



## Royal Wootton Bassett Academy

# Exams Contingency Plan

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### Key Staff Involved in contingency planning

| Role                                       | Name(s)            |
|--|--------------------|
| Head of centre                             | Mrs Anita Ellis    |
| Exams officer line manager (Senior Leader) | Mrs Demelza Bevis  |
| Exams officer                              | Mrs Sharon Mills   |
| Admin / Data Manager                       | Mrs Shelly Davies  |
| Exams assistant                            | Mrs Jo Randell     |
| SENCo                                      | Mrs Susan McMullin |
| Deputy SENCo                               | Mrs Anna Marriott  |

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## Purpose of the plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exam/assessment process at Royal Wootton Bassett Academy. 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 the Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland which provides guidance in the publication *What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted*, the JCQ Joint Contingency Plan for the Examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the JCQ document *Preparing for disruption to examinations* (Effective from September 2024).

This plan also confirms Royal Wootton Bassett Academy is compliant with the JCQ's **General Regulations for Approved Centres** (GR 5.3) that the centre has in place for inspection that must be reviewed and updated annually:

- a written contingency plan which covers all aspects of examination/assessment administration and delivery.

## Contingency arrangements

In accordance with the regulations (GR 3.17-19), Royal Wootton Bassett Academy **must** have an up to date written contingency plan.

The contingency plan **must** cover all aspects of examination/assessment administration and delivery. Senior leaders **must** have robust contingency arrangements in place that will minimise the risk to examination/assessment administration and delivery and any adverse impact on candidates.

The plan must cover the following scenarios:

- the head of centre, relevant senior leader(s) with oversight of examination and assessment administration, SENCo (or equivalent role), examinations officer or any other key staff essential to the examination process being absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle
- the potential impact of other events such as flooding which could lead to all or parts of the centre becoming unavailable
- potential issues with the centre's IT systems

As part of the contingency plan the centre **must** identify an alternative site if examinations cannot be conducted at the registered address. Larger centres may require more than one potential alternative site or different sites for different Year Groups.

Royal Wootton Bassett Academy **must** have at least one senior member of staff (senior designated contact) who is available to manage emergency requests from awarding bodies that are results related during the summer holidays. However, a number of contacts can be provided to reduce the risk of this falling on one individual throughout the summer holidays.

Royal Wootton Bassett Academy **must** ensure that candidates' work is backed-up and should consider the contingency of candidates' work being backed-up on two separate devices, including one off-site back-up. Appropriate security arrangements must be implemented which protect candidates' work in the event of IT system corruption and cyber-attacks.

## National Centre Number Register and other information requirements

In accordance with the regulations (GR 5.3), the head of centre will ensure that Royal Wootton Bassett Academy responds to the National Centre Number Register annual update by the end of October every year which includes providing senior designated contact details (this might include a personal mobile number and/or email address). These must be the contact details of someone who can be reached in an emergency if the centre is closed over the summer and who can mobilise resources to respond to the issue.

## Head of centre absence at a critical stage of the exam cycle

Where the head of centre is absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle, main duties and responsibilities will be escalated to Assistant Head Teacher for Examinations.

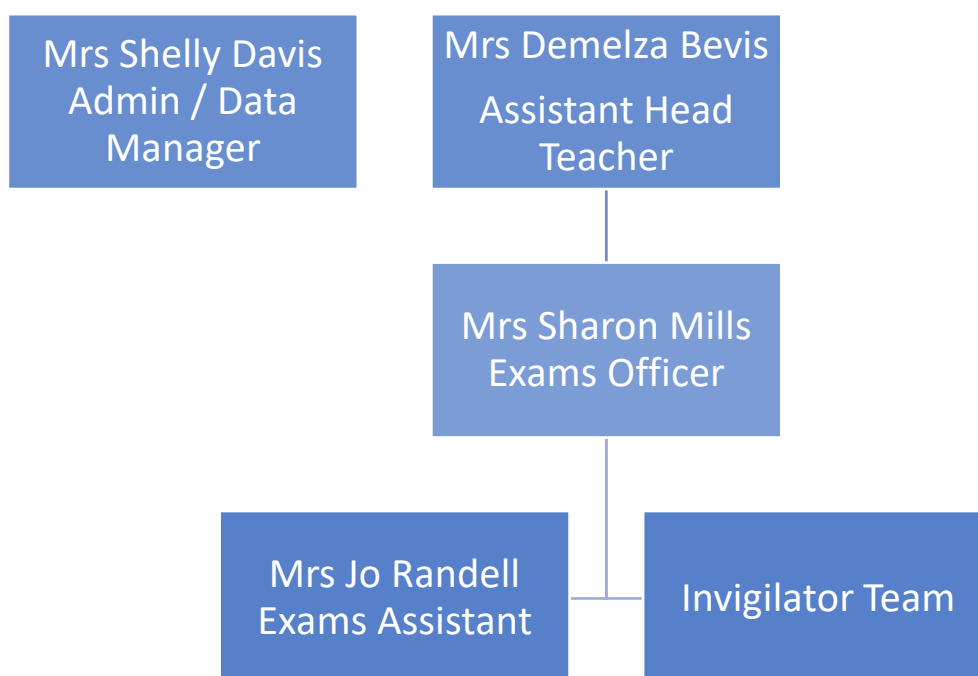
## Possible causes of disruption to the exam process

1. Exam officer extended absence at a critical stage of the exam cycle

The department is structured with an exams officer and exams assistant and over seen by the Assistant Head Teacher for Examinations and the Admin / Data Manager.

In a period of extended absence, the Admin / Data Manager would take responsibility for carrying out the duties of the exams officer and would work in consultation with the Assistant Head Teacher for Examinations.

Appropriate back-filling of responsibilities would then be decided upon by the Assistant Head Teacher for Examinations.



All members of the invigilating team regularly receive training and colleagues involved in the administration of key processes are trained on how to carry out processes and who to contact in extremes.

## 2. SENCo extended absence at a critical stage of the exam cycle

In the event of the extended absence of the SENCo, appropriate back-filling of responsibilities would be decided upon by the Head Teacher, who is Head of Centre, in co-ordination with the Deputy SENCo.

## 3. Teaching staff extended absence at a critical stage of the exam cycle

In the event of a period of extended absence of a member of the teaching staff, the Head of Curriculum would arrange teaching cover from within the staff team and/or the wider staffing establishment at Royal Wootton Bassett Academy.

New staff providing cover would be briefed as part of their induction process on arrangements for assessment and examinations. Their practice in terms of assessments would be monitored by the Head of Curriculum.

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

New invigilators undergo training by the exams officer and complete a period of shadowing, following appointment. They are permitted to work independently once they,

and the exams officer are happy that they are competent and confident in processes and procedures.

Online training is updated in October / November and in-house training sessions are held in October and March / April for all invigilators to refresh their knowledge and communicate JCQ regulations changes and update local information. Royal Wootton Bassett Academy retains a pool of approximately 30 / 35 invigilators.

When invigilators resign/retire from the pool, recruitment procedures are begun. Within the wider Academy staff, colleagues may be required to assist during main exam seasons (mainly GCSE English and Mathematics) and are trained by the exams officer with regards to their responsibilities and duties. Minor absence issues (such as invigilators call in sick etc.) are covered by a member of the exams team or attempts are made to contact another invigilator from the pool.

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

Most exams are accommodated in the Assembly Hall, Gym and SFLT. We also use smaller class rooms for access arrangements and ICT rooms for on-line exams.

#### 6. Cyber-attack – where a cyber-attack may compromise any aspect of delivery

In the event of a cyber-attack Royal Wootton Bassett Academy would seek guidance from awarding bodies, local authorities or national agencies. Any incidents would be reported to the relevant awarding body which might compromise any aspect of assessment delivery such as a cyber-attack.

Where candidates produce their work electronically, we ensure their work is backed-up regularly and stored securely on the centre's IT system.

Royal Wootton Bassett Academy follows and regularly reviews National Cyber Security Centre advice for support in cyber security preparedness and mitigation work. Using the NCSC's free Web Check and Mail Check services to help protect from cyber-attacks.

#### 7. Failure of IT systems

Royal Wootton Bassett Academy endeavours to minimise any ICT disruption via resilient design and preventative maintenance. In the event of an issue this would be dealt with the ICT Support Team who test and update the systems on a regular basis. Where such failures impact on scheduled exams, steps will be taken to resolve the problem as quickly as possible.

#### 8. Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lockdown)

Invigilators are given clear guidance of what actions to take should there be a Fire Alarm or a Lockdown Incident and this is covered in training sessions. These procedures should be followed at all times.

#### 9. Disruption of teaching time – centre closed for an extended period

In the event of Royal Wootton Bassett Academy being closed for an extended period of time causing a disruption of teaching, the Head of Centre will arrange for lessons to be conducted at an alternative venue or online.

#### 10. Candidates may not be able to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open

The response is dependent on the type of issues. The procedure for absence is outlined in the Students Examinations Guide. A copy is emailed to all students prior to the examination season annually and is also put on the school website.

If a candidate can sit the exam but cannot attend the Royal Wootton Bassett Academy due to a crisis, appropriate communication with the relevant Awarding Bodies would be undertaken by the exams officer and alternative options would be explored (home, hospital, alternative Centre etc.)

Appropriate use of Special Considerations Policies would be applied should the candidate / candidates be unable to attend due to unforeseen circumstances and where alternative arrangements could not be made or are not agreed by the Awarding Body.

#### 11. Centre may not be able to open as normal during the exams period

In the event that Royal Wootton Bassett Academy is not able to open as normal, appropriate communication with the relevant awarding bodies would be undertaken by the exams officer and alternative options would be explored, such as:

Moving exams to an external location (such as the local leisure centre (Lime Kiln), hotels, local schools (Bradon Forest, Lawn Manor etc.) and where possible the appropriate transport arrangements would be made for students to get to the venues.

All arrangements would be agreed with the Awarding Body before being put in place. In such instances, details would be communicated to candidates via the schools website, Arbor, Email and Social Media (Facebook, Twitter etc.). In this instance the JCQ Alternative Site online form would be used to notify the JCQ Centre Inspection Service.

Staff involved in exams (including invigilators would be contacted via email, telephone, text, social media etc.)

#### 12. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers

Should a script not be available at the time of the exam. The exams officer will contact the appropriate Awarding Body to arrange for a secure electronic copy of the script. Copies will be made and then distributed to the students taking the exam. Students will be given the same amount of time to complete the exam.

#### 13. Delay in collection arrangements for completed examination scripts

All scripts are returned using the designated dispatch methods prescribed by the Awarding Body concerned. Where this becomes unavailable or inappropriate, the Awarding Body will be contacted to seek advice. Royal Wootton Bassett Academy will ensure secure storage of completed examination scripts until collection.

#### 14. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked

In the event of a large-scale damage or destruction of completed examination scripts / assessment evidence before it can be marked, the exams officer would contact the Awarding Body immediately for advice and further instructions.

Student's marks would be submitted based on appropriate evidence and candidates would be given the opportunity to retake in a subsequent series if the option is available.

#### 15. Centre unable to distribute results as normal or facilitate post results services

Royal Wootton Bassett Academy distributes 'as normal' via collection by the student. Where learners do not collect results in person, these will be distributed via pre-stamped address envelope, provided by the student to the exams officer.

Should Royal Wootton Bassett Academy be closed during a results day, arrangements would be made to hand out results at an alternative venue. Students would be informed of the new venue via email, text and social media.

The exams officer would work with the Awarding Bodies to gain access to those results.