

Policy document control box	
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Policy owner (including job title)	Christina Pepper (Head of Centre)
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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 Red Balloon Learner Centre Reading. By outlining actions/procedures to be followed in case of disruption it is intended to mitigate the impact these disruptions have on our exam process.

Alongside internal processes, this plan is derived from information contained in the **Joint contingency plan for the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland** where it is stated that “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.”

Causes of potential disruption to the exam process

Red Balloon Learner Centre Reading (“The Centre”)

1. Rebecca Pittman (Exams officer) absent for an extended period at key points in the exam process of May/June 2021

In a period of extended absence, Christina Pepper, Sarah Doran and Ohana Rowen are sufficiently trained and would take responsibility for carrying out the duties of the Exams Officer. 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.

2. Sarah Doran (SENCo) has extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

In the event of the extended absence of the SENCo, Juliette Fraser (RBAir SENCo) to assist.

3. Teaching staff have extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

In the event of a period of extended absence of a member of the teaching staff, Christina Pepper to ensure that they, or other nominated persons, are aware of all planned entries and deadlines for coursework and are able to ensure appropriate cover is provided.

4. Unavailability of invigilator(s) at last minute

Rebecca Pittman to ensure that another trained member of staff is available to invigilate.

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

The examinations are accommodated within the school. Rooms allocated in advance of the exams. If the school were to be evacuated at short notice we would accommodate students in a vacant classroom at the nearby (ie Reading College or Leighton Park). If the examination had already begun, students would be escorted under close supervision to maintain exam conditions.

In the case of last minute unavailability of a room (e.g. through flood or electrical hazard) use of other rooms for examinations must take precedence over all other activities even if that requires the cancellation of certain classes / activities.

6. Failure of IT systems

The school endeavours to minimise any IT disruption via resilient design and preventative maintenance. In the event of an issue this would be dealt with by the IT support team who test and update the systems on a regular basis. Where such failure impacted on scheduled exams, steps would be taken to resolve the problem as quickly as possible. All data is backed up and accessible regardless of IT failure.

7. Disruption of teaching time – i.e. centre closed for an extended period or candidates unable to attend for an extended period during normal teaching or study thus interrupting the provision of normal teaching and learning.

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. The Centre must ensure alternative arrangements (e.g. alternative building, online learning) are made under such circumstances.

8. Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period

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.

The Centre might use alternative venues in agreement with relevant awarding organisations (e.g. Reading College or Leighton Park).

The Centre may offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available 'series'.

The Centre should apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements.

9. Candidates unable to take examinations because of a personal 'crisis'

Response is dependent on the type of issue. The procedure for absence is outlined in the examinations policy. The Centre will offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series.

The Centre will apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements. Candidates are only eligible for special consideration if they have been fully prepared and have covered the whole course but are affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control. If a candidate chooses not to sit an examination for other reasons they should be aware that special consideration rules will not apply.

10. Late arrival of examination papers / students issued with wrong exam papers

The Centre must check all exam papers upon arrival in school and will alert the appropriate awarding body of any discrepancies.

If this happens on the day of the exam, the exam board will be contacted immediately. Awarding organisations may be able to provide centres with electronic access to examination papers via a secure link or to fax examination papers to centres if electronic transfer is not possible. The examinations officer would need to ensure that copies are received, made and stored under secure conditions.

11. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

In the first instance centres will seek advice from awarding organisations and/or the normal collection agency regarding collection.

The Centre must not make their own arrangements for transportation without approval from awarding organisations.

The Centre must ensure secure storage of completed examination papers until collection. All examination scripts must be stored in the secure cabinet.

12. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked i.e. scripts or other assessment evidence are destroyed, lost or damaged before being marked

The Centre must notify awarding bodies immediately. Awarding organisations may then generate candidate marks for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement as defined by the awarding organisations. Candidates should retake affected assessment(s) at a subsequent assessment window.

13. Centre unable to distribute results as 'normal'

The Centre should notify awarding bodies and seek to make arrangements to access results at an alternative site (possible to access from home).

14. Examinations cancelled by Government

All published guidelines will be followed.