Green Labyrinth
Exam Contingency Plan 2025/2026

Title	Exam Contingency Plan 2025/2026
Author/Owner	Head of Centre and Examinations Officer
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Content

1. Key staff involved in contingency planning.

Role	Name (s)
Head of Centre	Ms Emma Gallagher
Exams officer line manager	Mrs Karen Stew
Exam Officer	Mrs Anna Marcinov
SENCo	Ms Joana Robson
SLT member(s)	Mrs Stephanie Davies Mr David Lee Ms Emma Gallagher Mrs Karen Stew Ms Joana Robson Ms Teresa Tuffin Ms Stephanie Biggs **Please amend the list as appropriate**
IT lead and System Manager	Mr Martin Denyer
Lead Invigilators	Ms Amie-Rose O'Donoghue Ms Carly Read

2. **Purpose of the process**

The Centre must have an up-to-date written contingency plan, which plan must cover all aspects of examination/assessment administration and delivery. Senior leaders must have robust contingency arrangements in place that will minimise the risk to examination/assessment administration, delivery and any adverse impact on candidates.

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the management and administration of the exam process at Green Labyrinth.

The contingencies set out are to be implemented to alleviate the impact of disruptions to the exam process. At all times the Head of Centre and Examinations Officer will liaise with the relevant Awarding Body to ensure that the contingency plans meet with its requirements and that JCQ regulations are adhered to were possible.

This plan also confirms that Green Labyrinth is compliant with the JCQ regulation (section 15, Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2025-2026) that the centre **must have a written examination contingency plan which covers all aspects of examination administration. This will allow members of the senior leadership team to act immediately in the event of an emergency or where the head of centre, examinations officer or SENCo is absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle. The examination contingency plan should reinforce procedures in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency.**

- *https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland/what-schools-and-colleges-should-do-if-exams-or-other-assessments-are-seriously-disrupted*
- **https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/other-documents/preparing-for-disruption-to-examinations/**
- **https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations/**
- **https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance/**

Implementing this plan will safeguard the interests of candidates while maintaining the integrity of the examination system and safeguarding qualification standards. The contingencies applied will be selected based on the context of the disruption and have been implemented on several occasions in response to localised issues. They would be applied on a larger scale in response to any widespread disruption at a national level.

The priority when implementing contingencies will be to maintain three principles:

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

3. Possible causes of disruption to the exam process

A) **Head of Centre/senior leader(s) with oversight of examination and assessment administration absence at a Critical Stage of the Examination Cycle**

Where the Head of Centre/senior leader(s) may be absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle, main duties and responsibilities are escalated in accordance with the Centre's documented escalation process.

If the Head of Centre decides that the Green Labyrinth cannot be opened for scheduled examinations, the relevant Awarding Body must be informed as soon as possible. Awarding Bodies will offer advice regarding the alternative arrangements for conducting examinations that may be available, and the options for candidates, who have been unable to take scheduled examinations.

B) **Exams Officer (EO) absence at key points in the exam process (cycle)**

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 body 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 body 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 body 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 the awarding bodies.
- Required reports/requests not submitted to awarding bodies during an exam/assessment period, 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 post-results services.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

Senior Administrator can administer exams and has the same knowledge and training as the Exams Officer. In the unlikely event of both members of the Exams team are absent long term, the Head of Centre have access to key Awarding Body portals. Policy and procedural documents have been developed to guide any member of staff to administer the exams cycle if necessary. These include the GL Exams Policy and availability of the JCQ ICE Document. Detailed exam process is available in Green Labyrinth Examination Process document. Members of the administration team will be appointed to help administer exams where necessary.

C) **SENCo and Additional Learning Support Lead extended absence at key points in the exam process**

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.
- Centre fails to recognise its duties towards disabled candidates as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010.
- 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 body.
- 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

- Support for candidates with access arrangements not arranged for exam rooms

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

The Head of Centre and Exams Officer will closely monitor the access arrangement process in the event of the SENCo having an extended absence. The Head of ALS will liaise with the Exams Officer and centre staff regarding the identification and approval of access arrangements and collation of evidence, to ensure that all required access arrangements deadlines are met. Specialist advice will be sought from outside agencies if the need arises.

D) **Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam process**

Criteria for implementation of the plan and key tasks not undertaken including:

- Estimated entry information not provided to the exams officer on time; resulting in pre-release information not being received.
- Final entry information not provided to the exams officer on time; resulting in candidates not being entered for exams/assessments or being entered late/very late or other penalty fees being charged by awarding bodies.
- 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 body and therefore, not being able to consider appealing internal assessment decisions and requesting a review of the centre's marking

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

The Exams Officer will closely monitor the key tasks undertaken by teaching staff and will liaise with the Head of Centre and other centre staff regarding entry information. The Head of Centre will monitor the progress of nonexamination tasks, coursework marks and internal assessment marks and ensure steps are put in place to complete these and inform candidates of these within the appropriate timescales. Awarding bodies will be informed of any potential issues as soon as possible.

E) **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 listed above

All exam dates are sent out and shared with the exam team as soon as they are available to have plenty of time to cover days where invigilators may not be available. All SP exams are listed in a day order on SP Exam tracker, any registration details for GCSEs exams are recorded on GCSE tracker.

Head of Centre is informed if any recruitment is necessary, to ensure there are sufficient invigilators employed to cover the invigilation for a whole academic year. The Office Manager collates and maintains a list of invigilators and is responsible for a proactive recruitment of a bank of invigilators well ahead of time.

All Green Labyrinth staff are required to complete annual invigilation and cybersecurity training and sign the auditable register. All training details are kept on GL invigilation tracker.

All TAs complete up-to-date exam invigilator training as well, to ensure back up is available in the case of absence. Invigilators are given their timetables in advance and should all report to the Exams Officer on arrival. The Head of Study Programme, Exam officer or Office manager will detail where they are meant to be and with which candidates. If an invigilator does not turn up for any reason a member of SLT or examination team will stand in for them.

F) Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venue(s) unavailable at short notice

Criteria for implementation of the plan
- 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.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

Advanced planning necessary to avoid clashes. Rooms always prioritised for exams, if an emergency situation occurs, classes to be cancelled to ensure learners sit exams.
If the Office manager is unable to identify sufficient/appropriate rooms during the planning period, timetable changes will be made to ensure that appropriate rooming is in place.

This is also the case on peak exam days. If there is an unexpected incident at exam time preventing the use of a room, the Head of Study Programmes has the authority to commandeer any appropriate space with Green Labyrinth to conduct the examination. Special consideration will be applied for and the candidates kept secure for the duration of the delay.

G) Failure of IT system and Cyber-attack

Criteria for implementation of the plan
- MIS system failure at final entry deadline.
- MIS system failure during exams preparation.
- MIS system failure at results release time.
- Where a cyber-attack may compromise any aspect of delivery.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

All exam entries are made well in advance of the deadline to avoid any system failure at the time of a deadline. Exams officer and Office Manager are fully trained to use all the exam boards' website and if MIS system fails, they will liaise with the awarding body to seek guidance to arrange alternative method of data entry/exchange.

Both Exams officer and Office Manager have work laptop which can be taken home and make entries/amendments if the College internet goes down.

In the event of a MIS system failure at crucial times during the exam cycle the IT administrator will be informed as soon as possible and every step will be taken to reinstate the MIS to working condition. Exam boards will be notified, and steps will be taken to continue proceedings using manual systems.

Green Labyrinth will contact Examination Boards for any alternative route of dissemination of results during time of disruption. GL will ensure that all staff is trained on cyber security annually, and any cyber-attacks will be reported to:

- the NCSC (National Cyber Security Centre) via NCSC portal https://report.ncsc.gov.uk/.
- the local law enforcement and action fraud tel. 0300 123 2040
- the DfE by emailing: sector.securityenquiries@education.gov.uk.

H) Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or Centre lockdown) and candidates unable to re-enter venue for extended period

Criteria for implementation of the plan
- 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 is 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.
- Centre may not be able to open for examinations (including in the event of the Centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

The head of centre will liaise with the exams officer regarding the necessity for stopping the exam and evacuating the building. Examinations Officer will communicate with all relevant Awarding Bodies at the outset to make them aware of the issue.

The Centre then will communicate with parents, carers and candidates about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plans to address this.

If the fire alarm sounds the Head of Study Programmes will note the time of the alarm and if the need arises for an evacuation, then Green Labyrinth Fire Evacuation Procedures will apply:

The Invigilation Room:
- Candidates will stop writing and close their answer booklets.
- The invigilators will remind the candidates of the need to remain in silence and not communicate with any other candidates.
- Candidates will evacuate the Green Labyrinth via the main/fire exit door. Invigilators will take candidates desk labels with them for identification purposes.
- The Head of Study Programme will go with the candidates to the fire assembly point. The fire marshal will take the rollcall.
- The Exams Officer will be the last to leave, having secured the evacuation of all candidates and the room.

Returning to the Exam Room:
- The invigilators will escort candidates back to their room; candidates will return to the exam room in reverse order.
- In assessing whether to continue the exam the Head of Study Programmes will liaise with the Head of Centre (or the nominated deputy) as to whether or not the session will continue.

The Head of Centre will take the following factors into consideration:
- The length of time that has passed since the official start time.
- Whether the minimum time for remaining the examination has passed to maintain the integrity of the exam.
- The amount of time left to complete the exam(s).
- Whether there is sufficient time to complete the exam before another session starts.
- Whether continuing the exam will take candidates over the session limit of 3 hours, taking particular care to consider candidates with access arrangements which include extra time.

If the Head of Centre is satisfied that the above conditions have not been breached, they will instruct the exam to continue. In this case the candidates are to mark their work with an Asterisk (star) so that the exam board can identify where the candidates' concentration was disturbed.

The candidates will continue with the exam and be given the full allocated amount of time (including stoppage) for the completion of the exam.

Scripts will be submitted to the exam board in the usual manner at the end of the exam. The Exams Officer will apply for special consideration for all affected candidates.

If the above conditions cannot be met the Head of Study Programmes will liaise with the Head of Centre regarding a decision to abandon the session.

If the session is to be abandoned, this will be either because of:

- consideration of the criteria above,
- re-entry to the premises cannot be secured,
- the risk of communication between candidates, the validation of the exam cannot be guaranteed

If evacuation is unnecessary, the Exams Officer will apply the procedures above providing the conditions above can be guaranteed.

I) Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open

Criteria for implementation of the plan
- Candidates do not turn up for an exam.
- Candidates turn up for an exam that they are not entered for
- Candidates are entered for the wrong paper.
- Candidates are taken ill during an exam.
- Awarding Body communications systems fail – online exams.
- Candidates are unable to site their exam due to a power outage in the exam room.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

Candidates do not turn up for exam
Message to Reception to ring home. Candidates can be admitted into the exams room up to 1 hour after published start of exam when the exam is over 1 hr duration.
If they cannot attend the exam candidates can be given the opportunity to sit the exam at the next available series and/or special consideration can be applied if the adverse circumstances are beyond their control and if the student has met the minimum requirements.

Candidates turn up who are not entered
Check with the Head of Study Programme. Find a paper, seat them, amend attendance list and make entry. Charge late fee to department. If recurring problem the MD is to be consulted.

Candidates are entered for the wrong paper
Subject teacher/leader contacted to confirm error. Contact Awarding Body for copy of paper if necessary. Provide exam paper, seat and amend entry.

Student taken ill during exam

Invigilators raise the alarm to the exam team, where the Head of Study Programme is to take charge as appropriate.

Awarding Body communications systems fail – online exams

Contact awarding body immediately.

Unable to conduct exams because of a power outage – centre remains open

The IT team is informed as soon as possible. Use of different IT if possible and start the exam late within JCQ regulations enforced. Special consideration to be applied for only if external examinations cannot be taken, and it is the final exam opportunity for the candidates.

J) **Centre unable to open as normal during the examination period (including in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations owing to unforeseen emergency)**

   Criteria for implementation of the plan
   - Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

If there are timetabled examinations scheduled on a day when the Head of Study Programme decides that the department should be closed to all staff and candidates, the following procedures will be implemented and GL will invoke contingency plan, which must focus on options that enable candidates to take their examinations. As part of a general planning for emergencies, centre will cover the impact on examinations.

The responsibility for deciding whether it is safe for a Green Labyrinth to open lies with the Head of centre. The head of centre will take advice or following instructions from the relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether Green Labyrinth should be open.

Information on what schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted can be found here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-planengland-wales-and-northern-ireland/what-schools-and-colleges-should-do-ifexams-or-other-assessments-are-seriously-disrupted

Awarding organisations will ensure that any applications for special considerations, as a result of disruption will be reviewed across awarding organisations to ensure consistency of decision making. If there is enough staff and should conditions allow, the timetabled exams may go ahead. In such an eventuality, Green Labyrinth will remain open for an examination only.

In order that Green Labyrinth can ensure the correct administration of exams, the team must include the Exams Officer or a suitably trained member of the exam and SLT team. If these members of staff are unable to get the scheduled exam(s) the exam will be cancelled.

In line with JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) guidance, the Green Labyrinth will endeavour to be open and, where conditions allow, timetabled examinations will go ahead. If the start of the exam is delayed candidates will be isolated and the exam board will be notified. Special consideration may be applied.

In the event that weather is adverse and Green Labyrinth is closed on a day of a scheduled examination the Head of Study Programme will assess the possibility of key staff being able to attend. If the head of centre is confident that key staff is available on the site, then the exam will run. Start times may be delayed for morning exams if several candidates are late (permission will be sought from relevant awarding bodies).

All candidates are expected to make the effort to come in and sit their examination. The decisions regarding travelling to Green Labyrinth for an exam rest with individual families, taking consideration of the weather and road conditions locally to them.

If a candidate is unable to get in on an exam day because of inclement weather, it is imperative that families contact the Green Labyrinth as soon as possible to explain that this has occurred.

If the Head of Study Programme were to take a decision that Green Labyrinth must be closed, as it is unsafe to open, they will contact and notify the exam board that Green Labyrinth is unable to run the exams that were scheduled for that day.

If the Green Labyrinth must be closed for a prolonged period of time, which may affect more than one examination, candidates may need to sit the exam at an alternative venue.

In the event of the centre having to be partially closed, centre will:

- consider opening Green Labyrinth for examinations and examination candidates only;
- use alternative venues in agreement with relevant awarding organisations (e.g. share facilities with other centres or use other public buildings if possible);
- apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements;
- offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series, if possible.

K) Disruption in the distribution of examination papers.

Criteria for implementation of the plan
* Disruption to the distribution of examination papers to the centre in advance of examinations.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

Green Labyrinth will contact the awarding organisation to source alternative couriers for delivery of hard copies, and to provide GL with electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network. The examinations officer would ensure that copies are received, made, checked and stored under secure conditions, comply with the requirements detailed in the JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations - awarding organisations would provide guidance on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances.

As a last resort, and in close collaboration with centres and regulators, awarding organisations to consider scheduling of the examination on an alternative date.

L) Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts.

Criteria for implementation of the plan
* Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts/assessment evidence.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

Green Labyrinth will contact the relevant awarding organisations at the outset to resolve the issue. The centre will, in the first instance, seek advice from awarding organisations and their normal collection agency regarding collection. Green Labyrinth will not make their own arrangements for transportation without approval from awarding organisations and ensure secure storage of completed examination scripts until collection point.

4. 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.
* Completed examination scripts/assessment evidence does not reach awarding bodies.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

If possible, the candidate will retake the assessment that has been affected at a subsequent assessment window. The awarding organisations can be asked to generate candidate marks for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement, as defined by the awarding organisations in consultation with the regulators. It is the responsibility of the head of centre to communicate this immediately to the relevant awarding organisation(s) and subsequently to candidates and their parents or carers.

5. **Disruption of teaching time in the weeks before an exam and centres closed for an extended period**

    Criteria for implementation of the plan
    - Centre is 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.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

Where there is disruption to teaching time and students miss teaching and learning, it remains the responsibility of centres to prepare students, as usual, for examinations.

6. **The College is unable to distribute results as normal or facilitate post results services.**

    Criteria for implementation of the plan
    - Centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post-results services.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

Green Labyrinth will make every effort to make arrangements to access results at an alternative site and/or share facilities with other colleges if possible. The centre will also contact the awarding organisations about alternative options and arrange for the results to be collected from an alternative venue and communicate this to candidates.

For facilitation of post results services, the centre will arrange to make post results requests at an alternative location and contact relevant awarding organisations if electric post results requests are not possible.