Amplify Education

Examination Contingency Policy

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Date	Page	Change	Purpose of Change
April 2026		New policy	New over-arching policy for the Trust

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1. Statement of Intent

Amplify Education is committed to upholding the highest standards of integrity, fairness, inclusivity and compliance in the administration and delivery of all examinations and assessments. This Examination Contingency Plan sets out how Amplify Education and its schools will prepare for, respond to and manage any disruption to the examination process.

We recognise that examination and assessment systems are vulnerable to a range of internal and external risks, including staff absence, building unavailability, IT failure, cyber incidents, adverse weather, public emergencies and candidate-specific crises. Through proactive planning and clear escalation protocols, this plan ensures that disruption is minimised and that candidates are not unfairly disadvantaged.

This plan ensures that Amplify Education will:

- protect the security and confidentiality of examination materials
- maintain examination conduct standards
- support prompt, transparent communication with awarding bodies, candidates, parents and staff
- ensure full compliance with JCQ regulations and the Ofqual/JCQ Joint Contingency Plan
- ensure candidates remain available up to and including the JCQ contingency day.

This policy is reviewed annually and following any significant incident to ensure continuous improvement and alignment with national requirements.

2. Values, Principles and Standards

Amplify is **a bold voice for Bristol** - speaking with ambition and channelling the city's spirit into a shared journey of belief, opportunity and citizenship.
We **build belief** in every young person, shaping a future where every voice matters, every story is heard, and every learner moves forward with confidence.
We **expand opportunities** and nurture potential to enrich each learner's journey with a passport of inclusive, academic, creative and musical experiences.
We **strengthen citizenship** through connecting communities, educating to build unity and pride. This is Bristol, represented.

3. Aims, Objectives and Scope

3.1 Objectives

The objectives of this Examination Contingency Plan are to:

- define examination contingencies clearly and consistently across Amplify Education schools
- prevent or reduce the likelihood of disruption through robust systems, training and planning
- ensure a transparent, fair and JCQ-compliant response to any disruption
- protect the integrity and security of qualifications
- establish practical response strategies for a wide range of disruption scenarios
- ensure effective communication with all stakeholders during incidents
- ensure compliance with the Ofqual/JCQ Joint Contingency Plan for Widespread Disruption

3.2 Scope and Integration with Other Policies

This policy applies to:

- all Amplify Education schools
- all candidates entered for qualifications administered by an awarding body
- all staff involved in exam administration, teaching or support

This policy operates in conjunction with:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Business Continuity and Emergency Planning Policies

Further Guidance and External References:

- JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres
- JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations
- Ofqual Joint Contingency Plan (England, Wales and Northern Ireland)
- DfE Emergency Planning and Response for Education Settings
- National Cyber Security Centre guidance for schools

4. Responsibilities and accountabilities

4.1 Trust Central Team

- ensure the policy is compliant, equitable and regularly reviewed

- provide oversight, training and support to schools
- monitor contingency-related risks and incidents across the Trust

4.2 Headteacher / Head of Centre

- ensure full implementation of JCQ contingency requirements
- maintain effective contingency arrangements for venues, staffing, IT and security
- ensure secure storage and handling of examination materials at all times
- liaise with awarding bodies during incidents
- investigate and respond to complaints related to examination contingencies
- ensure accurate completion of the National Centre Number Register

4.3 School Leadership

- ensure staff induction and training on contingency procedures
- monitor compliance and risk
- ensure pupils and parents receive appropriate briefings
- ensure alternative arrangements are activated promptly when required

4.4 All Staff

- follow examination regulations and contingency procedures
- report concerns or risks promptly
- support a calm, inclusive examination environment
- maintain confidentiality and integrity of assessments

4.5 Parents

- support their child in complying with examination requirements
- raise concerns constructively with the school where needed

4.6 Pupils

- follow all examination rules and instructions
- attend all rescheduled examinations, including the JCQ contingency day
- communicate any issues affecting attendance or performance

4.7 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- assess and act upon safeguarding concerns arising during disruption
- support vulnerable pupils affected by contingency arrangements
- ensure safeguarding considerations are incorporated into contingency planning.

4.8 Exams Officer

- maintain and implement a current, centre-specific examinations contingency plan in line with JCQ requirements
- identify, manage and escalate risks to examination delivery, including staffing, venues, IT and security
- ensure the secure handling of examination materials and the accurate administration of timetables, seating and invigilation, including alternative arrangements where required
- liaise with awarding bodies, JCQ, the Trust and senior leaders during disruption and apply for approved contingency measures where appropriate
- maintain accurate records of incidents, actions and decisions, and ensure systems and data are securely backed up
- ensure access arrangements continue to be implemented during contingency situations, working with the SENCo as required

5. Policy and Contingency Framework

Amplify Education schools must maintain a current written contingency plan covering all aspects of examination and assessment delivery, in line with JCQ General Regulations (GR 3.17–3.19).

Plans must address:

- absence of key staff at critical stages of the exam cycle
- partial or full site unavailability
- IT system failure or cyber-attack
- secure alternative venues
- emergency contacts during holidays
- failure of digital assessment platforms
- loss or corruption of digital candidate evidence.

Candidate work must be backed up securely, ideally across two separate systems with one off-site backup.

Heads of Centre must complete the annual National Centre Number Register update by the published deadline each October, ensuring accurate emergency contact details.

Where the Head of Centre is absent at a critical stage, responsibilities must be escalated in line with the school's deputisation arrangements.

6. Causes of Potential Disruption and Required Actions

The following scenarios apply across Amplify Education schools and incorporate actions from the Ofqual/JCQ Joint Contingency Plan:

- Exams Officer extended absence
- SENCo absence affecting access arrangements
- Teaching staff absence impacting entries or internal assessments
- Invigilator shortages
- Exam rooms or venues unavailable
- IT or MIS system failure
- Cyber-security incidents
- Extended school closure
- Candidates unable to attend examinations
- Centre unable to open
- Disruption to delivery of exam papers
- Disruption to dispatch of completed scripts
- Assessment evidence unavailable for marking
- Centre unable to distribute results or manage post-results services

For each scenario, schools must:

- notify awarding bodies immediately where required
- follow JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations
- apply for special consideration where eligibility criteria are met
- document decisions and actions taken
- communicate promptly with candidates and parents

All incidents affecting examination delivery must be reported immediately through the appropriate channels. Records of decisions, actions and communications must be retained securely in line with data protection requirements.

Whistleblowing protections apply to anyone raising concerns in good faith.

7. Monitoring and Review

The Trust will oversee contingency related incidents, risks and compliance across all schools. This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if JCQ or regulatory updates require changes. Findings will be reported to the Education committee of the Trust Board and used to strengthen practice.