LORETO GRAMMAR SCHOOL

CONTINGENCY PLAN

2026/2027

This plan is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
Mrs Stokes	
Date of next review	October 2027

Key staff involved in the plan

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	**Mrs Beever**
Exams officer line manager (Senior leader)	**Mrs Stokes**
Exams officer	**Mrs Caulkin**
ALS lead/SENCo	**Mrs Brooks**
Deputy Headteacher	**Mrs Walker**

Purpose of the plan

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

By outlining actions/procedures to be invoked in case of disruption it is intended to mitigate the impact these disruptions have on processes at Loreto Grammar School.

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* and the JCQ guidance Preparing for disruption to examinations.

This plan also confirms how Loreto Grammar School complies with JCQ's General Regulations for Approved Centres (5.3 *Centre management*) by:

- having 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

- its contingency planning including succession arrangements for membrs of staff involved in examination and assessment administration

Contingency arrangements

Loreto Grammar School **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.

Loreto Grammar 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.

Loreto Grammar School **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 via the Cloud. Appropriate security arrangements must be implemented which protect candidates' work in the event of IT system corruption and cyber-attacks (GR 3.17-19)

National Centre Number Register and other information requirements

The head of centre will ensure that Loreto Grammar School responds to 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 (GR5.3)

Head of centre/senior leader(s) with oversight of examination and assessment adminstration absence at a critical stage of the exam cycle

Where the head of centre/ senior leader may be absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle, main duties and responsibilities will be escalted in accordance with the centre's writen escalation process.

Possible causes of disruption to the exam process

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

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

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

- A temporary examinations officer will be appointed and carry out duties as outlined in examinations officer job description.
- Examination boards informed to ensure that the temporary examinations officer receives all necessary information.
- Temporary examinations officer to liaise with Mrs Stokes to ensure that all necessary arrangements are made.
- Temporary examinations officer to be given copies of all necessary documents and policies to ensure that no candidates are disadvantaged by this disruption.
- Governing body informed.

2. SENCo (or equivalent role) 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

- SENCO to work with examinations officer, pastoral leads and assistant headteacher to ensure that all parties are aware of what access arrangements have been put into place to support candidates with SEND.
- Examinations officer, pastoral leads and assistant headteacher to have written documentation of these access requirements.
- Examinations officer to liaise with examination board, teachers and parents as needed.
- Temporary SENCO to be appointed to oversee the access arrangements for candidates with SEND.

3. Teaching staff extended absence at a critical stage of 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 (including controlled assessments and coursework) 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
- Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet awarding body submission deadlines

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Heads of Department/ seconds in department to be responsible for overseeing and setting NEA tasks; for informing candidates of centre assessed marks and for ensuring that candidates receive any pre-release materials if the class teacher is absent.
- Mrs Stokes to be responsible for issuing clear guidelines on this, to both teaching staff and candidates.

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

- Examinations officer to plan in advance how many invigilators will be needed

- All invigilators to be given clear training so that they conduct examinations in line with JCQ's guidelines.
- Invigilators to call in by 7.45am on the morning of the examination if they are absent on the day of the examination, so that alternative invigilators can be contacted in time
- Examinations officer to keep a list of internal staff that could be used as invigilators in the event of an emergency.

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

The centre will:

- 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.
- where possible, move to alternative venue, prioritising candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned.
- Alternative site details: tbc
- communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue
- ensure the secure transportation of question papers or assessment materials to the alternative venue
- 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.

6. Cyber security

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Where any incidents might compromise any aspect of assessment delivery, such as a cyber-attack

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

The centre will:

Ensure there are procedures in place to maintain the security of user accounts by:

- providing training for authorised staff on the importance of creating strong unique passwords and keeping all account details secret
- providing training for staff on awareness of all types of social engineering/ phishing attempts
- enabling additional security settings wherever possible
- updating any passwords that may have been exposed
- setting up secure account recovery options
- reviewing and managing connected applications
- monitoring accounts and regularly reviewing account access, including removing access when no longer required
- ensuring authorised members of staff securely access awarding bodies' online systems in line with awarding body regulations regarding cyber security and the JCQ document *Guidance for centres on cyber security*
- Authorised staff will have access, where necessary, to a device which complies with awarding bodies' multi-factor authentication (MFA) requirements
- reporting any actual or suspected compromise of an awarding body's online systems immediately to the relevant awarding body.

7. Failure of IT systems

Criteria for implementation of the plan

IT 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 durning an on-screen examination

MIS system failure at results release time

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Ensure that candidates' work is stored on One Drive and backed up both in school and off-site using the Cloud (GR 3.36)
- Secure accounts for staff, with all staff undertaking annual training via National Cyber Security Centre (see Data protection policy)
- SIMS permissions regularly reviewed by our GDPR officer for accuracy and specific need of the staff member.
- SIMS backed up daily.
- Examinations officer to inform examination boards and Trafford of MIS system failure and follow advice from them.
- If failure occurs at results release time, parents and candidates to be informed and updates to be posted on the school website.
- Colleges and UCAS to be informed of any MIS system failure, where applicable.

8. 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

- Refer to and invoke its **Exams Emergency Evacuation Procedure** in line with its **Exams Lockdown Procedure**
- 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.

9. Disruption of teaching time in the weeks before an exam – 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

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.
- 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.

10. Candidates at risk of being unable to take examinations - centre remains open

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Candidates at risk of being unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal because of a crisis

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- focus on options that enable candidates to take their examinations (referencing the JCQ document *Preparing for disruption to examinations*)
- 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.
- 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.

11. Centre may not be able to open for examinations

(Including in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency)

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

The centre will:

- focus on enabling candidates to take their examinations
- (although the decision on whether it is safe to open lies with the head of centre) 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 (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)
- discuss alternative arrangements with the awarding body if the exam or assessment cannot take place.
- follow guidance provided by the awarding body on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances.
- where accommodation is limited, prioritise candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned.
- communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue.
- 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.

12. 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

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

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.

13. Delay in collection arrangements for completed examination scripts

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts/assessment evidence

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

The centre will:

- where examinations are part of the national 'yellow label' service or where awarding organisations arrange collections, seek advice and instructions from the relevant awarding organisations and will not make its own arrangements for transportation unless told to do so by the awarding organisation
- for any examinations where the centre makes its own arrangements for transportation, investigate alternative options that comply with the requirements detailed in the JCQ **Instructions for conducting examinations**
- keep completed examination scripts in the secure room until as close to the collection time as possible - ensuring script packages are not left unattended in the collection area

14. 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

Completed examination scripts/assessment evidence does not reach awarding organisations

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of 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.

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) or facilitate post results services

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

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

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.
- 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 services.

Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning

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 schoolsfrom 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

JCQ

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 www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/

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

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 www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/

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