



MORLEY COLLEGE LONDON

Exams Contingency Policy

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| POLICY OWNER: | Chief Planning and Data Officer |
| FINAL APPROVAL BY: | Policy Committee |
| Policy Category: | Corporate |
| Approved by Policy Committee: | 31 October 2023 |
| Approved by Governing Body: | N/A |
| Review Date: | 31 October 2027 |

1. Introduction, Purpose and Scope of Policy:

- 1.1 This Exams Contingency policy outlines the guidelines and protocols to be followed in the event of unforeseen circumstances that may disrupt the regular examination process at Morley College London. The purpose of this policy is to ensure fairness, integrity, and consistency in the administration of exams while accommodating unexpected situations that may arise.
- 1.2 This policy applies to all students and staff involved in the examination process at Morley College London.

2. Equality and Diversity Analysis Screening:

- 2.1 In accordance with the College's Equality and Diversity policy, the development of this policy complies with the Equality Act 2010 in ensuring due regard to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations.
- 2.2 The policy does not discriminate against different groups and hence an equality analysis is not required.

3. Applicability:

- 3.1 The policy is applicable to all staff and students involved in running or participating in examinations.

4. Definitions:

- 4.1 JCQ: Joint Council of Qualifications
- 4.2 OFQUAL: The Office of Qualifications and Examination Regulations
- 4.3 ALS: Additional Learning Support
- 4.4 AEO: Assessment and Examinations Officer

5. Statutory and regulatory requirements:

- 5.1 Alongside internal processes, this policy is informed by other key publications:
 - 5.1.1 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 publication 'What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted'.
 - 5.1.2 The JCQ Joint Contingency Plan for the Examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the JCQ notice Preparing for disruption to examinations (effective from September 2022).
 - 5.1.3 This policy also confirms Morley College London's compliance with JCQ's General Regulations for Approved Centres (section 5.3).

6. Policy Objectives:

- 6.1. To ensure the College is compliant with regulatory requirements and the impact on students in the event of unforeseen circumstances is minimised.

7. Implementation of Policy:

7.1. Identification of Potential Disruptions:

The Senior Leadership Team proactively identifies potential disruptions that may impact the examination process, such as natural disasters, severe weather conditions, power outages, technological failures, and public health emergencies.

7.2. Cyber attack

7.2.1. The College will seek to mitigate the impact of the disruption on exam arrangements.

7.2.2. The College has robust security measures in place to prevent unauthorised access as detailed in the Access Control Policy.

7.2.3. Staff undergo awareness training including phishing campaigns and are regularly communicated with regarding security best practices.

7.2.4. In the event of a cyber-attack, Business Continuity Plan will be utilised. This could include but not limited to the isolation of an area of the network, partial shutdown of some services or complete shutdown due to total loss of data.

7.3. Communication Channels:

The College has established effective communication channels to disseminate information to students and staff in the event of a contingency. These channels include email notifications, College website announcements, social media platforms, and direct communication with relevant stakeholders.

7.4. Disaster Recovery Team:

The Disaster Recovery Team (DRT) is responsible for assessing the situation, making decisions, and implementing appropriate measures to address exam disruptions. The DRT includes representatives from the Senior Leadership Team, The Governing Body, IT services, Management Information Services, and relevant professional services staff.

7.5. Student Support and Appeals

7.5.1. Student Support Services:

The college shall provide necessary support services to assist students affected by exam disruptions. These services may include academic counselling, mental health support, and guidance on alternative assessment methods.

7.5.2. Appeals Process:

If students believe that the contingency measures have adversely affected their performance or created an unfair disadvantage, they may submit an appeal following the College's established procedures for academic appeals (see 5.4 in Assessment Manual). The College administration shall handle these appeals promptly, ensuring a fair and impartial review process.

7.6. The College will review contingency plans well in advance of each exam or assessment series including consider how, if the contingency plan is invoked, the College will comply with the awarding organisation's requirements.

7.7. In the absence of any instruction from the relevant awarding organisation, the College will make sure that any exam or timetabled assessment takes place if it is possible to hold it. This may mean relocating to alternative premises.

7.8. The College will discuss alternative arrangements with the awarding organisation if:

7.8.1. the exam or assessment cannot take place.

7.8.2. a student misses an exam or loses their assessment due to an emergency, or other event, outside of the student's control.

- 7.9. In the event of disruption, the College will:
- 7.9.1. Contact the relevant awarding organisation and follow its instructions.
 - 7.9.2. Take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether your centre is able to open.
 - 7.9.3. Identify whether the exam or timetabled assessment can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation, ensuring the secure transportation of questions papers or assessment materials to the alternative venue.
 - 7.9.4. Where accommodation is limited, prioritise students whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned.
 - 7.9.5. In the event of an evacuation during an examination please refer to JCQ's Centre emergency evacuation procedure.
 - 7.9.6. Communicate with parents, carers and students any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue.
 - 7.9.7. Communicate with any external assessors or relevant third parties regarding any changes to the exam or assessment timetable.
- 7.10. In the event that the government determines that exams are not able to go ahead the College will refer to the Assessment Resilience Arrangements outlined in the Assessment Manual.

8. Communication and Training:

- 8.1 The Senior Leadership Team shall ensure that this policy is widely disseminated among students, faculty, and staff. It should be readily accessible through the College's website and other appropriate platforms.

9. Monitoring and Reporting:

- 9.1 This Exams Contingency Policy shall be reviewed periodically to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Any updates or amendments shall be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

10. Related References, Policies, Procedures, Forms and other Appendices:

- 10.1 Business Continuity Plan (confidential)
- 10.2 [Assessment Manual](#)
- 10.3 [Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy](#)
- 10.4 [Access Control Policy](#)

Appendix 1: Examples of Disruption

| Disruption | Criteria for Implementation | Centre Actions to Mitigate Disruption |
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| Absence of the College Examinations Lead during key points of the exam process | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key tasks required in the management and administration of the exam cycle not undertaken (e.g. planning period, entries deadline, examination days, results day) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up-to-date procedural information stored in shared location • Upskilling members of Exam team to enable them to assume responsibility with the support of the Head of IS |
| Absence of the Additional Learning Support (ALS) Manager during key points of the exam process | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key tasks required in the management and administration of the access arrangements process within the exam cycle not undertaken (e.g. candidates not tested, approval not applied for, arrangements not put into place) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of Student Services to ensure functionality of ALS team • ALS team to collate Normal Way of Working evidence and assessments • Exams Team to work with ALS Team to ensure access arrangement deadlines are met |
| Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to recruit and train sufficient invigilators to conduct exams • Invigilator shortage on peak exam days • Invigilator absence on the day of an exam (e.g. due to transport strikes) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum and professional service staff trained to provide cover for any shortfalls or invigilator absence • List of trained non-staff invigilators and contact details maintained by Exams Team • Exams Team and ALS to check if possible to combine rooms used for learners with access arrangements to release an invigilator • Advance communication to invigilators of known issues (e.g. transport strikes) |
| Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 (e.g. flooding of room, room has become unsafe) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exam planning includes advance room booking • Priority given to exams and classes moved to make suitable rooms available • Exams Team liaise with Estates team to find suitable alternative rooms if required • Alternate College Centres considered if cannot be accommodated at initial Centre • Alternate external locations considered where no suitable College locations are available |
| Failure of IT Systems (including cyber-attack) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System or power failures interrupting key exams processes, such as failure of MI system | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exam entries made in advance of deadlines |

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| affecting examination administration | at final entry deadline, during exams preparation or on the results release date | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exams Team to access alternate device/location to attempt connection • Head of Centre/Exams Lead to contact relevant Awarding Organisation to notify and discuss alternate access arrangements • IT Team made aware of key exam-related dates (particularly exam results day) in advance so that they can provide additional technical support where possible |
| Failure of IT Systems (including cyber-attack) affecting learner examinations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System or power failures interrupting the running of online/ on-screen examinations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT Team made aware of key exam-related dates in advance so that they can provide additional technical support where possible • Check of all PCs in examination rooms in advance of exam dates • Spare PC/s available in the examination room to be used if an isolated issue • <i>Power failure to individual PC</i>: candidate to use spare PC in room • <i>Power failure to examination room</i>: an alternate room to be used if the issue occurs before the examination is due to start • <i>Student cannot log-in</i>: Invigilator to check and confirm details; Exams Officer contact AO to confirm or reset log in details; contact IT to check that PCs set to correct specification to meet AO exam requirements • <i>Software does not run or open</i>: IT to check that PCs and software installation; resort to spare PC • If all PCs are affected and the issue cannot be resolved on date of examination, Head of Centre/Exams Lead to contact AO to inform of issues and receive advice on actions to take (e.g. rescheduling, applying for special consideration) |
| Disruption of teaching time – Centre closed for an extended Period | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre closed or candidates are unable to attend for an extended period during normal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The College would facilitate teaching through alternative methods (online teaching) or locations (other Centres) |

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| | teaching or study supported time, interrupting the provision of normal teaching and learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority to be given to examinations with fixed dates set by the awarding organisation • The College would communication with staff, students and parents the plans that will be implemented to address the interruption to teaching |
| Centre is unable to open as normal during the examination period | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buildings scheduled to hold examinations in, cannot be used or is inaccessible (e.g. due to weather conditions, power outage or local incident) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider alternate spaces at other College Centres • SLT to determine if centre could open for examination only • Head of Centre/Exams Lead to contact relevant Awarding Organisation to notify and discuss alternate access arrangements |
| Learners unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidates are unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal (e.g. threats to the transport system, major incidences that has occurred in the local area) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider alternate spaces at other College Centres • SLT to determine if centre could open for examination only • Head of Centre/Exams Lead to contact relevant Awarding Organisation to discuss alternate access arrangements and liaise with SLT • In the event of a major local incident, the College will take advice from JCQ and AO concerned and act accordingly, providing updates through the College's website, social media and MyDay platforms |
| Disruption in the distribution of examination papers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruption to the distribution of examination papers from awarding organisations in advance of examinations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of Centre/Exams Lead to contact relevant AO to inform them of missing papers and arrange alternate delivery method (e.g. secure download, email, fax) • All members of Exams Teams suitably trained so as to receive/make/store/distribute exam copies as and when received by alternate method |
| Disruption to the transportation of completed examination papers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of Centre/Exams Lead to contact AO immediately to notify of disruption • The College will not make alternate arrangements without approval from AO and will ensure secure storage of completed examination papers until such approval is received |

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| <p>Assessment evidence is not available to be marked</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence occurs before it can be marked | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of Centre to notify the AO immediately to notify of circumstances and discuss alternate arrangements, in liaison with Exams Lead |
| <p>College is unable to distribute results as normal</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates or to facilitate post-results services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of Centre/Exams Lead to notify AO and discuss alternate arrangements • Attempt access at alternate College Centre • Use of alternate methods of communication and/or IT systems • Ensure communication to staff, students and parents as soon as possible • IT Team made aware of key exam-related dates (particularly exam results day) in advance so that they can provide additional technical support where possible |

Further Guidance to Inform and Implement Planning

Ofqual:

[Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland](#)

[Emergencies and severe weather: schools and early year's settings](#)

[Teaching time lost due to severe weather conditions](#)

[Dispatch of exam scripts guide - Contingency planning](#)

JCQ:

[JCQ Guidance on alternative site arrangements](#)

[Instructions for conducting examinations](#)

[Guidance on access arrangements and special consideration](#)