



# Exam Contingency Plan

2023/24

## **Purpose**

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the management and administration of the exam process at Edison Pace 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.

Alongside internal processes, this plan is informed by information contained in the joint contingency plan for the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland where it is stated that "Centres should prepare plans for any disruption to examination as part of their general planning. It is important to ensure that relevant centre staff are familiar with the plan. Consideration should be given as to how these arrangements will be communicated to candidates, parents and staff should disruption to examinations occur."

## **Causes of potential disruption to the exam process**

### **1. Exam officer extended absence from Edison Pace School**

Due to the small size of the school and the relatively low number of entries, the structure consists of the Head of Centre (Headteacher), The Deputy Headteacher who is also the Exams Officer and a small team of invigilators (all internal).

In a period of extended absence, the Head of Centre will oversee all exam processes. We currently have a subject teacher who has been trained by the Exams Officer to follow the correct JCQ procedures in the Exam Officers absence. All invigilators receive relevant training on their roles prior to the exam period and who to contact in an emergency.

### **2. SENDCo extended absence at key point during the exam cycle**

In this eventuality, appropriate backfilling of duties and responsibilities would be decided upon by the Exams Officer, in consultation with the Head of Centre.

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

In the event of extended absence, the Deputy Headteacher would co-ordinate and arrange teaching cover from within the staff team and/or the wider school community. Any new staff would be briefed on their role as part of their induction process on arrangements for assessment and examinations.

### **4. Invigilators – lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence**

New invigilators undergo training overseen by the Exam Officer and complete at least one shadowing exercise. They are permitted to work independently once they and the Exams Officer are happy that a level of competency and confidence has been reached. Annual training sessions prior to the exam period starting is conducted by the Exams Officer and any update or changes made by JCQ is communicated. Teaching staff from within the centre are also asked to invigilate if necessary. Minor absence issues (such as an invigilator calling in sick) are covered by other members of the teaching staff.

### **5. Exam Rooms – lack of appropriate rooms at short notice**

The majority of the exams (unless ICT based) will be held in the Learning Resource Centre (LRC). This is a separate building from the main school, on the ground floor with easy entrance and exit as well as quick access to toilets. If alternative rooms are required, the teaching staff in communication with the Exam Officer will ensure that the room is set up as per the JCQ guidelines.

## **6. Failure of ICT system**

The school endeavours to minimise any ICT disruption with the management of the ICT network now outsourced to a specialist ICT Support provider. This external supplier regularly tests and updates the ICT network. If such disruption affects the exam process, steps would be taken to minimise this as quickly as possible.

## **7. Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or lock down)**

Whole centre evacuation during the exam period can be a serious incident resulting in candidates not being able to complete their exams. If this is the case, the centre would follow published JCQ guidelines.

## **8. Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period**

In the event of the Centre not being able to open as normal, appropriate communication with the relevant Awarding Body would be undertaken by the Exams Officer and alternative arrangements would be explored, such as moving the candidates to another centre. Transport would then be arranged for the pupils and examination scripts would remain secure following JCQ guidance. Any arrangements would be agreed with the Awarding Body first and relevant pupils, parents and staff would be communicated to.

## **9. Candidates unable to take examination because of crisis**

If the candidate can sit the examination but not attend the Centre due to a crisis, appropriate communication with the relevant Awarding Body would be undertaken and alternative arrangements discussed. If necessary, appropriate use of Special Considerations policies (JCQ approved) would be applied if the candidate is not able to attend or complete the examination elsewhere due to unforeseen and serious circumstances.

## **10. Disruption to the transport of exam scripts**

Upon arrival, all exam papers are immediately placed in the secure storage unit. Upon arrival, they are checked and counter checked and then left in the unit until the time of the exam. If papers are discovered to be missing, the Exams Officer will contact the relevant Awarding Body to seek alternative methods of gaining the necessary number of scripts. All scripts are returned using a designated dispatch method and returned to the relevant place using Awarding Body processes. Where these processes are not available or are inappropriate, the Exams Officer will contact the Awarding Body for further advice.

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

In the event of large-scale damage or destruction of completed examination scripts/materials/assessment evidence before it can be marked, the Exam Officer would notify the Awarding Body immediately for advice and further instruction. Student marks would be submitted based on other appropriate evidence (pupil workbooks, files etc.) and candidates would be given the opportunity to re-take in a subsequent series if appropriate and agreed with the Awarding Body.

## **12. Centre unable to distribute results as normal**

The Centre distributes results "as normal" via learner collection. Where learners do not collect results in person or where previously agreed, results will be distributed via post.

Further advice and guidance to help inform contingency planning can be found:

JCQ – Joint Council for Qualifications - [www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk)

Ofqual - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-contingencyarrangements-for-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-summer-2022>