



**St Philip Howard**  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

# Examination Contingency Plan

**This Policy has been approved and adopted by the Governors.**

<b>Approved:</b>	<b>For review:</b>
May 2023	May 2024
Exam officer	Catherine White
Head of Centre	Tim Hulse

## **Bosco Catholic Education Trust Mission Statement**

The Bosco Catholic Education Trust is a Christ-centered family of Catholic academies, within the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton, working together as one body to provide an outstanding education for all. As Catholic schools, we endeavor to develop confident, compassionate and faithful young people. Through partnership, collaboration and mutual support, we seek to enable all those entrusted to our care to become the person God called them to be.

“Serve the Lord joyfully”

### **1. AIMS**

The Examination Contingency Plan is designed to ensure a consistent and effective response in the event of major disruption to the examination system at SPH affecting candidates across several awarding organisations. This plan has been produced as a response to the JCQ Notice to Centres – examination contingency plan/examinations policy and the linked Ofqual document located at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland/what-schools-and-colleges-should-do-if-exams-or-other-assessments-are-seriously-disrupted#disruption-to-assessments-or-exams>

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 replace them. This also applies to all other qualifications at SPH.

The plan will be implemented in the event of major disruption to the system, such as widespread illness, travel disruption, bad weather, power failures or Cyber-attacks. 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 will meet to agree further actions.

This plan is intended to meet the requirements of the Ofqual Joint Contingency Plan and to meet the requirements of the Joint Qualifications Council (JCQ)

## **2. COMMUNICATION DISRUPTION**

In the event of local disruption, communication to teachers and students will take place through the Examination Officer following agreement with the Head Teacher. In the event of major 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.

The website is [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
- In the event of exam disruption and or absence of the Exam officer, responsibility would fall to the Head of Centre to ensure all necessary communication is sent out to teachers and students.

## **3. DISRUPTION OF TEACHING TIME – SCHOOL CLOSED FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD**

If SPH 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 school to prepare students, as usual, for examinations.

- In the case of modular courses, candidates should sit the examinations in the next available series
- The school should plan to facilitate teaching and learning by an alternative method or at an alternative location.
- The alternative location will be St Paul's Burgess Hill or St Oscar Romero's in Worthing.

Guidance on emergency planning, with advice on severe weather, is available on the Department for Education website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/emergencies-and-severe-weather-schools-and-early-years-settings>

#### **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 will source alternative couriers for delivery of hardcopies
- The awarding organisations will provide the school with electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network

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 - SCHOOL REMAINS OPEN**

If candidates are unable to attend an examination or take an examination as normal, the school will liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with the relevant awarding organisations.

JCQ guidance on alternative site arrangements can be accessed through the JCQ website: [www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk)

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.

JCQ guidance on special consideration can be accessed through the JCQ website: [https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Guide\\_to\\_spec\\_con\\_process\\_June22\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Guide_to_spec_con_process_June22_FINAL.pdf)

#### **6. SCHOOL UNABLE TO OPEN AS NORMAL DURING THE EXAMINATION PERIOD**

If SPH is unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations it must inform each awarding organisation with 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 Teacher (Head of Centre). The Head Teacher 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)
- 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

## **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 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 a 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 on-screen marking processes
- 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 examination board 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 organisations (including the case of a single awarding organisation) to either meet planned schedule for issue of results, or to issue results as planned due to a systems failure. If the awarding organisation(s) face delay in meeting the planned schedule for issuing results:

- The awarding body should establish priorities for processing results, implement existing contingency plans for disruption to the schedule for issuing results.
- If awarding organisation(s) face difficulty in issuing results as planned due to a systems failure: 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 (i.e. UCAS, CAO) regarding process of candidate progression to further and higher education.

## **12. AWARDING ORGANISATIONS UNABLE TO ISSUE ACCURATE RESULTS**

Due to 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 from an alternative site
- The school will share facilities with other centres where possible

#### **14. ABSENCE OF THE EXAMS OFFICER**

The Head Teacher and Senior Leadership Team are to ensure that trained, knowledgeable staff are available to keep the exams office running without accruing late fees and disadvantaging students, if the need arises.

#### **15. CYBER ATTACK**

- Where it is identified that a cyber-attack may compromise any aspect of the delivery of examinations the Exams Officer will work with IT and make contact with the relevant Awarding Body to seek further guidance.
- Senior Leaders will monitor the situation and take any action required as directed by the Awarding Bodies, Exam Officer & Director of IT.
- In the event of a cyber attack and / or IT systems being down the alternative site would be St Pauls in Burgess hill or St Oscar Romero's Catholic School Worthing.

#### **16. SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL IN THE EVENT OF DISRUPTION TO EXAMINATIONS.**

- Preparing plans for any disruption to exams as part of general emergency planning.
- Preparing candidates for examinations.
- Exam officer to check if there are any exam clashes before examinations begin and to ensure that Pupils, parents and staff are aware and appropriate actions have been put in place, in line with JCQ regulations.  
<https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Timetable-clashes-AS-A-level-Maths-exams-1.pdf>
- Ensuring examinations and assessments are taken under the conditions prescribed by awarding organisations.
- Pupils and Parents notified that any form of electronics are allowed in the exam hall. This includes phones and any watches which will need to be removed before lining up for the exam.
- Ensuring, where relevant, that assessment materials and candidate work are stored under secure conditions.
- Deciding whether the school can open for examinations as scheduled and informing relevant awarding organisations if the school 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.