main Hall and Exams Room), the auditorium of the Hub building is a viable alternative. Jubilee Hall and the Mary Norton Hall could also be used if necessary.

### **Useful information and links**

AQA <http://www.aqa.org.uk/>

OCR [www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)

Pearson Edexcel [www.edexcel.com](http://www.edexcel.com)

JCQ [www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk)

Ofqual [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual)

DfE [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk)

EDI [www.ediplc.com](http://www.ediplc.com)

DENI [www.deni.gov.uk](http://www.deni.gov.uk)

UCAS <https://www.ucas.com/>

Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>

DfE guidance to centres - severe weather conditions

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/emergencyplanning/a0069425/advice-on-severe-weather>