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Lea Manor High School

Contingency Plan (Exams) 2026/27

Date Reviewed	Body
October 2026	Jess Pather Headteacher
Next review date: October 2027	To be reviewed: Annually

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Purpose of the plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the examination and assessment process at Lea Manor 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 processes.

Alongside internal processes, this plan is informed by the Ofqual (and Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment) **Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland** which provides guidance in the document *What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted*.

Preparing for disruption to examinations.

This plan also confirms Lea Manor High School compliance with 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 by a member of the senior leadership team and communicated within the centre... a contingency plan which covers all aspects of examination/assessment administration and delivery
- The centre's contingency planning **must** include succession arrangements for members of staff involved in examination and assessment administration

Contingency arrangements

In accordance with the regulations (GR 3.31-36), Lea Manor High School **must** have in place, and at all times comply with, 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 or alternative sites which can be used 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.

Lea Manor High School **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.

Lea Manor High School **must** ensure where candidates' work is produced electronically it is backed-up and should consider the contingency of candidates' work being backed-up on two separate devices, including one off-site back-up via the Cloud. 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 Lea Manor High School completes the National Centre Number Register annual update by the end of October every year (even if there are no changes to centre details) 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/senior leader(s) with oversight of examination and assessment administration absence at a critical stage of the exam cycle

Possible causes of disruption to the exam process

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

1. Exams manager extended absence at a critical stage of the exam cycle

- SLT/Exams Manager to ensure that other staff members are trained to have knowledge of conducting exams and to comply with JCQ regulations
- Exams manager to have meeting in order to update teachers with awarding bodies policies
- Exams manager to ensure that invigilators have sufficient training prior to exams cycles
- SLT/HODs to be aware of deadlines and to comply with JCQ regulations
- Exams manager to ensure that examinations bodies' deadlines are met
- Head of Centre and Exams manager to have contingency plan for distribution of results and facilitation of Post Results Services
- Exams officer to be available by phone, email or zoom

2. SENCo (or equivalent role) extended absence at a critical stage of the exam cycle

- Evidence should be gathered by year 9
- Online access arrangement to be submitted in a timely manner
- Exams officer to make SENCO aware of deadlines in order for candidates to be tested prior to exams seasons
- Special consideration to be submitted to examinations boards in case of centre's failure to provide candidates with access arrangements
- SENCO and Exams officer to provide all year training to staff to support candidates

3. Teaching staff (or other key staff essential to the examination process) extended absence at a critical stage of the exam cycle

- HOD of Centre, SLT to make arrangement for Cover teachers to be employed to reduce disruption to teaching time and to prepare students as usual for exams
- Exams manager to ensure that "Intention to offer forms are completed and submitted to examinations boards
- Examinations manager to ensure that final entry information is provided at least two weeks prior to deadlines and for Subject Leaders to check that all students have been entered for exams/assessments: Clerical checks to be made during the year
- Examinations manager to update Head of Centre, SLT and teachers of all deadlines to avoid charges, to avoid marks being submitted late and for all assessment to be taken within exams window
- Candidates to be provided with exams timetable to check individual entries
- SLT and all Subject teachers to be given key dates
- Candidates to be made aware of JCQ exams and NEA policies

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

- Invigilators to be trained prior to mock exams
- Invigilators to use The Exam Office to complete online training
- Examinations manager will use trained administrators, teachers/SLT who do not teach the subject at time of exams and trained agency staff if necessary
- To have a pool of extra trained invigilators

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

- On creating seating plans examinations officer to ensure that sufficient venues are available
- Arrangement to be made for students to be kept secure if large cohort needs to be divided
- Head of centre/SLT will source alternative venues/facilities

6. Cyber security

- Staff to complete cyber security training set by The National Cyber Security Centre NCSC)
- Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) to be set up for both centre and awarding bodies' systems
- MFA to be used for all accounts and systems containing exam-related information. User accounts to be checked and deleted when necessary
- Reporting any actual or suspected compromise of an awarding body's online systems **immediately** to the relevant awarding bodies
- Implementing and enforcing robust security measures
- MIS (Bromcom) to protect school's data, reviewing and managing setting
- Staff and students to be aware of AI policy
- Ensuring authorised members of staff securely access awarding bodies 'online system in line with awarding body regulations regarding cyber security and the JCQ document Guidance for centres on cyber security

7. Failure of IT systems

- *T system corruption affecting candidates' work*
- *MIS system failure at final entry deadline*
- *MIS system failure during exams preparation*
- *Technical failure or power outage immediately prior to or during an on-screen examination*
- *MIS system failure at results release time*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- (This will include the security arrangements put in place which protect candidates' work)
(GR 3.36) Ensure where candidates' work is produced electronically it is backed-up and should consider the contingency of candidates' work being backed-up on two separate devices, including one off-site back-up via the Cloud... Implement appropriate security arrangements which protect candidates' work in the event of IT system corruption and cyber-attacks.

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

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Head of Centre and Exams officer to inform and seek advice from awarding bodies
- Details to be logged and recorded
- Parents to be notified
- Lockdown policy in place and drills during the year – drill to take place during internal exams for good practice

9. Disruption of teaching time in the weeks before an exam – centre closed for an extended period

- Where there is disruption to teaching time and students miss teaching and learning, it remains the responsibility of the centre to prepare students as usual for examinations
- Candidates to be SLT will source alternative venues/facilities
- Head of Centre, SLTs and Subject leaders to give candidates access to learning via Google Classroom, GO4schools, Maths watch etc.
- Extra lessons and Intervention to be put in place

10. Candidates may not be able to take examinations - centre remains open

- Centre to keep all students mocks exams secure in case required by examinations bodies
- Centre to inform awarding organisation of examinations to be affected
- Be aware of JCQ rules and regulations regarding starting time of examinations
- Where possible use other Trust school's
- Applied Special Consideration where necessary

11. Centre may not be able to open for examinations

- Centre to inform awarding organisation of examinations to be affected
- Look where possible to provide alternative provision e.g. local primary schools and Community school

Parents and students to be notified by via text, school's website and Social Media Criteria for implementation of the plan

Centre may not be able to open as normal for scheduled examinations

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Centre to inform awarding organisation of examinations to be affected
- Look where possible to provide alternative provision e.g. local primary schools and Community school
- Parents and students to be notified by via text, school's website and Social Media (The centre's contingency plans must focus on enabling candidates to take their examinations if the centre is at risk of not being able to open as normal)

(This could include implementing alternative arrangements for the conducting of examinations and notifying the JCQ Centre Inspection Service of an alternative site arrangement by submitting the JCQ Alternative Site form online, using the Centre Admin Portal (CAP).)

• The decision on whether it is safe for a centre to open lies with the head of centre who is responsible for taking advice or following instructions from relevant local or national agencies (For further guidance see: What schools, colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted) • Special consideration is an option if all other avenues have been exhausted and candidates meet the published criteria • The relevant awarding organisations

should be contacted if additional support or guidance in the event of disruption to examinations is required

12. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers

- Awarding organisations to provide centres with electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network. Centre would ensure that copies are received, made and stored under secure conditions
- Reprographics to take copies securely and given immediately to examinations officer to secure.
- Centre will request guidance from Awarding organisations on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances.

As a last resort, and in close collaboration with centre and regulators, awarding organisations to consider scheduling of the examination on an alternative date

13. Delay in collection arrangements for completed examination scripts

- Where examinations are part of the national 'yellow label' service or where awarding organisations arrange collections, centre will should seek advice from awarding organisations and will not make their own arrangements for transportation unless told to do so by the awarding organisation.
- For any examinations where centres make their own arrangements for transportation, centres should investigate alternative dispatch options that comply with the requirements detailed in the JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations.
- Centre to ensure secure storage of completed examination papers until collection

14. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Immediate communication to be made with relevant awarding body
- Centre to keep records of candidate marks from various mock subjects as evidence for awarding organisations
- Awarding organisations to generate candidate marks for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement as defined by the awarding organisations
- Where marks cannot be generated by awarding organisations candidates may need to retake affected assessment in a subsequent assessment series
- Parents and students to be notified
- Yellow labels service informed for investigation

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

(Including in the event of the centre being unavailable on results day owing to an unforeseen emergency)

- Centre to contact awarding bodies and discuss alternative means of distribution
- Centre to plan to access its results at an alternative site, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation
- Centre to share facilities with other Trust centres if this is possible, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation.)
- Post Results Services

- Centre to decide to make post results requests at an alternative location
- Centre to contact the relevant awarding organisation if electronic post results requests are not possible

Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning

DfE

Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges

Cyber security: core standard

Ofqual

What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted

In addition to this guidance, you will need to be aware of your specific responsibilities for local and national school preparations and contingencies. You should also follow advice from relevant public health bodies.

Contingency planning

Awarding organisations are required to establish, maintain and comply with an up-to-date detailed written contingency plan, to mitigate any incident they have identified may occur. This includes having communication plans for external parties ([Ofqual General Condition of Recognition A6](#)). Schools and colleges should also be prepared for possible disruption to exams and assessments and make sure staff are aware of these plans.

Disruption to assessments or exams

In the absence of any instruction from the relevant awarding organisation, you should make sure that any exam or timetabled assessment takes place if it is possible to hold it. This may mean relocating to alternative premises. You should discuss alternative arrangements with your awarding organisation if:

- the exam or assessment cannot take place
- a student misses an exam or loses their assessment due to an emergency, or other event, outside of the student's control

You may also wish to see [JCQ's notice on preparing for disruption to examinations](#) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland for qualifications within its scope.

Steps you should take

Exam planning

Review your contingency plans well in advance of each exam or assessment series. Consider how, if the contingency plan is invoked, you will comply with the awarding organisation's requirements.

Schools, colleges and other exam centres must speak to the relevant awarding organisations as soon as possible if they are expecting any disruption that might affect the sitting of exams and assessments.

In the event of disruption

1. Contact the relevant awarding organisation and follow its instructions.
2. Take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether your centre is able to open.
3. Identify whether the exam or timetabled assessment can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation, ensuring the secure transportation of questions papers or assessment materials to the alternative venue.
4. Where accommodation is limited, prioritise students whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned.
5. In the event of an evacuation during an examination please refer to JCQ's [Centre emergency evacuation procedure](#).
6. Communicate with students, parents and carers any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue.
7. Communicate with any external assessors, invigilators or relevant third parties regarding any changes to the exam or assessment timetable.

After the exam

1. Consider whether any students' ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply to the relevant awarding organisation for special consideration.
2. Advise students, where appropriate, of the opportunities to take their exam or assessment at a later date.
3. Ensure that scripts are stored under secure conditions.
4. Return scripts to awarding organisations in line with their instructions. Never make alternative arrangements for the transportation of completed exam scripts, unless told to do so by the awarding organisation.

Steps the awarding organisation should take

Exam planning

1. Establish and maintain, and at all times comply with, an up-to-date, written contingency plan.
2. Ensure that the arrangements in place with centres and other third parties enable them to deliver and award qualifications in accordance with their conditions of recognition.

In the event of disruption

1. Take all reasonable steps to mitigate any adverse effect, in relation to their qualifications, arising from any disruption.
2. Provide effective guidance to any of their centres delivering qualifications.
3. Ensure that where an assessment must be completed under specified conditions, students are able to complete the assessment under those conditions (other than where any reasonable adjustments or special considerations require alternative conditions).
4. Promptly notify the relevant regulators about any event which could have an adverse effect on students, standards or public confidence.
5. Coordinate its communications with the relevant regulators where the disruption has an impact on multiple centres or a wide range of learners.

After the exam

Consider any requests for special consideration for affected students; for example, those who may have lost their internally assessed work or whose performance in assessments or exams could have been affected by the disruption.

If any students miss an exam or are disadvantaged by the disruption

If some of the students have been adversely affected by the disruption, you should ask the awarding organisation about applying for special consideration.

Decisions about special consideration, when it is or is not appropriate, is for each awarding organisation to make. Their decisions might be different for different qualifications and for different subjects, depending on their specific policies.

See also [JCO's guidance on special consideration](#)

Wider communications

The regulators, [Ofqual](#) in England, [Qualifications Wales](#) in Wales and [CCEA Regulation](#) in Northern Ireland, will share timely and accurate information, as required, with awarding organisations, government departments and other stakeholders.

The [DfE](#) in England, the [Department of Education](#) in Northern Ireland, and the [Welsh Government](#) will inform the relevant government ministers as soon as it becomes apparent that there will be significant local or national disruption, and ensure that they are kept updated until the matter is resolved.

Awarding organisations will alert the [Universities and Colleges Admissions Service](#) (UCAS) and the [Central Applications Office](#) (CAO) about any impact of the disruption on their deadlines and liaise regarding student progression to further and higher education.

Awarding organisations will alert relevant professional bodies or employer groups if the impact of disruption particularly affects them.

Widespread national disruption to the taking of examinations or assessments

As education is devolved, in the event of any widespread sustained national disruption to examinations or assessments, national 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 examinations and assessments, including exam timetables.

In September 2023, Ofqual and the DfE published [joint consultation decisions on long-term resilience arrangements](#). As in 2023, Ofqual has provided [guidance on collecting evidence of student performance to ensure resilience in the qualifications system](#) for students entering GCSEs, AS and A levels, the Advanced Extension Award and Project qualifications. For VTQs and other qualifications used alongside or instead of GCSEs, AS and A levels, awarding organisations will provide guidance where needed and will contact schools and colleges with more information.

In December 2022, Qualifications Wales published [guidance for contingency assessment arrangements](#) for GCSEs, AS and A levels and Skills Challenge Certificates in the event that a national decision is made to cancel exams. This guidance is still relevant for the current academic year.

The DfE has updated its guidance on [handling strike action in schools](#) in England in light of the industrial action in 2023. The guidance recommends schools should prioritise the running of examinations and assessments on any strike days, and should review their contingency plans to make this happen. Schools, colleges and other exam

centres must speak to the relevant awarding organisations if they are expecting any disruption that might affect the sitting of exams and assessments.

The DfE has also issued [guidance for education settings with confirmed reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete \(RAAC\)](#) in their buildings. It includes the need for contingencies for possible disruption to examinations and links to the existing emergency planning guidance.

We will update this page as necessary, with any further relevant links, should national disruption occur.

General contingency guidance

- [emergency planning and response for education, childcare and children's social care settings](#) from the DfE in England
- [handling strike action in schools](#) from the DfE in England
- [school organisation: local-authority-maintained schools](#) from the DfE in England
- [reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete: guidance for education settings with confirmed RAAC](#) from the DfE in England
- [exceptional closure days: Northern Ireland](#) from the Department of Education in Northern Ireland
- [checklist - exceptional closure of schools](#) from the Department of Education in Northern Ireland
- [school terms and school closures](#) from NI Direct
- [opening schools, childcare and play settings in extreme bad weather and extreme hot weather](#) - guidance for schools from the Welsh Government
- [emergency planning and response guidance for education and childcare settings](#)- guidance for schools and education settings from the Welsh Government
- [protective security and preparedness for education settings](#) from the DfE
- [police guidance](#) from National Counter Terrorism Security Office and partners on preparing for threats
- [cyber security guidance for schools and colleges](#) from the National Cyber Security Centre

(Ofqual guidance extract above 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** (last updated 7 May 2024) 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

Instructions for conducting examinations www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/instructions-for-conducting-examinations-ice/ (with particular reference to section 15, **Contingency planning**)

Preparing for disruption to examinations www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/

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

Guidance notes on alternative site arrangements www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms/

Guidance notes for transferred candidates www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms/

A guide to the special consideration process www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-reasonable-adjustments/

Guidance for centres on cyber security (Effective from November 2023; Revised July 2025) www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/

5 tips to get exam ready and stay cyber safe! www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/blogs/

GOV.UK

Emergency planning and response: Exam and assessment disruption www.gov.uk/government/publications/emergency-planning-and-response-for-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care-settings

Dispatch of exam scripts guide: Contingency planning www.gov.uk/government/publications/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-yellow-label-service

National Cyber Security Centre

Cyber Security for Schools www.ncsc.gov.uk/section/education-skills/cyber-security-schools

Cyber security training for school staff www.ncsc.gov.uk/information/cyber-security-training-schools