

# Examination Contingency Plan



## Saffron Valley Collegiate

**Last reviewed: April 2019**

**To be reviewed: April 2020**

### **Mission Statement**

The Saffron Valley Collegiate seeks to provide a personalised educational experience that identifies and responds to the circumstances and needs of each individual child or young person. In doing so it enables them to progress academically and become successful learners through the re-engagement of the young person with education.

### **EQUALITIES STATEMENT:**

All who work at the Saffron Valley Collegiate are committed to the celebration of diversity, and the challenging of disadvantage and discrimination, in all of its forms.

These values are explicit to the ethos of the Saffron Valley Collegiate and implicit in all policies and practices.

## **Contingency planning**

The qualifications regulators, awarding bodies and government departments responsible for education have prepared and agreed a Joint contingency plan for the examinations system in case of wide scale disruption as a result of a flu pandemic, adverse weather conditions or other event.

The joint contingency plan is designed to ensure consistency of response in the event of major disruption to the examinations system affecting significant numbers of candidates.

In addition, awarding bodies have their own well-established contingency plans in place to respond to disruptions. It is important that exams officers who are facing disruption liaise directly with the relevant awarding body/bodies.

Examination centres should prepare plans for any disruption to examinations as part of their general emergency planning. It is important to ensure that relevant Examination 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.

In the event that the head of exam centre decides the centre cannot be opened for scheduled examinations, the relevant awarding body must be informed as soon as possible. Awarding bodies will be able to offer advice regarding the alternative arrangements for conducting examinations that may be available and the options for candidates who have not been able to take scheduled examinations.

The Joint contingency plan for the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland may be downloaded from the Ofqual website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland>

### **Related documents include:**

Examination policy  
Emergency evacuation policy  
Disability (exams) policy

### **Legal**

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

### **Monitoring and Review:**

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Headteacher. The Headteacher will undertake a formal annual review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of 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.

## **Purpose of the Plan:**

This purpose of this plan is to consider and identify potential risks or issues which could cause serious disruption to the management and administration of the exam process at Saffron Valley Collegiate. By outlining actions or procedures to be invoked in case of disruption, it is intended to mitigate the impact these disruptions may have on our exam process.

This plan complies with JCQ's General Regulations for Approved Centres, which requires exam centres to:

*'Have in place a **written** examination contingency plan/examinations policy which covers all aspects of examination administration. This will allow members of the senior leadership team to have a robust contingency plan in place, minimising risk to examination administration, should the examinations officer be absent at a crucial stage of the examination cycle.'*

## **Potential Causes of Disruption to the Exam Process:**

### **Extended Absence of Examinations Officer**

Should the Exams Officer be absent for an extended period of time the Finance Officer who has several years of exam officer experience will assume overall responsibility for the management of exams. The Finance Officer should refer to the JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations (ICE) book, and exam officer instructions folder, which is stored on the Exam Officer's desk at KS4 South. The Head of Centre has keys to the secure storage safe at KS4 South.

### **Extended Absence of SENCO**

Should the SENCO be absent for an extended period of time, the assistant SENCO will undertake the administration and management of the access arrangement process.

**Implementing the plan will safeguard the interests of candidates while maintaining the integrity of the examination system and safeguarding qualification standards.**

**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 agree the additional actions required.**

## **Disruption of teaching time- Saffron Valley Collegiate closed for an extended period.**

If the Saffron Valley Collegiate 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 Saffron Valley Collegiate to prepare students, as usual, for examinations.

- In the case of modular courses, candidates should sit the examinations in the next available series.
- The Saffron Valley Collegiate should plan to facilitate teaching and learning at any provision within the Saffron Valley Collegiate.

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>

### **Disruption:**

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

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

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

If candidates are unable to attend examination to take examinations as normal.

- Saffron Valley Collegiate can liaise with the candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat at another provision in agreement with the relevant awarding organisations.
- The Saffron Valley Collegiate can offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series if available the exams officer will confirm availability with the awarding body.
- The Saffron Valley Collegiate 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 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: <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>

## **2. Saffron Valley Collegiate is unable to open as normal during the examination period**

If the Saffron Valley Collegiate is unable to open 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 Saffron Valley Collegiate to open lies with the Headteacher. The Headteacher is responsible for taking advice, or following instructions from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether they are able to open.

- The Saffron Valley Collegiate should open for examinations and examination candidates only if possible.
- Saffron Valley Collegiate should use other provisions in agreement with relevant awarding organisations
- The Saffron Valley Collegiate can apply to awarding organisations for special considerations for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements.

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

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

- The Saffron Valley Collegiate will seek advice from awarding organisations and normal collection agency regarding collection. The Saffron Valley Collegiate must not make arrangements for transportation without approval from awarding organisations.
- The Saffron Valley Collegiate must ensure secure storage of completed examination scripts until collection

### **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 as subsequent assessment window.

### **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 process.
- The awarding organisations should revert to traditional form of marking.
- The awarding organisations should recruit, train or re-standardise qualified new markers.

### **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.

### **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 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. local colleges) regarding process of candidate progression to further and higher education.

### **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, college 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.

### **Saffron Valley Collegiate is unable to distribute results as normal.**

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

- The Saffron Valley Collegiate will contact the awarding organisations about alternative options.
- The Saffron Valley Collegiate will make arrangements to access its results at any of provision within the collegiate.
- The Saffron Valley Collegiate will make arrangements to coordinate access to post results services from any provision within the collegiate.
- The Saffron Valley Collegiate will share facilities with any provision within the Collegiate where possible.

### **Summary of Saffron Valley Collegiate responsibilities in the event of disruption to examinations.**

- HOPS to have individual plans for any disruption to exams as part of Saffron Valley Collegiate's general emergency planning ( *Appendix A- Emergency Evacuation Policy (exams)* .
- Preparing candidates for examinations.
- Ensuring examinations and assessments are taken under the conditions prescribed by awarding organisations and JCQ.
- Ensuring, where relevant, that assessment materials and candidate work are stored under secure conditions.
- Deciding whether the Saffron Valley Collegiate can open for examinations as scheduled and informing relevant awarding organisations if the Saffron Valley Collegiate is unable to open.

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

### **Contingency Day**

For the first time a contingency exam day has been arranged by the exam boards and added to each student's timetable. The contingency day has been arranged for "GCSE and/or GCE examinations, should sustained national or local disruption arise during the June 2019 examination series".

The decision comes following the tragic events of last summer, namely the Manchester attacks and the Grenfell Tower fire. The Joint Council for Qualifications have decided that they need the option to postpone an exam in the event of an incident and re-arrange for a later date to allow all students an equal and fair chance.

The date that has been set aside as the contingency day is Wednesday 26 June 2019. **This means that all exam candidates must be available to sit exams from the start of the exams in May until Wednesday 26 June 2019.** This is not a school decision and does apply to all candidates in all schools.