BIG CREATIVE EDUCATION APPRENTICESHIPS TRAINING ACADEMY

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EXAMS CONTINGENCY POLICY

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Approved by the Principal

1. Purpose of the plan

1.1 This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the management and administration of the exam process at Big Creative Academy. 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.

1.2 Alongside internal processes, this plan is informed by 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."*

2. Exam officer extended absence at key points in the exam process

2.1 In a period of extended absence the Heads of Curriculum for Core Subjects would take responsibility for carrying out the duties of the Exams Officer and would work in consultation with the Director of Curriculum and Quality and the Principal. 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 in extremis.

3. SENCO extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

3.1 In the event of the extended absence of the SENCo, appropriate backfilling of responsibilities would be decided upon by Director of Student Services in consultation with the Director of Curriculum and Quality who is the Head of Centre.

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

4.1 In the event of a period of extended absence of a member of the teaching staff, the Heads of Curriculum would arrange teaching cover from within the staff team and/or the wider staffing establishment at the Academy. Their practice in terms of assessments would be monitored by the relevant Heads of Curriculum.

5. Lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence

5.1 New invigilators undergo training by the Exams Officer and complete a period of shadowing, following appointment. They are permitted to work independently once they, and the Exams Officer are happy that they are competent and confident in processes and procedures.

5.2 Annual training sessions are held for all invigilators in order to refresh their knowledge and communicate JCQ regulation changes and update local information. Minor absence issues (such as an invigilator calling in sick) are covered by another member staff covering the exam.

6. Lack of appropriate exam rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice

6.1 The majority of exams are accommodated in the Common Room. Smaller rooms and one to one room are provided for students with access arrangements.

7. Failure of ICT systems

7.1 The Academy endeavours to minimise any ICT disruption via resilient design and preventative maintenance. In the event of an issue this would be dealt with the ICT 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.

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

8.1 In the event of the Centre not being able to open as normal, appropriate communication with the relevant Awarding Bodies would be undertaken by the Exams Officer and alternative options would be explored such as moving exams to an external location (such as leisure centres, hotels, local schools, etc. and appropriate transport arrangements would be made). All arrangements would be agreed with the Awarding Body before being put in place.

8.2 In such instances, details would be communicated to candidates via the school's website, email and text facilities. Staff involved in exams (including invigilators) would be contacted by email, telephone and text.

9. Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis

9.1 The response is dependent on the type of issue. If a candidate is able to sit the exam but cannot attend the centre due to a crisis, appropriate communication with the relevant Awarding Bodies would be undertaken by the Exams Officer and alternative options would be explored (home, hospital, alternative centre etc.). Appropriate use of special consideration policies would be applied should the candidate/candidates be unable to attend due to unforeseen circumstances and where alternative arrangements could not be made or are not agreed by the Awarding Body.

10. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

10.1 All scripts are returned using the designated dispatch methods prescribed by the Awarding Body concerned. Where this becomes unavailable or inappropriate, the Awarding Body will be contacted to discuss suitable alternatives.

11. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked

11.1 In the event of large-scale damage or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked, the Exams Officer would notify the Awarding Body immediately for advice and further instructions. Student marks would be submitted based on appropriate evidence and candidates would be given the opportunity to retake in a subsequent series.

12. Centre unable to distribute results as normal

12.1 The Centre distributes the results ‘as normal’ via collection by learner. Where learners do not collect results in person, these will distribute via post.

Further guidance to inform and implement contingency planning please visit:
https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/preparing-for-disruption-to-exams/