Examinations Contingency Plan

1. Purpose and Commitment

1.1. This document explains how the College Group approaches [topic e.g. student behaviour, complaints, appeals, data protection] in a way that is fair, transparent, and respectful.

1.2. The College Group is committed to creating an environment where students, staff and other stakeholders feel safe, respected, and able to participate fully in learning and work. Our policies aim to support wellbeing, dignity, and inclusion while ensuring that concerns and issues are addressed consistently and fairly.

1.3. Where possible, the College Group seeks to resolve concerns in ways that promote understanding, accountability, and positive outcomes for everyone involved.

2. Scope

2.1. The Examinations Contingency Plan sets out the risks, modifications, and actions to follow in the event of issues directly impacting on the delivery of the examinations function. The Examinations Contingency Plan will ensure that all Loughborough College Group Departments and Support Services will be ready to provide a consistent and expeditious response to known key risks should they arise.

2.2. This policy applies to Loughborough College Group, its colleges, and its subsidiaries.

3. Definitions

3.1. Definitions are intended to help readers understand this guidance document and should be interpreted in a reasonable and supportive way, rather than used to make assumptions about individuals or situations. Where there is uncertainty about how a term should be understood, individuals are encouraged to seek clarification from the College Group.

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Key Term/Acronym	Definition
JCQ – Joint Council for Qualifications	The organisation that sets common regulations and guidance for the administration and conduct of examinations.
CIMP – Critical Incident Management Plan	The College plan setting out how significant incidents or emergencies that disrupt normal operations will be managed.
EM – Exam Manager	The manager responsible for overseeing the operation and administration of examinations within the College.
EO – Exam Officer	A member of the Exams Team responsible for administering examination processes and ensuring relevant requirements are followed.
SEM – Senior Exam Manager	Person responsible for the Exam Teams across Loughborough Group.
MIS – Management Information Systems	The College function responsible for systems and information used to manage and support student, curriculum and examination data and processes.
SENCO – Special Educational Needs Coordinator	The role responsible for coordinating provision for learners with special educational needs. Within the College, the plan states that aspects of this role relating to examinations are carried out by specialist assessors.
LSM – Learner Support Manager	The manager responsible for the Learner Support function and for reallocating relevant responsibilities if specialist assessors are absent.
Contingency Day	A date reserved within the national examination timetable that may be used if major local or national disruption prevents examinations taking place as originally scheduled.
ICE – Instructions for Conducting Examinations	JCQ regulations setting out the requirements centres must follow when conducting examinations.

3.2. Unless the context requires otherwise, singular words include the plural and vice versa, references to a person include an individual or legal entity, and references to legislation include any amendments or replacements.

3.3. The terms "including", "include", and similar expressions are illustrative and do not limit the meaning of the preceding words. References to the Group or College refer to all parts of the group.

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4. Policy Impact Assessments

4.1. This document has been assessed for its impact on equal opportunities and will be informed by the aim to eliminate all forms of discrimination in all strands of the equal opportunities' legislation.

4.2. This document has been assessed for potential risk on data subjects due to the processing of personally identifiable information. All processing has been reviewed and is in line with all current Data protection laws and appropriate safeguards implemented to ensure that the policy has privacy by design as its underlying approach.

4.3. This document has been impact assessed where appropriate for Safeguarding, Health and Safety and Sustainability Factors to ensure that all potential risks are identified and mitigated, and that the policy supports a safe, inclusive, and environmentally responsible learning and working environment.

5. Policy/Procedure

5.1. This policy pulls together a single document identifying and mitigating known risks to the examination process and department. As such this policy will link to a number of other existing policies and documents including the Critical Incident Management Plan (CIMP). It is the responsibility of all staff at all levels to read and understand their part in this policy and implement when required.

5.2. The Loughborough College Group has a structured procedure for releasing data containing Personally Identifiable Information to ensure that information is managed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA), the UK GDPR, the General Data Protection Regulation (2016/679) (GDPR), the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003 (SI 2426/2003) (as amended) and all applicable laws and regulations relating to the processing of the Personal Data and privacy.

5.3. Ensure equality and accessibility are considered throughout any contingency plans being implemented. Reasonable adjustments and appropriate support should be provided where required, without compromising the safety of the candidate or others. Safeguarding of anyone affected by contingency arrangements should also be considered throughout any contingency periods.

5.4. Exam officer extended absence at a key point in the exam process (cycle)

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There are currently 3 Exam Teams across The Loughborough College Group managed by a Senior Exam Manager –

- Loughborough College site has an Exam Manager (EM), 7 Exam Officers (EO) and 1 Senior Administrator (EA)
- Stephenson College site has an Exam Manager (split between 2 sites) (EM), 2 Exam Officers (EO) and 1 Senior Exam Administrator (SEA)
- Brooksby College site has an Exam Manager (split between 2 sites), and 2 Exam Officers (EO)
- All Exam Department staff report into the Senior Exam Manager (SEM) who reports into the Director of MIS (Audit, Compliance, Student Records & Exams).

5.4.1. In a period of extended absence the duties and responsibilities of the EM will be reallocated across the other EM, EO's and SEM. Appropriate sharing of responsibilities and any additional resources will be determined by the SEM with support from the Director.

5.4.2. All members within the Exams team are supported with their ongoing training and CPD by the Awarding Organisations, the EM and also the EO (Compliance and Technical) enabling them to remain both updated and knowledgeable. EOs are involved in the administration of all key processes and are aware of who to contact with queries.

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

The Loughborough College Group does not have a specific SENCO in post, however this role is carried out by the College Group's qualified specialist assessors. In the event of extended absence their line manager who is Learner Support Manager (LSM) would assign responsibilities temporarily to qualified members of the Team as required supported by their manager the Vice Principal for Learner Experience. In the absence of an appropriate person, a suitably qualified external specialist assessor with an established relationship with the college may need contracting to carry out access arrangement assessments and this would be determined by management.

5.6. Teaching staff 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, the relevant Curriculum Manager would liaise directly with the Head of the Department to arrange immediate teaching cover initially from within the team, the wider staffing establishment at the College or through an agency. New staff providing cover would need to be urgently briefed as part of their induction process on current arrangements for assessment and examinations, and any new or agency team member's practice in terms of assessments must be monitored by an experienced member of the teaching team.

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5.7. **Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence**

5.7.1. New invigilators undergo mandatory Examination specific training consistent with JCQ and other Awarding Organisations guidelines. All Invigilators then move onto a cycle of yearly examination refresher and rule update training organised and delivered by the EM and LSM. Where practical a short period of shadowing also takes place and Invigilators are only allowed to work independently once they and the EM are happy that processes and procedures are understood and that invigilators are competent. The College retains a pool of invigilators.

5.7.2. During the majority of the year (Not during heavy examination periods) Minor absence issues (such as an invigilator calling in sick) will be covered in order of preference by

- Another Invigilator from the pool (if available)
- An Exams Officer
- Other member of the Exams team (Where appropriate)
- Wider MIS Team trained in invigilation (Exceptional circumstances only)

5.7.3. During main exam sessions (mainly during the Summer GCE series, and always for GCSE English and Maths or the New Year Series, which both have attendance and locations too large to cover with the retained Invigilator/Reader/Scribe pool) Members of identified wider college group staff will be required to assist with invigilation. It is essential that the GCSE exam dates wider college staff are identified and notified by the EM during the September of the academic year the exams are being held. This gives enough time for those staff to be fully trained by the examinations staff with regard to their responsibilities and duties. NOTE: Staff must complete a mandatory training session with the option of a Q&A session with the EM.

5.8. It is essential that the College provides all learners with the best possible opportunity to succeed in every examination they sit whilst maintaining consistency, rigor and accountability throughout. As such:

5.8.1. The college Executive have agreed (where appropriate) to close the college for onsite lessons on the mornings of the GCSE English and Maths Summer Exams. By doing this the necessary rooming will be available and appropriate, but also all trained

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cross college staff will be available if required for selection for invigilation/reading/scribe purposes.

5.8.2. Managers must support the process, and those staff identified must commit to agreed exam dates and attend training provided by the exams team.

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

5.9.1. The Loughborough College Group is a large organisation with a number of sites and rooming resources. The majority of exams are accommodated within the examinations specially allocated rooms, or within standard size classrooms/IT suites and the Exams team works closely with the College's timetabling team in order to utilise rooms effectively and at short notice.

5.9.2. For the majority of the year (Not during heavy examination periods) rooming is not normally an issue. The Exams teams retain several designated rooms which are fitted to be JCQ compliant. Large spaces exist within each campus sports hall where standard teaching can be relocated or suspended so that large exams can be held.

5.9.3. During main National Exams (mainly during the Summer GCSE/GCE series, and always for GCSE English and Maths and the January Series, both have attendance and locations too large to cover with the Exams owned rooms. This is primarily due to the high number of special consideration students requiring small rooms/individual rooms.

5.9.4. The college Executive agreed (where appropriate) to close the colleges for onsite lessons on the mornings of the GCSE English and Maths Summer Exams. By doing this the necessary rooming will be available on those days, and external environment appropriate. This will involve close collaboration with the colleges Timetabling teams.

5.9.5. Where alternative room arrangements are put in place, the locations must be deemed exam appropriate and a safe/risk free environment for students to complete their examinations in, considering any access arrangements required.

5.10. Failure of IT systems and/or Information Systems

5.10.1. The college endeavours to minimise any IT disruption via resilient design and preventative maintenance of its systems and IT infrastructure. In the event of any

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issue this would be dealt with in accordance to the college's IT Services Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity Plan Where an IT failure impacts on the college groups scheduled exams, steps would be taken by the Exams team to reschedule any exam dates as soon as possible. It is rare that an online examination could not be rescheduled. However, If this is not possible due to the examination being fixed, the EM would firstly discuss with the Awarding Organisations any options to move these exams to another date or time, or move the exam to another location such as another Loughborough College Group site – Loughborough, Stephenson or Brooksby campus, transport for candidates would be sought if this was a possible solution.

5.11. **Disruption of teaching time – centre closed for an extended period**

5.11.1. Teaching can be disrupted for a number of reasons due to issues at the centre. See Critical Incident Management Plan for additional details.

5.11.2. In the event of the centre not being able to open as normal alternative options would be explored such as moving provision to another Loughborough College Group site (Loughborough, Stephenson or Brooksby campus) or an external location (such as leisure centres, hotels, local schools, etc.).

5.11.3. In such instances, details would be communicated to learners via the College's website, text messaging facilities and email.

5.11.4. Staff involved in exams (including invigilators) would be contacted by email and telephone.

5.12. **Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period (including GCSE and A level results day**

5.12.1. Exams could be disrupted for a number of reasons due to issues at the centre. These could include amongst other things, fire, flood, bomb, pandemic, terrorist threat, or power failure. For more information see the Critical Incident Management Plan.

5.12.2. In the event of the centre not being able to open as normal, appropriate communication with the relevant Awarding Organisations would be undertaken immediately by the EM and EO's and alternative options would be explored such as moving fixed exams that could not be rescheduled to an alternative external location for example Loughborough, Stephenson or Brooksby campus or an external location (such as leisure centres, hotels, local schools, etc.) Any arrangements would be agreed with the Awarding Organisation before being put in place.

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5.12.3. In such instances, details would be communicated to candidates via the College's website, text messaging facilities and student email.

5.12.4. Any college scheduled exams that could be cancelled and easily rearranged will be cancelled.

5.12.5. Staff involved in exams (including invigilators) would be contacted by email and telephone.

5.13. **Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open**

If a candidate is able to sit the exam but cannot attend the centre due to a crisis, appropriate communication with the relevant Awarding Organisation would be undertaken by the EM as per JCQ processes and Awarding Organisation rules.

5.14. **Awarding Body Contingency Day 2026/27**

5.14.1. For the Summer 2025 exams, the contingency date is on **23rd June 2027** for all exam boards in the UK.

5.14.2. In line with Ofquals exam system contingency plan, these are additional days at the end of the exam periods, which will only be used in the event of major local or national disruption to summer 2027 exams, in which case it is possible the timetable examination dates could be affected up to and including the contingency day.

5.14.3. This is consistent with the qualification regulators' document Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

5.14.4. The designation of 'contingency days' within the common examination timetable is in the event of national or local disruption to examinations. It is part of the awarding bodies' standard contingency planning for examinations. Centres must therefore remind candidates that they must remain available until **23rd June 2027** should an awarding body need to invoke its contingency plan.

5.14.5. The College will ensure that all students and staff are made aware about awarding body contingency day being a possibility through ongoing communication and PR activity from the point the date is confirmed, and ensure staff are prepared should it be invoked.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

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6.1 In a period of extended absence the duties and responsibilities of the EM will be reallocated across the other EM, EO's and SMM. Appropriate sharing of responsibilities and any additional resources will be determined by the SMM with support from the DPPM.

7. Related Documents

7.1. This document should be read with:

7.1.1. Hazardous weather conditions policy

7.1.2. Bomb Threat Policy

7.1.3. Offensive Weapons Policy

7.1.4. JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres

7.1.5. JCQ ICE Regulations

7.1.6. CIMP Critical Incident Management Plan

8. Document Access

8.1. This document can be found on the College Group's website and on the Document Control SharePoint.

9. Review and Continuous Improvement

9.1. The College Group is committed to actively periodically reviewing its documents in line with legislation and best practice, to ensure they remain accurate, transparent, compliant, inclusive, effective, and supportive.

10. Change Log

Date	Version	Details of Change	Reviewer
26/08/26	1.1	Change of template. Wording reviewed and updated	Lisa Hatton
07/09/26	1.2	Document formatted, structures updated and wording checked	Michelle Hopkins

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Name:	Examinations Contingency Plan	Owner:	Exams
Approved by:	Executive	Applicable to:	Staff/Students
Reference:	XM-PCG-019	Last Review:	August 2026
Version:	1.1	Next Review:	September 2027

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