Da Vinci Academy
A L.E.A.D. Academy

"One Team, Changing Worlds"

# Exams Contingency Plan Policy

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| L.E.A.D. Academy Trust<br>Lead • Empower • Achieve • Drive | Policy Date: September 2021<br>Reviewed by: EZA HBS |

# Purpose of the plan

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

At all times, the Examinations Officer and Senior Leadership Team will liaise with the relevant Awarding Body to ensure any contingency plans meet with its requirements and that JCQ regulations are adhered to where possible.

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 examinations as part of their general emergency 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 at key points in the exam process (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 essential key tasks, key dates and deadlines
  - sufficient invigilators not recruited and trained
- *Entries*
  - awarding bodies not being informed of early/estimated entries which prompts release of early information required by teaching staff
  - candidates not being entered with awarding bodies for external exams/assessment
  - awarding body entry deadlines missed or late or other penalty fees being incurred
- *Pre-exams*
  - exam timetabling, rooming allocation; and invigilation schedules 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 e.g. very late arrival, suspected malpractice, special consideration
  - candidates' scripts not dispatched as required to awarding bodies
- *Results and post-results*
  - access to examination results affecting the distribution of results to candidates
  - the facilitation of the post-results services

Centre actions:

- Data Manager/Deputy Headteacher Data and Outcomes to assume responsibility for the above tasks with the support of the School Operations Manager

## 2. 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/assessed 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 to the awarding body
  - centre delegated arrangements not put in place
  - modified paper requirements not identified in a timely manner to enable ordering to meet external deadline
  - staff providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained
- *Exam time*
  - access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms

Centre actions:

- The Learning Centre Manager, Teaching Assistants, Examinations Officer to work with SLT to identify students where applications for access arrangements may be required. The employment of outside agencies/professionals may be required.

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

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Key tasks not undertaken including:

- *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; resulting in:*
  - *candidates not being entered for exams/assessments or being entered late*
  - *late or other penalty fees being charged by awarding bodies*
- *Non examination assessment tasks not set/issued/taken by candidates as scheduled*
- *Candidates not being informed of centre assessed marks before marks are submitted to the awarding body and therefore not being able to consider appealing internal assessment decisions and requesting a review of the Centre's marking*
- *Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet submission deadlines*

Centre actions:

- The Examinations Officer to liaise with acting Curriculum Leaders and/or SLT, if necessary, to ensure all necessary deadlines are adhered to. Where this is not possible, the Examinations Officer will liaise with the relevant Awarding Body and act upon advice received.

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

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- *Failure to recruit and train sufficient invigilators to conduct exams*
- *Invigilator shortage on peak exam days*
- *Invigilator absence on the day of an exam*

Centre actions:

- The Examinations Officer will review the invigilation staffing at the start of each academic year to ensure sufficient staff are recruited and trained in a timely fashion.
- The Cover Administrator will be aware of the academy staff available for invigilation duties at short notice and for peak exam days.

**5. Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice**

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- *Examinations officer unable to identify sufficient/appropriate rooms during exams timetable planning*
- *Insufficient rooms available on peak exam days*
- *Main exam venues unavailable due to an expected incident at exam time*

Centre actions:

- The Examinations Officer will organise rooming for examinations before the Easter holidays ensuring sufficient time is available to identify appropriate rooms and plan appropriately.
- In the event of a room not being available at very short notice, sufficient staff will be made available to ensure the security of the examination is not compromised whilst alternative rooming is sourced. The Examinations Officer will work with SLT at all times during such emergencies.

**6. Failure of IT systems**

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- *MIS system failure at final entry deadline*
- *MIS system failure during exams preparation*
- *MIS system failure at results release time*
- *Systems error or internet error during online testing*

Centre actions:

- The Examinations Officer, in consultation with SLT, will make entries from another venue direct to the Awarding Bodies. Results may also be accessed directly from the Awarding Bodies. At all times during the

system failure the Examinations Officer will liaise with the Awarding Bodies to minimise disruption and costs incurred.

- Examinations Officer to liaise with Awarding Bodies for further advice.

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

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Whole centre evacuation (or lock down) during exam time due to serious incident resulting in exam candidates being unable to start, proceed with or complete their exams

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Please refer to the Academy's General Emergency Lockdown Procedure/see Keir Mather.

**8. Disruption of teaching time – centre closed for an extended period**

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Centre 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.

Centre actions:

- SLT to manage all such incidents

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

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations

**In the event that the head of 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.*

Centre actions:

- The Examinations Officer will contact the relevant Awarding Bodies to discuss alternative arrangements and liaise with SLT to take appropriate action.

**10. Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open**

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Candidates are unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal

Centre actions:

- The Examinations Officer will contact the relevant Awarding Bodies to discuss alternative arrangements and liaise with SLT to take appropriate action.

**11. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers**

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- *Disruption to the distribution of examination papers to the centre in advance of examinations*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The Examinations officer will check a week before the scheduled exam to make sure papers have arrived and the correct amount of papers have been sent. If they have not the Examinations Officer will contact the relevant Awarding Body.

**12. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts**

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts

Centre actions:

- The Examinations Officer will contact the Awarding Body to notify them of any such difficulties and put in place suitable alternative arrangements

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

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked

Centre actions:

- The Examinations Officer will contact the Awarding Body to notify them of any such incidents and act upon advice given

**14. Centre unable to distribute results as normal (including in the event of the centre being unavailable on results day owing to an unforeseen emergency)**

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post-results services

Centre actions:

- The Examinations Officer will contact the Awarding Bodies to notify them of any such incidents and act upon advice given

*information taken from the *Joint contingency plan for the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*

## Further guidance to inform and implement contingency planning

**Ofqual**

[Ofqual guidance extract taken directly from the ***Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland - What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted***, (updated 23 January 2018) 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]

**GOV.UK**

*Emergency planning and response: Severe weather; Exam disruption* https://www.gov.uk/guidance/emergencies-and-severe-weather-schools-and-early-years-settings

*Teaching time lost due to severe weather conditions* https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-time-lost-due-to-severe-weather-conditions

*Dispatch of exam scripts guide: Ensuring the service runs smoothly; Contingency planning* https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-yellow-label-service

*Statutory guidance on school closures* https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools

**JCQ**

[JCQ guidance taken directly from JCQ *Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2018-2019* http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations, section 15, **Contingency planning**]

*General Regulations for Approved Centres* http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations

Guidance on *Alternative Site* arrangements and *Transferred Candidate* arrangements

Accessed through secure login to the Centre Admin Portal (CAP) or through the JCQ training site http://jcq.training.jcq.org.uk/CAP/Home/Training

*Instructions for Conducting Examinations* http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations

*A guide to the special consideration process* http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance

The Exams Contingency Plan Policy is next due for review on 1st September 2022

Headteacher Date: September 2021

Deputy Headteacher Date: September 2021

Exams Officer Date: September 2021