

EXAMINATION CONTINGENCY

PLAN 2024-25

This policy applies to

Beal High School (Centre number 13317)

The Forest Academy (Centre number 13313)

Beacon Business and Innovation Hub (Centre 13362)

Area/Department responsible for policy	TRUST
Approval Body:	Trust Executive
Date of last review:	November 2024
Statutory (DFE) Yes/No	No

I. PURPOSE, LEGISLATION OR GUIDANCE AND LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

1. This Plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exams process at all schools within the Beacon Multi Academy Trust, namely, Beal High School (BHS), The Forest Academy (TFA) and Beacon Business Innovation Hub (BBIH).
2. 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.
3. Alongside internal processes, this plan is informed by:
 - a. The [Ofqual Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland](#) which provides guidance in the publication “*What schools and colleges and other Centre’s should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted*”; and
 - b. The [JCQ Joint Contingency Plan in the event of widespread disruption to the Examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland](#).
4. This plan also confirms the Beacon Academy Trust is compliant with the JCQ regulations 2024-25 that the Centre “*has in place a written examination contingency plan which covers all aspects of examination administration. This will allow members of the senior leadership team to act immediately in the event of an emergency or staff absence.*”
5. This plan also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES

6. **The Head of Centre** is the Executive Headteacher / Executive Principal for the respective school. They will ensure that a written examination contingency plan / examinations policy is in place which covers all aspects of examination administration.
7. **Staff and invigilators:** Staff and invigilators involved in the centre’s exam process are responsible for reading, understanding and implementing the contingency plan.
8. **The Trust Exams Manager** will review this Plan every year in the autumn term, or well in advance of each exam series, with appropriate oversight from the Trust Executive, the Board of Trustees and Local Governing Bodies.

III. CONTINGENCY PLAN

SCENARIO (POSSIBLE CAUSE OF DISRUPTION TO THE EXAMPROCESS)	IMPLEMENTATION (CRITERIA FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN)	ACTIONS (CENTRE ACTIONS TO MITIGATE THE IMPACT OF THE DISRUPTION)
Exams Officer – extended absence at key points in the examination cycle	Planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	Exams Officers will work together with support from SLT, Awarding Bodies, The Exams Office and JCQ where necessary to put appropriate plans in place. In preparation that such contingencies may have to be invoked, work shadowing, job rotation, staff development and briefing sessions should be undertaken throughout the year.
	Entries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awarding Bodies not being informed of early/estimated entries which prompt the dispatch of pre-release materials to centres, required by teaching staff 	Seek advice from the awarding bodies for assistance on mitigating the impact to teachers and candidates. Also requesting a review of late fees based on circumstances. Prioritise candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exams when planned.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidates not being entered with awarding bodies for external exams/assessments • awarding body entry deadlines missed or late or other penalty fees being incurred 	<p>Enter candidates for the next available examinations series (where available)</p>
<p>Pre-exams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • invigilators not trained or updated on changes to instructions for conducting 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • internal assessment marks and samples of candidates' work not 	<p>Deliver and invigilator update training session as soon as practicable possible. Issue each invigilator with a copy of the JCQ ICE Booklet requesting they sign off on having read the booklet in its entirety. Alternatively, sign each invigilator up to The Exams Offices' online invigilator training course.</p> <p>Exams Officers will undertake timetabling, rooming and invigilation scheduling with support from SLT for centre based decisions and 3BM Strictly Education for technical questions.</p> <p>Where security of the exams has been compromised, contact the awarding body immediately, in line with JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres 5.11</p>

submitted to awarding
bodies/external moderators

Exam Time

- required reports/requests not submitted to awarding bodies during exam/assessment periods, for example very late arrival, suspected malpractice, special consideration

Exams Officers will contact Awarding Bodies as soon as possible notifying them of the delay in submitting relevant forms/scripts and undertake to get them sent off as soon as practicably possible.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • candidates' scripts not dispatched as required for marking to awarding bodies 	
	<p>Results and Post Results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • access to examination results affecting the distribution of results to candidates <p>the facilitation of the post-results services</p>	<p>Exams Officers to:</p> <p>Access results from awarding body secure portals; and process Post Result applications. Exams Office/3BM to provide support where necessary.</p>
<p>ALS lead/SENCo – Extended absence at key points in the exam cycle</p>	<p>Key tasks required in the management and administration of the access arrangements process within the exam cycle not undertaken including Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<p>Take advice from/instructions from relevant local or national agencies</p> <p>SLT to appoint an EP on an interim basis to test/assess candidates</p> <p>SEND Administrator to assist, in the collation of required evidence</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> evidence of need and evidence to support normal way of working not collated 	
	<p>Pre-exams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 (facilitators) providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained <p>Exam Time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms 	<p>SEND Administrator to process all outstanding applications with the support of the Exams Officer</p> <p>Contact awarding bodies to make alternative arrangements for producing modified papers within the Centre</p> <p>SLT to nominate a deputy to allocate facilitators and to liaise with the Exams Officer re training.</p>
<p>Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam process (exam cycle)</p>	<p>Key tasks not undertaken including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early/estimated entry information not provided to the exams officer on time; resulting in pre-release information not being received 	<p>SLT seminar leads/Heads of School and Aps to work with and lead departments in case of HoD absence. An interim faculty model may be adopted to ensure the integrity of the exam process</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 awarding body submission deadlines 	
<p>Invigilators – lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to recruit and train sufficient invigilators to conduct exams • Invigilator shortage on peak exam days 	<p>SLT to ensure that a number of non-exam support staff, teachers and teaching assistants attend the JCQ annual invigilator training to enable them to plug gaps when required.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invigilator absence on the day of an exam 	
<p>Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venue(s) unavailable at short notice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exams 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 unexpected incident at exam time <p>Alternative venue details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or venue • communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue <p>Communication details:</p>	<p>The centre will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (where main exam venue(s) unavailable due to an unexpected incident at exam time) where possible, make use of other available rooms within the centre, prioritising candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned • identify whether the exam or timetabled assessment can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding body, utilising all sites in the first instance • BBIH students to take exams at BHS or TFA • BHS students to use lower site in first instance, or take exams at TFA • TFA students to take exams at BHS • (where main exam venue(s) unavailable due to an unexpected incident at exam time) where possible, move to alternative venue, prioritising candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure the secure transportation of question papers or assessment materials to the alternative venue • (after the exam) consider whether any candidate's ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration 	
Failure of IT Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIS/IT system failure at final entry deadline • MIS/IT system failure during exams preparation • MIS/IT system failure at results release time • Cyber attack during onscreen exam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entries to be made manually via the awarding bodies secure portals, using manual reports of class lists for each subject • Rely on manual record of entries to continue preparation and where required, amendment to be made manually as above • Results to be obtained manually from awarding body secure portals. SLT may have to provide additional support to collate these results so they can still be issued within set timeframes • Onscreen exam to be rescheduled • If one site only is affected then work can be conducted remotely at the other
Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lockdown)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole centre evacuation (or lockdown) during exam time due to serious incident resulting in exam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • refer to and invoke its (exams) emergency evacuation policy/procedure in line with JCQ's 'Centre emergency evacuation procedure' (or its (exams) lockdown policy)

	<p>candidates being unable to start, proceed with or complete their exams</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contact the relevant awarding body as soon as possible and follow its instructions • where accommodation is limited, prioritise candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned • (after the exam) consider whether any candidate's ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration
<p>Disruption of teaching time in the weeks before an exam – Centre closed for an extended period</p>	<p>Centre closed and candidates are unable to attend for an extended period during normal teaching or study supported time, interrupting the provision of normal teaching and learning</p> <p>Communication details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take advice offered by the awarding body regarding alternative arrangements for conducting examinations that may be available 	<p>Seek alternative accommodation either at TFA or explore private venue options</p> <p>Implement online teaching via Moodle/MS Teams/SMH</p> <p>Advise awarding bodies of current situation and the Centre plans to address this; taking any advice, support and resources offered</p> <p>Advice JCQ of current arrangements to avoid maladministration sanctions</p> <p>Communicate with parents, carers and students about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plans to address this</p> <p>Prioritise candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exams when planned.</p> <p>Enter candidates for the next available examinations series (where available)</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take advice offered by the awarding body on the options for candidates who have not been able to take scheduled examinations • advise candidates, where appropriate, of the opportunities to take their exam or assessment at a later date 	<p>The centre will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognise it remains the responsibility of the centre to prepare students, as usual, for examinations • facilitate alternative methods of learning • communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) information relating to alternative methods of learning
<p>Candidates at risk of being unable to take examinations – Centre remains open</p>	<p>Candidates at risk of being unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal, following medical advice etc</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take advice offered by the awarding body on the options for candidates who have not been able to take scheduled examinations <p>Communication details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consider whether any candidates' ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment 	<p>Communicate with relevant awarding bodies and JCQ at the outset to make them aware of the issue.</p> <p>Communicate the nature of the disruption to parents/carers and students and inform them of solutions that will be implemented to address the disruption</p> <p>Liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with relevant awarding bodies and JCQ</p> <p>Offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series</p> <p>Apply to awarding bodies for Special Consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements and/or to mitigate the impact of the disruption</p> <p>The Centre will:</p>

	<p>has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take advice offered by the awarding body on the options for candidates who have not been able to take scheduled examinations • discuss alternative arrangements with the awarding body if a candidate misses an exam or loses their assessment due to an emergency, or other event, outside of the candidate's control • identify whether the exam or timetabled assessment can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding body, ensuring the secure transportation of questions papers or assessment materials to the alternative venue • communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue
<p>Centre at risk of being unable to open as normal during the examination period (including in the event of the Centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency)</p>	<p>Centre at risk of being unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations</p> <p>Communication details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consider whether any candidates' ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration 	<p>Inform relevant awarding bodies and JCQ</p> <p>Invoke BMAT emergency plans and/or health and safety policy, where appropriate</p> <p>Open for examinations and examination candidates only, if possible</p> <p>Liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue utilising BHS/TFA sites in the first instance. in agreement with relevant awarding bodies and JCQ</p>

Apply to awarding bodies for Special Consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements and/or to mitigate the impact of the disruption

Enter candidates for the next available examinations series (where available)

Prioritise candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exams when planned.

The centre will:

- take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether the centre is able to open
- contact the relevant awarding body as soon as possible and follow its instructions
- discuss alternative arrangements with the awarding body if the exam or assessment cannot take place
- follow guidance provided by the awarding body on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances
- where accommodation is limited, prioritise candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned
- communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue

<p>Disruption in the distribution of examination papers</p>	<p>Disruption to the distribution of examination papers to the centre in advance of examinations</p>	<p>Arrange with exam boards for alternative means of receiving papers, e.g. electronically, via secure external network or alternative courier Centre to ensure that the security of the examination papers is maintained during this process in the normal way</p> <p>The centre will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • liaise with awarding bodies regarding the provision of electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network and will ensure when copies are received/made these are stored under secure conditions • follow guidance provided by the awarding body on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances • understand that as a last resort, and in close collaboration with centres and regulators, awarding organisations will consider scheduling of the examination on an alternative date • communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue
<p>Disruption to transporting completed examination scripts</p>	<p>Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts/assessment evidence</p>	<p>Communicate with awarding bodies to organise an alternative method for the collection of scripts Centres should <u>not</u> make their own arrangements for transportation of completed script unless instructed to do so by the awarding bodies.</p>

		<p>The centre will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where examinations are part of the national 'yellow label' service or where awarding bodies arrange collections, contact the relevant awarding bodies for advice and instructions and will not make its own arrangements for transportation unless told to do so by the awarding body • for any examinations where the centre makes its own collection arrangements, investigate alternative options that comply with the requirements detailed in the JCQ 'Instructions for Conducting Examinations' • ensure the secure storage of completed examination scripts until collection
<p>Assessment evidence is not available to be marked</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large scale damage to, or destruction of, completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked. • Completed examination scripts/assessment evidence does not reach awarding organisations 	<p>Communicate this immediately to the relevant awarding body who will generate candidate marks for affected assessment based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement</p> <p>Where marks cannot be generated by the awarding body candidates may need to retake the affected assessment in a subsequent series</p> <p>Communicate the nature of the disruption to parents/carers and students informing them of solutions that will be implemented to address the disruption</p> <p>The centre will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • liaise with the awarding body to determine if candidate marks for affected assessments may be able to be generated based on

		<p>other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement as defined by the awarding body</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where marks cannot be generated by awarding body, inform candidates they may need to retake the affected assessment in a subsequent assessment series
<p>Centre unable to distribute results as normal (including in the event of the centre being unavailable on results day owing to an unforeseen emergency) or facilitate post-results services</p>	<p>Centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post-results services</p> <p>Alternative venue details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make arrangements to make post results requests at an alternative location • contact the relevant awarding body if electronic post results requests are not possible • inform candidates of any alternative arrangements in place for the distribution of results and the facilitation of post-results service 	<p>Centre to make arrangements to access results at an alternative site, BHS/TFA sites in the first instance, in agreement with the relevant awarding bodies</p> <p>Centre to make arrangements to make arrangements to coordinate access to post results services from an alternative site</p> <p>Centre to share facilities with other centres if possible</p> <p>The Centre will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make arrangements to access its results at an alternative venue/share facilities with another centre if this is possible, in agreement with the relevant awarding body • make arrangements to coordinate access to post results services from an alternative venue

<p>Absence of Head of Centre or exams SLT for extended period</p>	<p>Planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual data collection exercise not undertaken to collate information on qualifications and awarding body specifications being delivered 	<p>Exams Officers will work together with support from SLT, Awarding Bodies, The Exams Office and JCQ where necessary to put appropriate plans in place.</p> <p>In preparation that such contingencies may have to be invoked, work shadowing, staff development and briefing sessions should be undertaken throughout the year, including allocating a Deputy Head of Centre.</p>
<p>No national exams taking place due to pandemic or other widespread crisis / incidents</p>	<p>Exams cancelled either locally or nationally at such scale that contingency days cannot be implemented</p>	<p>All mock / internal / progression exam papers are retained by the departments as per CAG / TAG arrangements during COVID years.</p> <p>There are three mock exam seasons in each of key stage 4 and 5.</p> <p>Seating plans, registers, incident logs, details of 'special considerations' etc are retained by the exams office for all mock seasons until certificates for that qualification are received by the school.</p>
<p>Any other cause of disruption to the exam process</p>		<p>Seek guidance from JCQ or appropriate body</p>

IV. WORKING WITH QUALIFICATION REGULATORS, GOVERNMENT AND AWARDING BODIES

9. The regulators, [Ofqual](#) in England, [Qualifications Wales](#) in Wales and [CCEA](#) in Northern Ireland, will share timely and accurate information, as required, with awarding organisations, government departments and other stakeholders.
10. In the event of widespread sustained national disruption, the government departments will communicate with regulators, awarding organisations and centres prior to a public announcement. Regulators will provide advice to government departments on implications for exam timetables.
11. Ofqual [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.
12. The qualification regulators, JCQ and government departments responsible for education have prepared and agreed information for schools and colleges in the event of examinations being seriously disrupted. This jointly agreed information will ensure consistency of response in the event of major disruption to the examinations system affecting significant numbers of candidates.
13. 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.
14. 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.
15. 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.
16. The awarding bodies have designated at least one day and several afternoons as a 'contingency day' for examinations. This is consistent with the qualification regulators' document [Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland](#).
17. In the highly unlikely event that there is national disruption to a day of examinations in summer 2025 the awarding bodies will liaise with the qualification regulators and the DfE to agree the

most appropriate option for managing the impact. As a last resort the affected examinations will be rescheduled. Although every effort would be taken to keep the impact to a minimum, it is possible that there could be more than one timetable date affected following the disruption, up to and including the contingency day in June 2025. Centres will be alerted if it was agreed to reschedule the examinations and the affected candidates will be expected to make themselves available in such circumstances. The decision regarding the re-scheduling of examinations will always rest with the awarding body. The centre must conduct the examination on the scheduled date unless instructed to do otherwise by the awarding body.

18. Where candidates choose not to be available for the rescheduled examination(s) for reasons other than those traditionally covered by special consideration, they will not be eligible for enhanced grading arrangements. Centres must therefore ensure candidates and parents are aware of this contingency arrangement so that they may take it into account when making their plans for the summer. However, the awarding bodies will not insist upon candidates being available throughout the entire timetable period as a matter of course.