

EXAMINATION

CONTINGENCY PLAN

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:	October 2025
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 Principal for Beal High School and BBIH, and the Principal of The Forest Academy. 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: • 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 • 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 on 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.

	• Candidates not being entered with awarding bodies for external exams/assessments • awarding body entry deadlines missed or late or other penalty fees being incurred	Enter candidates for the next available examinations series (where available)
	Pre-exams • 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 • internal assessment marks and samples of candidates' work not submitted to awarding bodies/external moderators	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. Exams Officers will undertake timetabling, rooming and invigilation scheduling with support from SLT for centre-based decisions and 3BM Strictly Education for technical questions. Where security of the exams has been compromised, contact the awarding body immediately, in line with JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres 5.11

	Exam Time • 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	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.
	Results and Post Results • access to examination results affecting the distribution of results to candidates • the facilitation of the post-results services	Exams Officers to: Access results from awarding body secure portals; and process Post Result applications. Exams Office to provide support where necessary.
ALS lead/SENCo – Extended absence at key points in the exam cycle	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	Take advice from/instructions from relevant local or national agencies SLT to appoint an EP on an interim basis to test/assess candidates SEND Administrator to assist in the collation of required evidence

	• 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 (facilitators) providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained Exam Time • access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms	SEND Administrator to process all outstanding applications with the support of the Exams Officer Contact awarding bodies to make alternative arrangements for producing modified papers within the Centre SLT to nominate a deputy to allocate facilitators and to liaise with the Exams Officer re training.

Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam process (exam cycle)	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	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
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	Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet awarding body submission deadlines	
Invigilators – lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence	- Failure to recruit and train sufficient invigilators to conduct exams - Invigilator shortage on peak exam days - Invigilator absence on the day of an exam	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.
Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venue(s) unavailable at short notice	- 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 Alternative venue details: - communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or venue	The centre will: (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

	- communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue Communication details: - 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	candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned
Failure of IT Systems	- 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	- 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)	• Whole centre evacuation (or lockdown) during exam time due to serious incident resulting in exam candidates being unable to start, proceed with or complete their exams	• refer to and invoke its (exams) emergency evacuation policy/procedure in line with JCQ's 'Centre emergency evacuation procedure' (or its (exams) lockdown policy) • 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
Disruption of teaching time in the weeks before an exam – Centre closed for an extended period	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	Seek alternative accommodation either within the Trust or explore private venue options BHS to move to from upper to lower site, then to TFA BBIH to move to BHS, then to TFA TFA to move to BHS lower site Implement online teaching via Moodle/MS Teams/SMH

	Communication details: • take advice offered by the awarding body regarding alternative arrangements for conducting examinations that may be available • 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	Advise awarding bodies of current situation and the Centre plans to address this; taking any advice, support and resources offered Advice JCQ of current arrangements to avoid maladministration sanctions Communicate with parents, carers and students about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plans to address this Prioritise candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exams when planned. Enter candidates for the next available examinations series (where available) The centre will: • 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
Candidates at risk of being unable to take examinations – Centre remains open	Candidates at risk of being unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal, following medical advice etc	Communicate with relevant awarding bodies and JCQ at the outset to make them aware of the issue. Communicate the nature of the disruption to parents/carers and students and inform them of solutions that will be implemented to address the disruption

• take advice offered by the awarding body on the options for candidates who have not been able to take scheduled examinations Communication details: • 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	Liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with relevant awarding bodies and JCQ Offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series 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 The Centre will: • 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
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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)	Centre at risk of being unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations Communication details: 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	Inform relevant awarding bodies and JCQ Invoke BMAT emergency plans and/or health and safety policy, where appropriate Open for examinations and examination candidates only, if possible 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 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
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Disruption in the distribution of examination papers	Disruption to the distribution of examination papers to the centre in advance of examinations	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 The centre will: • 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
Disruption to transporting completed examination scripts	Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts/assessment evidence	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. The centre will: • 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

Assessment evidence is not available to be marked	• 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	Communicate this immediately to the relevant awarding body who will generate candidate marks for affected assessment based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement Where marks cannot be generated by the awarding body candidates may need to retake the affected assessment in a subsequent series Communicate the nature of the disruption to parents/carers and students informing them of solutions that will be implemented to address the disruption The centre will: • liaise with the awarding body to determine if candidate marks for affected assessments may be able to be generated based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement as defined by the awarding body • where marks cannot be generated by awarding body, inform candidates they may need to retake the affected assessment in a subsequent assessment series
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	Centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post-results services Alternative venue details:	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 Centre to make arrangements to make arrangements to coordinate access to post results services from an alternative site Centre to share facilities with other centres if possible

	• 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	The Centre will: • 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
Absence of Head of Centre or exams SLT for extended period	Planning: • Annual data collection exercise not undertaken to collate information on qualifications and awarding body specifications being delivered	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, staff development and briefing sessions should be undertaken throughout the year, including allocating a Deputy Head of Centre.
No national exams taking place due to pandemic or other widespread crisis / incidents	Exams cancelled either locally or nationally at such scale that contingency days cannot be implemented	All mock / internal / progression exam papers are retained by the departments as per CAG / TAG arrangements during COVID years. There are three mock exam seasons in each of key stages 4 and 5.

		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.
Any other cause of disruption to the exam process		Seek guidance from JCQ or appropriate body

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.