

WHITWORTH COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL

EXAM CONTINGENCY

PLAN

2026

Date effective from:	January 2026
Prepared by:	C Lord / P Bland
Date of next review:	January 2027

Version control record

Please note that where policy is LCC model policy, then the version details will be provided by LCC in the document.

Version numbers ending in a letter relate to documents under review and awaiting approval. Once a document has been approved then the version number will increase e.g. version 1a = approved version 1 being reviewed. Once version 1a has been approved it will then move to version 2.

Version Number	Date of change	Reviewed by	Brief reason for changes
1.0			Creation of document
2.0	09.01.2019	AWA	Annual Review – update of personnel
3.0	04.03.21	AWA	Annual Review – Dates/Covid-19
4.0	30.03.22	PB	Annual Review – Dates – removal of any covid instructions
5.0	31.01.23	PB	Annual Review
6.0	31.01.24	PB	Annual Review
7.0	21.03.25	PB	Annual Review & Updates
8.0	19.01.26	PB	Annual Review & Up-dates

Date approved: January 2026

Recommended review period: Annual

Date for review: January 2027

Leadership team role responsible for the operation of the policy: Deputy Headteacher

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 Whitworth Community High School. 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.

Alongside internal processes, this plan is informed by scenarios contained in the *Joint contingency plan in the event of widespread disruption to the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*.

This plan complies with JCQ general regulations (section 5) in that:

The centre agrees 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;*”

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
 - 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:

- the exams officer is part of a team of 3 people led by an experienced member of SLT. All members of the team have attended a planned training programme to ensure that the absence of the exam officer is covered by those in the team and members of SLT.

- The assistant examination officer will take responsibility for the exam, in the event of his absence the member of SLT in charge of exams will take responsibility.

2. Head of Centre absence

- In the event of the Head of Centre being absent the Deputy Headteacher will cover.

3. 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
 - 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
 - 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 absence of the SENCo would be covered by a member of SLT (AHT). Support would also be sought from the local authority SEN team (the local secondary school network).

4. 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
- *Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet submission deadlines*

Centre actions:

- The extended absence of any teaching staff will be covered by the Head of Faculty/Second in Faculty or line manager/SLT link.

5. Invigilators – lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Key tasks not undertaken including:

- *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 school has a list of pre-approved invigilators that it uses. This would be used in the event of the absence of an invigilator. In the event of the unavailability of any external invigilators, members of associate staff would

be used.

6. Exam rooms – lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- 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

Centre actions:

- The exam would be moved to the sports hall

7. Failure of IT systems and potential cyber attacks

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- SIMS system failure at final entry deadlines
- SIMS system failure during exams preparation
- SIMS system failure at results release time

Centre actions:

- Liaise with network support in school. Contact exam board for advice.
- Exam registers will be printed in advance of the day to ensure papers will be available on the day
- Any exam papers requiring download on the day we would use phone to hot spot and access the exam board websites.
- Any exam papers which require printing will be saved to a USB stick and printed
- In the event that a student could not use a laptop support staff would be assigned to scribe for them.
- Candidates work is backed up for the duration of the exam and until printed after which time it is deleted

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:

- The school would communicate with parents, carers and students about the potential for disruption teaching time and plans below:
- In the event the school site was closed, negotiations would take place with the local primary schools and FE Colleges, and local church hall

9. 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 centre to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to make them aware of the issue. The centre to communicate with parents, carers and candidates regarding solutions to the issue below:
- In the event that the school site was closed, negotiations would take place with the local FE Colleges or primary school, and local church hall
- Offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series

- Apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements

10. 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 eg. flooding. Parents and carers would be notified of the alternative venue via the school's parent/carer communications app.

Centre actions:

- In the event site was closed, negotiations would take place with the local FE Colleges and primary schools, and local church hall – St Bartholomew's Church & school hall.
- Apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements (see Scenario 3)
- Offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series, if possible

11. Disruption in the distribution of examinations papers

Criteria for implementation of the plan

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

Centre actions:

- The school would contact the exam board and arrange for the alternative delivery of papers

12. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examinations scripts

Centre actions:

- The school would contact Parcel Force or alternatively take them to the local Post Office.

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 school would communicate immediately with the exam boards and to students and parents/carers
- Candidates retake the assessment that has been affected at a subsequent assessment window, if possible

14. Centre unable to distribute results as normal

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Centres is unable to access or manage the distributions of results to candidates, or to facilitate post-results service

Centre actions:

- In the event that the school site was closed, results can be accessed remotely by a member of the exams team
- Make arrangements to distribute results at an alternative site e.g. church hall

Causes 7-13 – all scenarios, criteria and specific communications have been taken directly from the *Joint contingency plan in the event of widespread disruption to the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*

Further guidance to inform and implement contingency planning

Ofqual

Joint contingency plan in the event of widespread disruption to the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

<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>

JCQ

General regulations

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>

Guidance on alternative site arrangements

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/forms>

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>

GOV.UK

Emergencies and severe weather: schools and early years settings

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/emergencies-and-severe-weather-schools-and-early-years-settings#severe-weather>

Teaching time lost due to severe weather conditions

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-time-lost-due-to-severe-weather-conditions/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/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-guide>