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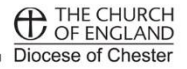
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EXAM POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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HIGH EXPECTATIONS



HIGH ASPIRATIONS



HIGH STANDARDS



YOU WILL SUCCEED



A VOLUNTARY AIDED CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL SERVING THE DIOCESES OF CHESTER AND LIVERPOOL

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1. Examinations Policy Statement

Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School Examinations Policy reflects the instructions for conducting examinations in accordance with the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and these regulations will prevail in circumstances for all external examinations unless directed otherwise by another awarding body. Internal examinations are considered practice for the 'real thing' and, as such, the school endeavours, as far as possible, to run them as close as possible to an external examination.

This Policy seeks to:-

- Ensure the integrity and security of the examinations in accordance with the JCQ General and Vocational Qualifications: Instructions for Conducting Examinations.
- Allow all students to access examinations.
- Ensure the JCQ General and Vocational Qualifications: Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments are followed as applicable.
- Comply with Health & Safety regulations.
- Provide invigilators in compliance with the JCQ General and Vocational Qualifications: Instructions for Conducting Examinations.

The Equality Act 2010 extends to General Qualifications to ensure that all students are given the opportunity to access examinations on an equal footing with arrangements being made to ensure no one is advantaged or disadvantaged. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) and Exams Manager will ensure that all access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration applications comply with the JCQ regulations.

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the centre's exam processes to read, understand and implement this policy and procedure.

The Examinations Policy and Procedure will be reviewed annually by the Exams Manager.

Where references are made to JCQ regulations/guidelines, further details can be found at www.jcq.org.uk.

1. Examinations Procedures

2.1 Exam Responsibilities

The Head of Centre:

- has overall responsibility for the school/college as an exams centre and advises on appeals and re-marks.
- is responsible for reporting all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice - refer to the JCQ document *Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments*.

Exams Manager¹:

- manages the administration of internal exams and external exams.
- advises the senior leadership team, subject and class tutors, and other relevant support staff on annual exams timetables and procedures as set by the various awarding bodies.
- oversees the production and distribution, to all centre staff and candidates, of an annual calendar for all exams in which candidates will be involved and communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events.
- ensures that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exams timetable that will affect them.
- checks with teaching staff that the necessary coursework and/or controlled assessments are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- provides and confirms data on estimated entries.
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.
- receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts and ensures that scripts are dispatched as per the guidelines.
- administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ publication *A guide to the special consideration process*.
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
- manages the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exam invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams.
- ensures candidates' coursework / controlled assessment marks are submitted and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- tracks, dispatches and stores returned coursework / controlled assessments.
- arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and manages, in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team, any post results service requests.

Heads of Department are responsible for:

- guidance to candidates who are unsure about exams entries or amendments to entries.
- accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the Exams Manager.
- accurate completion of coursework / controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets.

¹ This is the individual to whom the Head of Centre has delegated responsibility for the administration of exams in their centre.

- decisions on post-results procedures/ remarks

Teachers are responsible for:

- supplying information on entries, coursework, controlled assessments and internal exams as required by the Head of Department and/or Exams Manager.

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) is responsible for:

- identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements and notifying the exams officer in good time so that they are able to put in place exam day arrangements
- process any necessary applications in order to gain approval (if required).
- working with the Exams Manager to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exams rooms.

Invigilators are responsible for:

- assisting the Exams Manager in the efficient running of exams according to JCQ regulations.
- collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam.

Candidates are responsible for:

- confirmation and signing of entries.
- understanding coursework / controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.
- ensuring they conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ regulations.

2.2 Exam Series

Internal exams (mock exams) are scheduled in the autumn term, spring term and summer term. External exams are scheduled in the summer term. All examinations are held under external exam conditions in line with the JCQ regulations.

The centre does run some assessments on an on-demand basis. If offered, on-demand assessments can be scheduled only in windows agreed between the Senior Leadership Team, the Head of Department and the Exams Manager.

2.3 Exam Timetables

Once confirmed, the Exams Manager will circulate the exam timetables for internal and external exams before each series begins.

2.4 Entries and Late Entries

Candidates or parents/carers should discuss a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal with the relevant Head of Department.

The centre does not accept entries from private candidates.

The centre does not act as an exams centre for other organisations.

Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department via email with a return date for entries by January of the examination year.

Entries and amendments made after an awarding organisation's deadline (i.e. late) require the authorisation, by email, from the Head of Centre.

GCSE re-sits are not permitted, unless as directed by the Head of Centre.

Candidates may be withdrawn from an exam by their Head of Department if deterioration in attendance or attainment means that the candidate has not completed enough work to gain the qualification.

2.5 Exam Fees

Candidates or departments will not be charged for changes of tier, withdrawals made by the proper procedures or alterations arising from administrative processes provided these are made within the time allowed by the awarding bodies.

The Exams Manager will publish the deadline for actions well in advance for each exams series.

Entry exam fees are paid by the Exams Department.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the respective department making the late entries/ amendments.

Fee reimbursements may be sought from candidates:

- if they fail to sit an exam without supporting evidence
- if they do not meet the necessary coursework requirements without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances.

Re-sit fees are paid by the Exams Department.

2.6 Equality Legislation

All exam centre staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of any equality legislation.

The centre will comply with the legislation, including making reasonable adjustments to the service that they provide to candidates in accordance with requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies, and JCQ. This is the responsibility of the Head of Centre.

2.7 Access Arrangements

The SENCo will inform subject teachers and the Exams Manager of candidates with special educational needs and any special arrangements that individual candidates will need during the course and in any assessments/exams.

A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the SEN teacher.

Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement is the responsibility of the SEN teacher.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the SEN Teacher.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Exams Manager in consultation with the SENco.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the Exams Manager.

2.8 Emergency Evacuation

Dealing with emergency events is the responsibility of the Head of Centre, Exams Manager and the Invigilators.

Emergency evacuations must be dealt with in accordance with the Emergency Evacuation Procedure contained at **Appendix A**.

2.9 Invigilation

External staff will be used to invigilate external and internal mock examinations.

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the exams manager.

Securing the necessary Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the HR Manager.

DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the Warrington Borough Council.

Invigilators are recruited, timetabled, trained, and briefed by the exams manager and safeguarding officer.

2.10 Malpractice

The head of centre in consultation with the exams manager is responsible for investigating and reporting suspected candidate and/or staff malpractice to the Joint Council for Qualifications. Any sanction imposed will be the decision of the JCQ.

2.11 Exam Days

The exams officer will book all exam rooms after liaison with other users and make the question papers, other exam stationery and materials available for the invigilator.

Site management staff is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms, and will be advised of requirements in advance.

The exams manager and lead invigilators will start and finish all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Heads of Department may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates. Any staff present must be in accordance with the rules defined by JCQ concerning who is allowed in the exam room and what they can do.

In practical exams, subject teachers' availability will be in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Exam papers must not be read by any teachers or removed from the exam room before the end of a session. Papers will be distributed to heads of department in accordance with JCQ's recommendations and no later than 24 hours after candidates have completed them.

After an exam, the exams manager will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed examination scripts to awarding bodies, working in conjunction with the invigilators.

2.12 Contingency Planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Head of Centre and the Exams Manager.

The Exam Contingency Plan for Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School is in line with the guidance provided by Ofqual, JCQ and the awarding organisations and must be read in conjunction with this policy. The full Contingency Plan is contained in **Appendix C**.

2.13 Candidate Responsibilities

The Exams Manager will provide written information to candidates in advance of each exam series. A formal briefing session for candidates may be given by the Exams Manager.

The centre's published rules on acceptable dress and behaviour apply at all times. Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.

In an exam room candidates must not have access to items other than those clearly allowed in the instructions on the question paper, the stationery list, or the specification for that subject. This is particularly true of mobile phones and other electronic communication or storage devices with text or digital facilities. Any precluded items must be handed in to the invigilators at the start of the exam.

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines. Candidates are expected to stay for the full exam time at the discretion of the Exams Manager and Head of Centre.

Note: candidates who leave an exam room must be accompanied by an appropriate member of staff at all times.

The Exams Manager and Attendance Officer are responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day.

2.14 Clash Exams

The Exams Manager will be responsible as necessary for supervising escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays if applicable.

2.15 Special Consideration

Should a candidate be unable to attend an exam because of illness, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be ill or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the Exams Manager to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within 5 days of the exam.

The Exams Manager will make a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body within 7 days of the end of the exam series.

2.16 Internal Assessment and Appeals

It is the duty of Heads of Department to ensure that all internal assessments are conducted in accordance with JCQ Guidelines. The Exams Manager will assist by keeping a record of each dispatch, including the recipient details and the date and time sent.

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the Exams Manager by the Heads of Department. The Exams Manager will inform staff of the date when appeals against internal assessments must be made by. Any appeals will be dealt with in accordance with the centre's Internal Assessment Appeals Procedure (IAP) contained at **Appendix B**.

2.17 Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days,

- in person at the centre or
- by post to their home address where candidates have provided a self-addressed envelope or
- given to another person provided written permission has been provided by the candidate to release the results

The results slip will be in the form of a centre produced document.

The provision of the necessary staff on results days is the responsibility of the Assistant Headteacher (Achievement and Progress).

2.18 Enquiries About Results (EARs)

Enquiries about results may be requested by centre staff or the candidate following the release of results. A request for a re-mark or clerical check requires the written consent of the candidate, a request for a re-moderation of internally assessed work may be submitted without the consent of the group of candidates.

The cost of EARs may be paid by the centre if the grade is close to the next grade and the centre believes that it may increase.

All decisions on whether to make an application for an EAR will be made by the Head of Centre, the Assistant Headteacher (Achievement and Progress) and the Exams Manager.

Candidates can make a request for an EAR and this will be paid for by the candidate.

All processing of EARs will be the responsibility of the Exams Manager following the JCQ guidance.

2.19 Access to Scripts (ATS)

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of written exam papers. This will be paid for by the candidate.

Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained. This will be paid for by the centre.

An EAR cannot be applied for once an original script has been returned.

Processing of requests for ATS will be the responsibility of Exams Manager.

2.20 Certificates

Candidates will receive their certificates

- in person at the centre at Awards Evening or
- by post to their home address (candidates to provide a self-addressed recorded delivery envelope)
- if collected and signed for in person at the centre

Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have written authority from the candidate to do so and bring suitable identification with them that confirms who they are.

The centre will retain certificates for 10 years only.

A new certificate will not be issued by an awarding organisation. A transcript of results maybe issued if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred. The centre will not pay for replacement certificates that have been lost by the candidate.

Head of Centre

Exams Manager

.....

.....

Date.....

Date.....

Appendix A

Emergency Evacuation Procedure

The Exams Manager and invigilators must take the following action in an emergency such as a fire alarm or a bomb alert.

- The fire alarm is continuous high pitched a siren.
- Evacuation of the exam rooms will be on instruction of a fire warden.
- If evacuation is necessary, this will take place as far as possible within 2 minutes of the alarm activation and must be in complete silence.
- The Business Manager (or deputy in their absence) will make a decision to evacuate based on information from the alarm panel and Site Manager.
- **If evacuation is not necessary**, the invigilation staff will be informed and the alarm silenced as soon as possible, the exam will continue upon instruction from the Examinations Manager and in line with JCQ regulations.
- **If evacuation is necessary**, the invigilation staff MUST :
 - Stop the candidates from writing
 - Collect the attendance register from reception (in order to ensure all candidates are present) and evacuate the examination room in silence and in single file starting from Row A.
 - Advise candidates to leave all question papers, scripts and personal belongings in the examination room
 - Candidates must remain silent at all times
 - Make sure that the candidates are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room to make sure that there is no discussion about the examination.
 - Make a note of the time of the interruption and how long it lasted
 - Allow the candidates the full working time set for the examination
 - If there are only a few candidates, consider the possibility of taking the candidates (with question papers and scripts) to another place to finish the examinations
 - Check the register to ensure that all candidates have returned to the examination room
- **Evacuation from the Hall, Library and Lab 6** will be via the main entrance and the assembly point is on the grass at the front of the building.
- **Evacuation from the Old Gym or Drama Studio** will be via the nearest exist and the assembly point is on the grass next to the overspill car park
- **Evacuation from other rooms and assembly points** will be notified to invigilation staff before the exam and they should familiarise themselves with the evacuation notice displayed within the respective room(s).
- The Exams Manager must make a full report of the incident and of the action taken and send to the relevant awarding body

Appendix B

Appeals against internally assessed marks (GCSE controlled assessments)

Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School is committed to ensuring that whenever its staff marks candidates' controlled assessment/coursework this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the awarding body's specification and subject-specific associated documents.

Candidates' work will be marked by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skill, and who have been trained in this activity. Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School is committed to ensuring that work produced by candidates is authenticated in line with the requirements of the awarding body. Where a number of subject teachers are involved in marking candidates' work, internal moderation and standardisation will ensure consistency of marking.

If a candidate believes that this may not have happened in relation to his/her work, he/she may make use of this appeals procedure.

N.B: an appeal may only be made against the assessment process and not against the mark submitted to the awarding body.

1. Appeals should be made as early as possible, and no later than two weeks before the last timetabled examination in the series (e.g. the last GCSE written paper in the June GCSE examination series).
2. Appeals **must** be made in writing by the candidate's parent/carer to the Exams Manager.
3. The Head of Centre will appoint a senior member of staff, i.e. an Assistant Headteacher or a Deputy Headteacher, to conduct the investigation. The senior member of staff will not have had any involvement in the internal assessment process for that subject.
4. The purpose of the appeal will be to decide whether the process used for internal assessment conformed to the awarding body's specification and subject-specific associated documents.
5. The appellant will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal, including any relevant correspondence with the awarding body, and any changes made to internal assessment procedures.
6. The outcome of the appeal will be made known to the Headteacher and will be logged as a complaint. A written record will be kept and made available to the awarding body upon request. Should the appeal bring any irregularity in procedures to light, the awarding body will be informed.

After candidates' work has been internally assessed, it is moderated by the awarding body to ensure consistency in marking between centres. The moderation process may lead to mark changes. This process is outside the control of Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School and is not covered by this procedure.

Appendix C

Contingency Plan for Examinations

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Purpose of the Contingency Plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the management and administration of the exam process at Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School. 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.

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."

Causes of potential disruption to the exam process

1. Exams Manager 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 body specifications being delivered
 - annual exams plan not produced identifying essential key tasks, key dates and deadlines
 - sufficient invigilators not recruited and trained
- *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*
 - exam timetabling, rooming allocation; and invigilation schedules not prepared
 - candidates not briefed on exam timetables and awarding body information for candidates
 - 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 e.g. very late arrival, suspected malpractice, special consideration
 - candidates' scripts not dispatched as required 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:

- Head of Centre to appoint member of administrative staff to take over responsibilities should absence of EO have the potential to affect the meeting of deadlines.
- Staff member to work closely with Exams Manager to ensure they are up to date with the exam cycle and responsibilities at each point in time. This will be done under the supervision of the Business Manager and Head of Centre.

2. SENCo 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 body
 - modified paper requirements not identified in a timely manner to enable ordering to meet external deadline
 - staff providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained
- *Exam time*
 - access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms

Centre actions:

- Head of Centre responsible for ensuring position is filled should absence have the potential to disrupt exam preparation.
- Exams Manager to ensure access arrangements are in place by the Spring term of Year 10 for all students where possible.
- Exams Manager to plan access arrangements for exam days in advance of the Summer series, in consultation with SENCo

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

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Key tasks not undertaken including:
- *Early/estimated entry information not provided to the Exams Manager on time; resulting in pre-release information not being received*
- *Final entry information not provided to the Exams Manager 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*
- *Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet submission deadlines*

Centre actions:

- Exams Manager responsible for ensuring deadlines are met for estimated entries.

Any omissions to be referred to Head of Centre.

- Head of Centre responsible for ensuring the priority for teaching is the examination cohort and staff will be covered in good time, by trained professionals, in all circumstances.

4. 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:

- Exams Manager responsible for recruitment of invigilators on an ongoing basis. Advance planning required to ensure enough are available for the internal and external exam sittings.
- Head of Centre to be informed if recruitment necessary.
- Cover supervisors, teaching assistants and admin staff to also receive up dated exam invigilator training to ensure back up is available in case of invigilator absence.

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

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- *Exams Manager unable to identify sufficient/appropriate rooms during exams timetable planning*
- *Insufficient rooms available on peak exam days*
- *Main exam venues unavailable due to an expected incident at exam time*

Centre actions:

- Exams Manager responsible for ensuring planning of rooms is completed by the end of the Spring term to identify potential rooming issues.
- Alternative venues within the school to be made available by teaching staff in the event of an unexpected incident.
- Head of Centre to liaise with Exams Manager to ensure no disruption due to room shortages.

6. Failure of IT systems

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- *SIMS system failure at final entry deadline*
- *SIMS system failure during exams preparation*
- *SIMS system failure at results release time*

Centre actions:

- Exams Manager to contact awarding bodies directly to arrange alternative methods of information exchange.
- Head of Centre to be informed.

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

*Criteria for implementation of the plan

- *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.*

Centre actions:

- Head of Centre responsible for finding alternative venues/methods of learning.
- Priority given to exam cohort.
- Centre to communicate with parents and students.

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

*Criteria for implementation of the plan

- *Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations*
- **In the event that the head of centre decides the centre cannot be opened for scheduled examinations, the relevant awarding body must be informed as soon as possible. Awarding bodies will be able to offer advice regarding the alternative arrangements for conducting examinations that may be available and the options for candidates who have not been able to take scheduled examinations.*

Centre actions:

- Open for candidates only if possible.
- Use alternative venue, in agreement with awarding organisations.
- Offer students the opportunity to sit the next series if applicable.

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

*Criteria for implementation of the plan

- *Candidates are unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal*

Centre actions:

- Procedures for absence outlined to students in examination booklet information given each year.
- Exams Manager to liaise with student and parents to find alternative venue/advice on next opportunity to sit the examination/apply for special consideration as required.

10.*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:

- Exams Manager to communicate with awarding bodies for approval of alternative delivery arrangements

11.*Assessment evidence is not available to be marked

*Criteria for implementation of the plan

- *Loss or large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked*

Centre actions:

- Exams Manager to communicate with awarding bodies immediately.
- Student marks to be submitted based on appropriate evidence.
- Candidates offered the opportunity to retake in subsequent series if applicable.

12.*Centre unable to distribute results as normal

*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:

- Exams Manager and Head of Centre to assess alternative arrangements for issuing results with the regulators and awarding bodies.
- Head of Centre to inform transition colleges, students and parents about delay as soon as possible.

*information taken from the *Joint contingency plan for the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*