



## **BEACONSFIELD HIGH SCHOOL**

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### **EXAM CONTINGENCY PLAN**

**Date last reviewed: September 2025**

**Next Review Date: September 2026**

**For Review by: Exams Officer/Assistant Head in charge of  
Exams**

## Contents

Purpose of the plan	3
Possible causes of disruption to the exams process	3
1. Exams Officer extended absence at key points in the exam cycle	3
2. Head of Centre/Deputy Headteacher with responsibility for exams absence At key points in the exam cycle	4
3. SENCO extended absence at key points in th exams cycle	5
4. Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exams cycle	5
5. Invigilators – lack of appropriately trained invigilator or invigilator absence	6
6. Exam rooms – lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice	7
7. Cyber Attack at key points in the exam cycle	7
8. Failure of IT systems at key points in the exam cycle	8
9. Emergency Evacuation of an exam room (or centre lockdown)	8
10. Disruption to teaching time in the weeks before an exam – centre closed for an extended period	9
11. Centre unable to open as normal during the exam period	9
12. Disruption in the distribution of exam papers	9
13. Disruption to the transportation of completed exam scripts/ assessment evidence	10
14. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked	10
15. Centre unable to distribute results as normal or facilitate post results services	11
Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning	12
JCQ	12
National Counter Terrorism Security Office	12

## **Purpose of the plan**

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exams process at Beaconsfield High School. 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.

Alongside internal processes, this plan is informed by the Ofqual Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland> which provides guidance to schools and the JCQ Joint Contingency Plan in the event of widespread disruption to the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland [Preparing for disruption to examinations - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#).

This plan also confirms that Beaconsfield High School is compliant with the JCQ regulation (section 5.3, General Regulations for approved Centres 2025-26 [Gen regs approved centres 25-26 FINAL.pdf \(jcq.org.uk\)](#)) that the centre has in place a written exam contingency plan which covers all aspects of exam administration. This will allow members of the senior leadership team to act immediately in the event of an emergency or staff absence. The exam contingency plan should reinforce procedures in the event of the centre being unavailable for exams, or on results day, owing to an unforeseen emergency.

## **Possible Causes of disruption to the exams process**

### **1. Exams Officer extended absence at key points in the exams 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 the key tasks, key dates and deadlines.

Sufficient invigilators not recruited.

#### **Entries**

Awarding bodies not being informed of estimated entries where required which prompts release of early information required by teaching staff.

Candidates not being entered with awarding bodies for external exams/assessment.

Awarding body entry deadline 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, room allocation and invigilation schedule 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.

Facilitation of the post results services.

### **Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption**

Sill to, Assistant Exams Officer is trained on the essential functions of the exam cycle under the guidance of the Exams Officer, Assistant Headteacher in charge of Exams and the Deputy Headteacher in charge of Exams. Necessary documentation is available, for example:-

How-to guides and training documents in place

List of useful contacts

Secure access to required passcodes

## **2. Head of Centre/Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for exams absence at key points in the exam cycle**

### **Criteria for implementation of the plan**

#### **Escalation Process**

For compliance with the JCQ regulations (General Regulations for approved centres, section 5.3), it is the responsibility of the Head of Centre to ensure that the centre has in place a written Escalation process should the Head of Centre or a member of the senior leadership team with oversight of exam administration (Sian Allen, Assistant Headteacher in charge of exams) be absent.

### **Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption**

Tom Griffiths, Deputy Headteacher to assume Head of Centre role.

Emma Pritchard, Deputy Headteacher to assume role of oversight of exams in the absence of Sian Allen.

All leadership team to be familiar with JCQ General Regulations and Information for conducting exams (ICE) documents.

### **3. SENCO extended absence at key points in 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/accessed 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 via the awarding bodies.

Centre-delegated arrangements not put in place.

Modified paper requirements not identified in a timely manner to enable ordering to meet external deadlines.

Staff (facilitators) providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained.

#### **Exam time**

Access arrangements candidate support not arranged for exam venues.

### **Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption**

Tom Griffiths, Deputy Headteacher and Learning Support Assistants to assume key roles in the absence of Anna Lyczba, SENCO.

Testing to be conducted by external experts.

Sill To to manage applications for exam access arrangements to meet exam board deadline.

Leadership Team, Exams Officer and Learning Support staff to be familiar with JCQ Access Arrangement and Reasonable Adjustments guidance.

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

##### **Criteria for implementation of the plan**

##### **Key tasks not undertaken in the delivery of qualifications to candidates**

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, therefore candidates not entered for exams/assessments before the closing date for entries. Late entry/penalty fees are charged by the awarding bodies.

Non-examined assessments (NEAs) not set/issued/taken by candidates as scheduled.

Candidates not being informed of centre assessed marks before submission to examining bodies. Candidates are therefore not in a position to consider an appeal of their centre assessed grade by 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**

Emma Pritchard, Deputy Headteacher to liaise with Heads of Faculties and Heads of Departments to ensure departmental staff are redeployed to cover teacher absences.

Exams Officer to co-ordinate submission of internal assessment marks and work.

Exams Officer to request an extension to deadline with Exam boards if necessary.

#### **5. Invigilator absence or lack of appropriately trained invigilators**

##### **Criteria for implementation of the plan**

##### **Key tasks not undertaken in the invigilation of exams/assessments**

Failure to recruit and train sufficient invigilators to conduct exams/assessments.

Invigilator shortage on peak exam days.

Invigilator absence on the day of an exam.

##### **Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption**

Exams Officer to recruit/retain a minimum of 15 invigilators sufficient for the school's requirements.

Experienced invigilators trained yearly, new invigilators trained on appointment.

Where possible, invigilator staffing exceeds required invigilator/student ratio so absences can be managed and invigilators redeployed.

Exams Officer, Exams Assistant and support staff/teaching staff deployed to invigilate where absolutely necessary.

## **6. Exam Rooms – Sports Hall/Main Hall unavailable at short notice and lack of appropriate rooms**

### **Criteria for implementation of the plan**

### **Key tasks not undertaken in the provision of exam venues**

Exams Officer unable to identify sufficient/appropriate rooms during the exam timetabling process.

Insufficient rooms available on peak days.

Main exam venue (sports hall) unavailable due to an unexpected incident during exam time.

### **Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption**

Classrooms, drama studio, main hall, 6<sup>th</sup> form hub and 6<sup>th</sup> form study area to be converted to an exam venue if the sports hall is not available.

Exams Officer to contact the awarding body to request a delayed start to exams if necessary.

Where no alternate venue is sufficient, contact The Beaconsfield School and/or The Curzon Centre to investigate a change of venue. Exams Officer to keep awarding bodies updated by completing relevant JCQ documentation on alternative venues.

## **7. Cyber Attack at key points in the exam cycle**

### **Criteria for implementation of the plan**

### **Key tasks not undertaken in the event of a cyber attack on school systems**

Exams Officer unable to access school systems, e.g SIMs, awarding body exam portals due to attack.

Online exams cannot take place due to disruption to school network.

School computers cannot be used for typists due to disruption.

Specific programs cannot be accessed e.g. Python for A level Computer Science exams.

### **Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption**

Exams Officer to report the cyber attack to awarding bodies as soon as possible.

Exams Officer to ensure that paper copies of entries, examination registers, attendance registers and examiner addresses are available in the event that the SIMs Exams Organiser package is compromised.

ICT provide laptops for typists if network is compromised.

Written exams can take place as normal.

A level Computer Studies to be moved to an alternate venue due to program compromised. Exams Officer to contact the Beaconsfield School to request they facilitate this exam.

ICT Manager/Business Manager/Exams Officer to refer to JCQ's policy on cyber attacks for further guidance (see link on Page 12).

## **8. Failure of IT systems**

### **Criteria for implementation of the plan**

#### **Key tasks not undertaken in the event of a failure to our ICT systems**

MIS system failure at final entry deadline.

MIS system failure during exams preparation.

MIS system failure at results release time.

### **Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption**

Exam entries to be finalised internally three weeks prior to final entry deadline. Entries emailed to each department for their record. Exams officer can work remotely if school MIS systems fail. Exams Officer to contact the exam boards if an extension to deadline is necessary due to MIS failure and to ensure late fees are not payable in this instance.

If an MIS failure occurs during exam time, paper copies of registers, seating plans and all paperwork will be used.

ICT will provide laptops for students who type their exams.

Results can be accessed via the exam board portals in the event of an MIS/SIMs failure.

Where our MIS systems fail and we are not in a position to email results to students, paper copies of exam board results can be distributed to students.

## **9. Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lockdown)**

### **Criteria for implementation of the plan**

### **Key tasks not undertaken in the event of an emergency evacuation**

Candidates are unable to start, proceed with or complete their exams due to whole school evacuation or in event of lockdown procedures.

### **Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption**

Exams Officer and invigilation team ensure that candidates are to be isolated from other pupils/staff members to ensure integrity of exams using the school's fire evacuation procedure which is available in all exam rooms. In the event of lockdown, exams officer/invigilation staff ensure the students follow the school's lockdown procedure.

Exams Officer to contact the exam board to explain circumstances and discuss options.

Application for special consideration to be applied for where applicable.

## **10. Disruption to teaching time in the weeks before an exam – centre closed for an extended period**

### **Criteria for implementation of the plan**

### **Key tasks not undertaken in the event of a centre closure for an extended period in the lead up to exams**

Centre is closed or students cannot attend school for an extended period during normal teaching or study supported time which interrupts the provision of normal teaching and learning.

### **Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption**

School must retain responsibility to prepare students for examinations. Sian Allen, Assistant Headteacher in charge of Exams and Rachel McLennan, School Business Manager must ensure that distance learning is in place for those who are preparing for examinations. All students should have an electronic device to use remotely. If this is not the case, our ICT department must provide a device.

Where absolutely necessary, students may be advised to take an exam in the next available exam series.

## **11. Centre unable to open as normal during the examination period**

### **Criteria for implementation of the plan**

#### **Key tasks not undertaken in the event of a centre closure during the exam period**

Management, teaching and support staff are unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations.

#### **Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption**

The management and Exams Officer investigate the possibility of using our neighbouring school, The Beaconsfield School to run examinations.

Where this is not possible, the School Business Manager will contact the Curzon Centre or similar facility to investigate the possibility of hiring their facilities to run examinations.

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

### **Criteria for implementation of the plan**

#### **Key tasks not undertaken in the event of a centre closure during the exam period**

Disruption to the distribution of examination papers to the centre in advance of examinations.

#### **Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption**

Where paper copies of examination papers are not available due to distribution issues, awarding bodies will provide an electronic copy via their secure portal 90 minutes before the published start time of the exam.

Where large numbers are sitting exams, the Exams Officer may ask for a delayed start time to enable enough copies to be produced for the cohort.

Awarding bodies will provide guidance on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances.

As a last resort and in close collaboration with centres and regulators, awarding bodies will consider rescheduling the exam to an alternative date.

## **13. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence**

### **Criteria for implementation of the plan**

#### **Key tasks not undertaken in the event of disruption to the transportation of completed scripts/assessment evidence**

Delays occur in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts using the “yellow label” services and distributed to examiners using Parcelforce.

**Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption**

Exams Officer to seek advice from the awarding bodies and should not make their own arrangements unless advised to by such bodies.

In accordance with JCQ Instructions for conducting Examinations (ICE), the exams officer must ensure that the scripts are securely stored until collection.

**14. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked**

**Criteria for implementation of the plan**

**Key tasks not undertaken in the event that assessment evidence is not available for marking**

Large scale damage or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment material before they have reached an examiner for marking.

**Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption**

Following discussions with the exams officer, awarding bodies will generate candidate marks for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement as defined by the awarding organisations.

Where such marks cannot be generated due to lack of evidence, candidates may be advised to retake the affected assessment in a subsequent assessment series.

**15. Centre unable to distribute results as normal or facilitate post results services**

**Criteria for implementation of the plan**

**Key tasks not undertaken in the event of a centre closure resulting in staff being unable to distribute results or facilitate post result services**

Due to an unforeseen emergency, results cannot be distributed to students.

Exams Officer is unable to facilitate post results services.

**Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption**

Exams Officer to make arrangements to access its results at an alternative site, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisations.

Exams Officer to make arrangements to co-ordinate access to post results services from an alternative site and centre to share facilities with other centres (the neighbouring Beaconsfield School) if this is possible, in agreement with the awarding bodies

Exams officer to make arrangement to facilitate post results services at an alternative location. Where this is not possible, the exams officer should seek advise from the relevant awarding body.

#### **Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning**

##### **JCQ**

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/>

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/information-for-candidates-documents/>

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

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms/> - transferred candidates/alternative site guidance/

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/blogs/cyber-security-in-schools-and-colleges-october-2025-26>

##### **National Counter Terrorism Security Office**

<https://www.protectuk.police.uk/guidance>

[\\bhs-file-01\rmstaff\\$\Staff Resources\Office\EXAMS\Policies\jqc joint contingency plan](\\bhs-file-01\rmstaff$\Staff Resources\Office\EXAMS\Policies\jqc joint contingency plan)