



Exam Contingency Plan

2026/27

Approved/reviewed by

AGB

Date of next review

July 2026

This plan is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Key staff involved in contingency planning

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	Mr Philip Jones
Exams officer line manager (Senior Leader)	Mr Neil Barnes
Examinations officer	Mrs Joanne Miles
SENCo	Ms Jessamy Hill
SLT member(s)	Miss Rachel Moon Mr James Speed Mr Richard Knott Mrs Rebecca Wright Mr Neil Barnes
Data/SIMs Manager	Mrs Marianne Cureton
Specialist Assessor	Mrs Gemma Easom
Lead Invigilators	Mrs Lesley Frajt Mr Tobias Cobb Mrs Gunda Hoffmann Mrs Susanne Brown Mrs Joanne Mercer Mrs Carole Wilcox

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Purpose of the plan

The purpose of this plan is:

- To examine potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the management and administration of exams.
- To mitigate the impact of disruptions by providing actions or procedures to follow

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 Centre's should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted*.

This plan also confirms The Goodwin Academy is compliant with the JCQ regulation (*General Regulations for Approved Centre's 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.*

Possible causes of 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

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

- ▶ 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
- ▶ 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, for example very late arrival, suspected malpractice, special consideration
- ▶ candidates' scripts not dispatched as required for marking to awarding bodies

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Results and post-results

- ▶ *access to examination results affecting the distribution of results to candidates*
- ▶ *the facilitation of the post-results services*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ Data Manager and SIMs Manager (MCu) to take over responsibilities should absence of EO have the potential to affect the meeting of deadlines.
- ▶ Staff members to work closely with EO to ensure they are up to date with the exam cycle and responsibilities at each point in time. This will be done under the supervision of the Assistant Principal (NBa) and Head of Centre.

2. 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*
- ▶ *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*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ The SENCo (JHi) and Specialist Teacher (CTo) to work closely to identify students where applications for access arrangements may be required.
- ▶ EO to be kept informed of all access arrangements applied for.

3. 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*
- ▶ *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*

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- ▶ *Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet awarding body submission deadlines*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ The Examinations Officer to liaise with acting Head of Department and/or SLT, if necessary, to ensure all necessary deadlines are adhered to. Where this is not possible, the EO will liaise with the relevant Awarding Body and act upon advice received.
Deadlines are set to allow enough time for students to be informed of centre assessed marks prior to submission to the awarding body.

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

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- ▶ *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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ EO responsible for recruitment of invigilators in the Autumn term of the summer series. Advance planning required ensuring enough are available for the sittings.
- ▶ Head of Centre to be informed if recruitment necessary.

5. 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ EO responsible for ensuring planning of rooms is completed by the end of the Spring term to identify potential rooming issues.
- ▶ Alternative venues within the school to be made available by teaching staff in the event of an unexpected incident.
- ▶ Head of Centre to liaise with EO to ensure no disruption due to room shortages.

6. Failure of IT systems

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- ▶ *MIS system failure at final entry deadline*
- ▶ *MIS system failure during exams preparation*
- ▶ *MIS system failure at results release time*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ The EO, in consultation with the SLT, will make entries from another venue direct to the Awarding Bodies. Results may also be accessed directly from the AB. At all times during the system failure the EO will liaise with the AB to minimise disruption and costs incurred.

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7. Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lock down)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Whole centre evacuation (or lock down) during exam time due to serious incident resulting in exam candidates being unable to start, proceed with or complete their exams

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

Where examinations are taking place (advice from [JCQ – Joint Council for Qualifications](#)):

- ▶ Immediate Action:
 - Evacuate the examination room in line with the instructions given by the appropriate authority
 - Make sure that the candidates are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room to make sure there is no discussion about the examination
 - Make a note of the time of the interruption and how long it lasted
 - Make a full report of the incident and of the action taken, and send to the relevant awarding body
- ▶ Where evacuation is necessary during an exam students and Invigilators are to assemble on the grassed area by the Astro turf in seat order. A record of the time of the examination is stopped is kept.
- ▶ In the event of a total site evacuation students and staff are evacuated to Tides Leisure centre.
- ▶ It is recommended that schools check on the relevant awarding board websites for any further/updated recommendations

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ Head of Centre responsible for finding alternative venues/methods of learning.
- ▶ Priority given to exam cohort.
- ▶ Centre to communicate with parents and students.

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

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.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ Procedures for absence outlined to parents and students in the examination booklet information given each year.
- ▶ EO will contact the relevant AB to discuss alternative arrangements and liaise with the SLT to take appropriate action.

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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 (including centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency)

A centre, which is unable to open as normal for examinations, must inform each awarding organisation with which examinations are due to be taken as soon as is possible.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ Head of Centre responsible for finding alternative venues/methods of learning.
- ▶ Priority given to exam cohort.
- ▶ Centre to communicate with parents and students.

11. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers

Criteria for implementation of the plan

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

The centre to communicate with awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of papers

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ EO to contact relevant awarding bodies for advice and permission to print off exam papers.

12. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts

The centre to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to resolve the issue

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ The EO will contact the AB to notify them of any such difficulties and put in place suitable alternative arrangements.

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

It is the responsibility of the head of centre to communicate this immediately to the relevant awarding organisation(s) and subsequently to students and their parents or carers.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked
- ▶ *It is the responsibility of the head of centre to communicate this immediately to the relevant awarding organisation(s) and subsequently to students and their parents or carers*

14. Centre unable to distribute results as normal

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post-results services
Centres to contact awarding organisations about alternative options.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ EO and Head of Centre to assess alternative arrangements for issuing results with the regulators.
- ▶ Head of Centre to inform students and parents about delay as soon as possible.

Further guidance to inform and implement contingency planning

Ofqual

What schools, colleges and other Centre's should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted

1. Contingency planning

You should prepare for possible disruption to exams and other assessments as part of your emergency planning and make sure your staff are aware of these plans...

2. Disruption to assessments or exams

In the absence of any instruction from the relevant awarding organisation, the school or college should assume that any exam or timetabled assessment should take place if it is possible for it to do so. This may mean having to locate alternative premises.

If the exam or assessment cannot take place, or if a student misses an exam or loses their assessment due to an emergency or other event outside the control of the school or college, you should discuss alternative arrangements with your awarding organisation.

2.1 The school or college should consider the following steps

Exam planning

1. Review your contingency plan well in advance of each exam series.
2. Ensure that copies of question papers are received and stored under secure conditions.

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 the school or college is able to open.
3. Identify whether the exam can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation.
4. Where accommodation is limited, prioritise students whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exams when planned.
5. Communicate with parents, carers and students regarding any changes to the exam timetable.
6. Advise students, where appropriate, to sit exams in the next available series.

After the exam

1. Consider whether students may be eligible for special consideration.
2. Ensure that scripts are stored under secure conditions.
3. 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.

2.2 The awarding organisation should take the following steps

Exam planning

1. Establish, maintain and at all times comply with an up to date written contingency plan.
2. Ensure that the arrangements that are in place with schools and colleges enable them to deliver and award qualifications in accordance with its conditions of recognition.

In the event of disruption

1. Take all reasonable steps to mitigate any negative effect, in relation to its qualifications, arising from any disruption.
2. Provide effective guidance to any of its centres responsible for delivering qualifications on its behalf.
3. Ensure that where an assessment is required to be completed under specified conditions, students 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 a negative effect on students, standards or public confidence.

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.

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2.3 When a student misses an exam or is disadvantaged by the disruption

If you feel that the performance of all or some of your students has been negatively affected by the disruption you should ask your awarding organisation about applying for special consideration. The decision about what special consideration is, or is not appropriate, is for awarding organisations to make. Their decisions might be different, for different qualifications and for different subjects. However, we encourage awarding organisations to adopt a consistent approach, including between learners, schools or colleges, and awarding organisations, when dealing with a number of similar cases.

[Ofqual guidance extract 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*, sections 1 and 2 <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 Contingency planning

The qualifications 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.

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.

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.

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.

Further information may be found at:

<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 guidance taken directly from JCQ *Instructions for conducting examinations* <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>, page iv]

General regulations for approved centres

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

Guidance on *alternative site* arrangements

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

Guidance on *transferred candidate* arrangements

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/entries>

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>

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GOV.UK

Emergency planning and response: Severe weather; Exam disruption

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

Teaching time lost due to severe weather conditions

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/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>

Statutory guidance on school closures

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools>

Wales

School closures – opening schools in extreme bad weather

<http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/publications>

Northern Ireland

Exceptional closure days

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/exceptional-closure-days>

Checklist for Principals when considering Opening or Closure of School

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/checklist-exceptional-closure-schools>

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be monitored and evaluated every July against the following:

- Complaints from students / parents received
- Subjects failing to meet examination board criteria for any assessments, coursework or coverage of syllabus

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