

Examinations Contingency Plan

Vision: Grow - Flourish - Succeed

Mission: Together we inspire creative, mindful learners who value diversity, support one another and strive for success.

1. Purpose of the Plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exams process at GEMS Founders School, Dubai. By outlining actions/procedures to be invoked in case of disruption it is intended to mitigate the impact these disruptions have on the school's exam process.

Alongside internal processes, this plan is informed by scenarios contained in the Joint contingency plan in the event of widespread disruption to the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

This plan also confirms GEMS Founders School, Dubai is compliant with the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) regulation (section 5.3, *General Regulations for Approved Centres 2019-2020*) that the Centre has in place a written examination contingency plan which covers all aspects of examination administration. This will allow members of the SLT to act immediately in the event of an emergency or staff absence.

2. People Involved

Head of Centre

Executive and Senior Leadership Team – Executive Principal/CEO/Vice-President Education, Associate Principal, Vice Principal, Manager School Operations, Head of Secondary School, Senior Deputy Head of Secondary School, Deputy Heads of Secondary School, Head of Primary School, Senior Deputy Head of Primary School, Deputy Heads of Primary School, Assistant Principals

Assistant Head Teachers

Heads of Years

Heads of Departments

Teaching Staff – All Secondary teaching staff

Assistant Head Teacher - Inclusion

Head of Inclusion Secondary/ Primary

Senior Examinations Officer

Examinations Officer

Invigilators – People in the examination room responsible for conducting a particular examination session in the presence of the candidates.

Reception Staff

Site Staff



Candidates – All student who are sitting IGCSE, AS and A Level examination

3. The Outcome of the Plan

The overall outcome of the plan is to ensure that the interests of candidates are safeguarded while maintaining the integrity of the examination system and qualification standards.

There are three specific outcomes the plan seeks to achieve:

- delivering assessments to published timetables;
- delivering results to published timetables;
- complying with regulatory requirements in relation to assessment, marking and standards.

4. When the Plan Would be Triggered

The plan would be triggered in the event of a major disruption to the examination system affecting significant numbers of candidates across several awarding organizations.

This could include severe weather, widespread illness, travel disruption, fires, logistical problems or system failures.

Any actions taken will be subject to the advice of the official agencies dealing with the specific circumstances being faced, for example the police, KHDA or GEMS Corporate.

5. Causes of Potential Disruption to the Exam Process

Exam Officer extended absence at key points in the exam process (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 bodies 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 bodies 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 bodies 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

Type of Scenario	Extended Absence
Impact on:	Awarding organisations, candidates, parents and school staff
Example of Scenario	Emergency situation resulting in long term absence
Recommended actions	Relevant support staff (Head of Key Stage 5, Head of Year 10 & 12, Heads of Department), to assume responsibility for the above tasks with the support of the Senior Leadership Team
Specific communication	<p>The Centre to communicate with awarding organisations for support where needed.</p> <p>Communication with teaching staff to ensure deadlines are met.</p> <p>Communication with candidates and parents on any issues directly affecting candidates.</p>
Success criteria	<p>All relevant deadlines are met.</p> <p>Assessment marks and samples are submitted to awarding bodies.</p> <p>Examinations are carried out successfully without disruption.</p> <p>Results are released on time.</p> <p>Post results request are submitted without delay.</p>

Assistant Head Teacher - Inclusion/Head of Inclusion Secondary 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.
- 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 bodies.
- 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

Type of Scenario	Extended absence
Impact on:	Awarding organisations, EO, candidates, parents and staff
Example of Scenario	Emergency situation resulting in long term absence
Recommended actions	Appoint a temporary deputy/assistant to work with SLT to identify students where applications for access arrangements may be required. Examinations Officer to submit access arrangement applications via the JCQ online portal and provide necessary support to ensure access arrangements are in place for examinations.
Specific communication	Communication with affected students and parents. Liaising with the examination office. Communication with the awarding bodies as necessary.
Success criteria	Students are tested as required and necessary evidence is collected. Access arrangement requests are submitted.

Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Key tasks not undertaken including:



Planning

Early/estimated entry information not provided to the EO on time; resulting in pre-release information not being received.

Entries

Final entry information not provided to the EO 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.

Pre-exams

Non-examination assessment tasks not set/issued/taken by candidates as scheduled.

Candidates not being informed of centre assessed marks before marks are submitted to the awarding bodies 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 bodies submission deadlines.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

Type of Scenario	Extended absence
Impact on:	Candidates, parents, EO and school staff
Example of Scenario	Emergency situation resulting in long term absence
Recommended actions	<p>The EO to liaise with second in charge, Head of Subject and/or the line manager, if necessary, to ensure all necessary deadlines are adhered to.</p> <p>Where this is not possible, the EO will liaise with the relevant awarding bodies and act upon advice received.</p>
Specific communication	Communication between deputised staff and the examinations office.
Success criteria	All relevant information is provided to the EO on time and all deadlines are met.

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**

Type of Scenario	Lack of appropriately trained invigilators
Impact on:	Candidates, EO and school staff
Example of Scenario	Last minute cancellations due to an emergency
Recommended actions	<p>The Head of Secondary and EO will review the invigilation staffing at the start of each academic year to ensure sufficient staff are recruited and trained in a timely fashion.</p> <p>Invigilators will be recruited and trained well in advance of the examination start date.</p> <p>Where possible, an extra invigilator will be timetabled for each exam session.</p> <p>Invigilators are aware they may get called in to cover at short notice.</p>
Specific communication	Communication with invigilators.
Success criteria	Appropriate number of invigilators available to invigilate the examinations.

Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice**Criteria for implementation of the plan**

- EO 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

Type of Scenario	Lack of adequate space to facilitate examinations
Impact on:	Candidates, Staff and EO
Example of Scenario	Examination room become unavailable due to a maintenance issue or there are more candidates scheduled to take examinations than there is space in allotted examination rooms.
Recommended actions	<p>The EO will organise rooming for examinations before the spring break ensuring sufficient time is available to identify appropriate rooms and plan appropriately.</p> <p>Alternative venues/classrooms in school to be made available for exams.</p> <p>In the event of a room not being available at very short notice, sufficient staff will be made available to ensure the security of</p>



	the examination is not compromised whilst alternative rooming is sourced. The SLT will work with the EO at all times during such emergencies.
Specific communication	Liaising with line manager, SLT and relevant staff to source adequate space.
Success criteria	Sufficient rooming is sourced with minimal disruption to examinations.

Failure of IT systems

<u>Criteria for implementation of the plan</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIS system failure at final entry deadline. • MIS system failure during exams preparation. • MIS system failure at results release time. 	
<u>Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption</u>	
Type of Scenario:	MIS system failure.
Impact on:	Awarding bodies, EO, candidates, parents and staff.
Example of Scenario	Unable to download results from the MIS system due to a technical error.
Recommended actions	<p>Ensure IT technician supports all examinations that are dependent on IT systems.</p> <p>Ensure IT technician supports and is available to help administer downloaded results from the MIS.</p> <p>Contact the relevant awarding body to inform them of the issue and seek advice.</p> <p>Submit entries/download results via the awarding bodies' online portals where possible. Contact awarding body to provide the Centre with electronic access to results via a secure external network.</p> <p>Contact the IT department and MIS provider for technical assistance.</p>
Specific communication	The Centre to communicate with the MIS provider, IT department and awarding bodies to solve technical issues.



Success criteria	Resolving the technical issue in order to restore the MIS system to working order and successfully transmit or receive information to the awarding organisations.
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Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or Centre lock down)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Medical Emergencies
- Fire Emergency
- Lock Down

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

Medical Emergencies	
Type of Scenario:	Candidate becomes ill during an examination.
Impact on:	Candidates, Invigilators, EO, school medical staff, SLT, awarding bodies
Example of Scenario	Candidate with epilepsy has an epileptic fit.
Recommended actions	<p>If the candidate is unable to walk or move an invigilator should attend to the ill student. Other invigilators should ask all the candidates in the room to stop writing and the time should be noted down.</p> <p>Medical assistance should be summoned immediately.</p> <p>If the EO is not present she should be alerted immediately.</p> <p>Once the appropriate medical assistance has been given the remaining candidates may continue. Additional time should be added to the time to ensure candidates receive the full time allowed.</p>
Specific communication	<p>School medical staff and paramedics (where relevant) should be alerted.</p> <p>The Centre to communicate with the parents of the candidates in the exam room.</p> <p>The EO to alert senior members of staff on duty.</p> <p>The Centre to communicate with the awarding bodies and apply for special consideration as applicable.</p>



Success criteria	Getting immediate medical assistance for the effected candidate. Once the candidate has received appropriate medical assistance the remainder of the candidates are able to continue and complete their exam.
Fire Emergencies	
Type of Scenario:	Fire alarm is activated during an examination session.
Impact on:	Candidates, Invigilators, EO, SLT, awarding bodies.
Example of Scenario	Science experiment causes the fire alarm to be triggered.
Recommended actions	<p>Invigilators/EO should:</p> <p>Stop the candidates writing.</p> <p>Collect the attendance register (to ensure all candidates are present) and evacuate the examination room in an orderly fashion.</p> <p>Advise candidates to leave all question papers, scripts and stationery in the examination room. Candidates should leave the room in complete silence.</p> <p>Make sure that the candidates are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room to make sure there is no discussion about the examination. A note of the time should be made as well as how long the interruption lasted.</p> <p>Candidates should be escorted out of the room via the emergency exit and taken to the assembly point where they should line up in silence.</p> <p>Once the danger is assessed and building cleared, candidates should return to the exam room to complete the examination.</p> <p>If candidates are unable to return to the exam room and alternative venue should be considered.</p> <p>Make a full report of the incident and of the action taken.</p>
Specific communication	The awarding body and SLT should be informed of the incident.
Success criteria	Successfully evacuating candidates in a timely fashion. Allowing candidates to return to the exam room or an alternative room to complete their examination once the building has been cleared of danger.
Lock Down	
Type of Scenario:	Lock down alarm is activated during an examination session.
Impact on:	Candidates, parents, Invigilators, EO, SLT, awarding bodies.
Example of Scenario	Lockdown on unlawful entry of person/persons to the school.



Recommended actions	<p>Invigilators/Exams Officer should:</p> <p>Stop the candidates writing.</p> <p>Lock the exam room or place desks against the door to keep it from opening, pull down blinds.</p> <p>Have candidates sit on the floor with their backs to the wall in complete silence.</p> <p>Ensure that all students remain inside the exam hall or room with the door closed.</p> <p>Ensure candidates stay in this lock down position until 'all clear' is sounded.</p> <p>Supervise candidates as closely as possible while making sure there is no discussion about the exam. Make a note of the time of the interruption and how long it lasted.</p> <p>Once the danger has been assessed and the building cleared, candidates should return to the exam hall to complete the examination.</p> <p>Alternatively, if necessary, candidates should be evacuated via the emergency exit to safety.</p> <p>Make a full report of the incident and of the action taken.</p>
Specific communication	<p>The Centre communicates with relevant awarding bodies to make them aware of the incident.</p> <p>Parents to be informed of the situation as soon as possible.</p>
Success criteria	<p>Successfully evacuating candidates in a timely fashion. Allowing candidates to complete their examination once the building has been cleared of danger or evacuating all candidates to safety as quickly as possible.</p>

Disruption of teaching time – Centre closed for an extended period

<u>Criteria for implementation of the plan</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">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.
<u>Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption</u>



Type of Scenario	Disruption to candidates.	
Impact on	Teachers, candidates and parents.	
Example of Scenario	Severe flooding or fire causes closure for extended period.	
Recommended actions	<p>It remains the responsibility of centres to prepare students for examinations as usual by:</p> <p>Facilitate alternative methods of learning, alternative venues or both.</p> <p>Prioritise candidates who will be facing examinations shortly.</p> <p>Advise candidates, where appropriate, to sit examinations in the next available series.</p>	
Specific communication	The Centre to communicate with parents or carers and candidates about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plans to address this.	
Success criteria	Students continue to be taught either through an alternative method of learning or at an alternative venue.	

Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – Centre remains open

<u>Criteria for implementation of the plan</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Candidates are unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal.

Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period (including in the event of the Centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency)

<u>Criteria for implementation of the plan</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations.	
<u>Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption</u>	
Type of Scenario	Disruption to Centre.
Impact on	Candidates, teachers, school staff, parents, carers.
Example of Scenario	A fire at the Centre means that it is closed when examinations are due to take place.
Recommended actions	Open for examinations and examination candidates only, if possible.



	<p>Use alternative venues in agreement with relevant awarding bodies (e.g. share facilities with another centre, possibly in the GEMS network, or use other public buildings where possible).</p> <p>Offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed in the next available series, if possible.</p>
Specific communication	The awarding bodies with which the examinations are due to be taken should be informed as soon as possible.
Success criteria	Students are able to take examinations in alternative venues in a timely way.
Further advice and information	The responsibility for deciding whether it is safe for a Centre to open lies with the Head of Centre. The Head is responsible for taking advice or following instructions, for the relevant local agencies such as KHDA or Civil Defence in deciding whether the Centre can open.

Disruption in the distribution of examination papers

<u>Criteria for implementation of the plan</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disruption to the distribution of examination papers to the Centre in advance of examinations. 	
<u>Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption</u>	
Type of Scenario	Disruption to travel or delivery.
Impact on	School staff, teachers, candidates.
Example of Scenario	A courier delivers the wrong set of examination papers or delays the delivery of examination papers to the Centre.
Recommended actions	<p>Liaise with the courier to solve the issues.</p> <p>Source an alternative courier source for delivery of hard copies.</p> <p>Contact awarding bodies to provide the Centre with electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network or fax if electronic transfer is not possible.</p>
Specific communication	The Centre communicates with awarding bodies to organise alternative delivery of papers.
Success criteria	Students are able to proceed with taking examinations without having to reschedule examinations.

Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

**Criteria for implementation of the plan**

- Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

Type of Scenario	Disruption to transport or delivery.
Impact on	Courier staff, school staff and awarding bodies.
Example of Scenario	A courier contacts the Centre to report a problem about picking up scripts on time.
Recommended actions	<p>Contact the relevant awarding body to inform them of the issues and seek advice.</p> <p>With the approval of the awarding body retain scripts in secure storage until the courier service can collect the scripts or an alternative arrangement for transportation can be made.</p>
Specific communication	The Centre communicates with the relevant awarding body at the outset to resolve the issue.
Success criteria	Scripts are stored securely in line with JCQ/Cambridge International guidance. Scripts are collected and delivered to the awarding bodies with minimum delay.
Further advice and information	<p>JCQ guidance regarding the 'secure storage of scripts' is available on following websites:</p> <p>The JCQ website under <u>Instruction for Conduction Examinations 2022 – 2023.</u></p>

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.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

Type of Scenario	Assessment marking
Impact on	Candidates, teachers, staff, parents, carers and awarding bodies.
Example of Scenario	A fire or flood at the Centre destroys completed examination scripts.
Recommended actions	Awarding bodies may be able to generate candidate marks for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence of



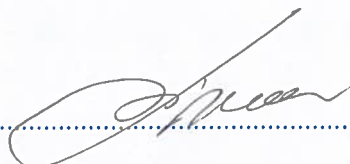
	<p>candidate achievement, as defined by the awarding bodies in consultation with the regulators.</p> <p>Candidates retake the assessment that has been affected at a subsequent assessment window, if possible.</p>
Specific communication	The Centre must communicate this immediately to the relevant awarding bodies and subsequently to students and their parents/carers.
Success criteria	Candidate marks are able to be generated (where possible) from existing assessment materials or candidates retake the assessments.

Centre unable to distribute results as normal (including in the event of the Centre being unavailable on results day owing to an unforeseen emergency)

<u>Criteria for implementation of the plan</u>	
Centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post-results services.	
<u>Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption</u>	
Type of Scenario	Issuing results.
Impact on	Candidates, parents/carers, school staff, awarding bodies, staff and GEMS corporate office
Example of Scenario	The school is unable to open and candidates are not able to visit to find out their results.
Recommended actions	<p>Make arrangements to access results at an alternative site.</p> <p>Share facilities with other schools and colleges if possible.</p>
Specific communication	Centres to contact awarding bodies about alternative options. Candidates, parents/carers and staff informed of alternative arrangements.
Success criteria	Candidates receive results in a timely way.

6. Further Guidance to Inform Procedures and Implement Contingency Planning

Signed



Senior Examinations Officer

Date

04/09/2023

Signed

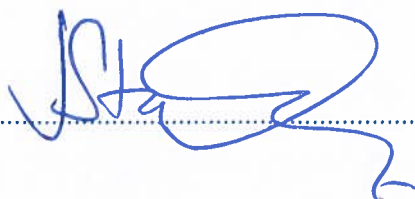


Head of Secondary/ Head of Centre

Date

04/09/2023

Signed



Vice Principal

Date

04/09/2023

Signed



Associate Principal

Date

04/09/2023

Signed



Executive Principal/CEO

Senior Vice President- Education

Date

04/09/2023

Policy review date: September 2024

