



The Bishop of Hereford's Bluecoat School

Exam Contingency Plan Policy

SLT Lead: Ellie Bunston

Governor Committee Approval: AQT

Review Date: September 2026

1. Key staff involved in exam contingency planning

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	Tom Williams
Senior leader(s)	Ellie Bunston
Exams officer	Clara Lobban
ALS lead/SENCo	Nick Vaughan
Other staff (if applicable)	Not Applicable

This plan is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that exam contingency planning at The Bishop of Hereford's Bluecoat School is managed in accordance with current requirements and regulations.

2. Purpose of the plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exam process.

By outlining actions/procedures to be invoked in case of disruption it is intended to mitigate the impact these disruptions have on our exam process at The Bishop of Hereford's Bluecoat School.

Alongside internal processes this plan is informed by the Ofqual **Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland** which provides guidance in the publication, 'What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted'.

This plan details how The Bishop of Herefords Bluecoat School complies with the JCQ's **General Regulations for Approved Centres** (section 5.3, Centre management) by having in place 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 staff absence. The examination contingency plan should reinforce procedures in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations, or on results day, owing to an unforeseen emergency.

3. Possible causes of disruption to the exam process

1. Exams officer absence at key points in the exam process (exam 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

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 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 post-results services

Other criteria:

No other criteria identified

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

The centre will:

Deputy head teacher to take over all roles and responsibilities

2. ALS lead/SENCo extended absence at key points in the exam process (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 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 access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms

Other criteria:

No other criteria identified

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

The centre will:

Examinations Officer and Deputy Head to liaise and coordinate

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

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Key tasks not undertaken including:

- Early/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/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
- Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet awarding body submission deadlines

Other criteria:

Covid related issues

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

The centre will:

Examinations Officer to liaise with Deputy Head and SLT to coordinate
Examinations Officer to contact Exam Boards where needed

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

Other criteria:

No other criteria identified

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

The centre will:

Examinations Officer will ensure that Cover supervisors/TAs in school are adequately trained.

Deputy Head will ensure Cover Supervisors/TAs are made available when required

5. 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

Other criteria:

Covid related issues

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

The centre will:

- (where main exam venue(s) unavailable due to an unexpected incident at exam time) where possible, make use of other available rooms within the centre, prioritising candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned identify whether the exam or timetabled assessment can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding body
- (where main exam venue(s) unavailable due to an unexpected incident at exam time) where possible, move to alternative venue, prioritising candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned

Alternative venue details:

Challenge Church - 40 Belmont Road Hereford HR2 7JW

(See site plan in appendix) communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or venue
communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue

Communication details:

Examinations Officer will communicate information verbally to students where possible, and also confirm in writing/email with Parents/students e.g. Candidate Timetables will be updated and emailed

ensure the secure transportation of question papers or assessment materials to the alternative venue

(after the exam) consider whether any candidate's ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration

Other centre actions:

No other actions identified

6. Failure of IT systems or a cyber attack

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- MIS/IT system failure at final entry deadline
- MIS/IT system failure during exams preparation
- MIS/IT failure during exams taking place
- MIS/IT system failure at results release time
- IT system cyber attack

Other criteria:

No other criteria identified

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

The centre will:

Examinations Officer will ensure internal deadlines are set earlier than final deadline to ensure that entries are made before deadline, and liaise with IT and SIMS team when problem arise

Examinations Officer will contact Exam boards where necessary

IT Services will ensure all computers are installed with antivirus software and best security is followed where possible. IT Services will ensure auto save is configured. The Examinations Officer Should always ensure a spare computer is available when seating candidates in an IT Room in case of any issues. IT rooms to be checked before exam season to ensure computers are configured correctly. Where possible Desktops or laptops, with a connected power source, should be used. Resources, such as the seating plan should be printed in advance. For exam candidates with headphones, for the use of an onscreen reader etc, spares should be available. The Password for candidate's login should be changed after each exam sitting, with restricted logins.

Students who work on a laptop may have to have paper copies with a scribe or reader from invigilation team if access arrangements permit instead of claro read.

Language exams to be conducted via CDs rather than through computers, some boards send these automatically but a copy may need to be requested from exam board.

IT Services will encrypt resources to further protect the data from a cyber attack when papers are no longer required by the candidates

In case of any printer issues, that prevents the students from printing their work, IT Services will ensure the work is saved and printed at a later date

7. Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lockdown)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Whole centre evacuation (or lockdown) during exam time due to serious incident resulting in exam candidates being unable to start, proceed with or complete their exams

Other criteria:

No other criteria identified

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

The centre will:

- take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether the centre is able to open contact the relevant awarding body as soon as possible and follow its instructions discuss alternative arrangements with the awarding body if the exam or assessment cannot take place follow guidance provided by the awarding body on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances
- where accommodation is limited, prioritise candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned
- communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue

Communication details:

Candidates and parents/carers will be informed in writing via email

- consider whether any candidates' ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration

Other centre actions:

No other actions identified

8. Disruption of teaching time in the weeks before an exam - 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

Other criteria:

Covid related issues

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

The centre will:

- take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether the centre is able to open contact the relevant awarding body as soon as possible and follow its instructions discuss alternative arrangements with the awarding body if the exam or assessment cannot take place follow guidance provided by the awarding body on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances
- where accommodation is limited, prioritise candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned
- communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue

Communication details:

Candidates and parents/carers will be informed in writing via email

- consider whether any candidates' ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration

Other centre actions:

No other actions identified

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

Other criteria:

No other criteria identified

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

The centre will:

- take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether the centre is able to open contact the relevant awarding body as soon as possible and follow its instructions discuss alternative arrangements with the awarding body if the exam or assessment cannot take place follow guidance provided by the awarding body on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances
- where accommodation is limited, prioritise candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned
- communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue

Communication details:

Candidates and parents/carers will be informed in writing via email

- consider whether any candidates' ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration

Other centre actions:

No other actions identified

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

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations

Other criteria:

Covid related issues

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

The centre will:

- take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether the centre is able to open contact the relevant awarding body as soon as possible and follow its instructions discuss alternative arrangements with the awarding body if the exam or assessment cannot take place follow guidance provided by the awarding body on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances
- where accommodation is limited, prioritise candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned
- communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue

Communication details:

Candidates and parents/carers will be informed in writing via email

- consider whether any candidates' ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration

Other centre actions:

No other actions identified

11. 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

Other criteria:

No other criteria identified

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

The centre will:

- liaise with awarding bodies regarding the provision of electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network and will ensure when copies are received/made these are stored under secure conditions follow guidance provided by the awarding body on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances
- understand that as a last resort, and in close collaboration with centres and regulators, awarding organisations will consider scheduling of the examination on an alternative date
- communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue

Other centre actions:

No other actions identified

12. 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

Other criteria:

Covid related issues

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

The centre will:

- where examinations are part of the national 'yellow label' service or where awarding bodies arrange collections, seek advice from awarding bodies and will not make its own arrangements for transportation unless told to do so by the awarding body
- for any examinations where the centre makes its own arrangements for transportation, investigate alternative dispatch options that comply with the requirements detailed in the JCQ's Instructions for Conducting Examinations

- ensure the secure storage of completed examination scripts until collection

Other centre actions:

No other actions identified

13. 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 organisations

Other criteria:

No other criteria identified

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

The centre will:

- liaise with the awarding body to determine if candidate marks for affected assessments may be able to be generated based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement as defined by the awarding body
- where marks cannot be generated by awarding body, inform candidates they may need to retake the affected assessment in a subsequent assessment series

Other centre actions:

No other actions identified

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

Other criteria:

No other criteria identified

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

The centre will:

- make arrangements to access its results at an alternative venue/share facilities with another centre if this is possible, in agreement with the relevant awarding body
- make arrangements to coordinate access to post results services from an alternative venue

Alternative venue details:

To be confirmed

make arrangements to make post results requests at an alternative location
 contact the relevant awarding body if electronic post results requests are not possible
 inform candidates of any alternative arrangements in place for the distribution of results and the facilitation of post-results services

Communication details:

Candidates and parents/carers will be informed in writing via email

Other centre actions:

No other actions identified

15. Secure Storage Access

Criteria for implementation of the plan

In an emergency situation where the secure room and the secure storage facility cannot be accessed

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

- the JCQ Centre Inspection Service **must** be contacted **immediately**.
- Have adequate printing options available for all papers within secure printing environment.]
- Advise candidates of possible disruption and/or delay in starting examination due to added process of printing papers
- liaise with awarding bodies regarding the provision of electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network and will ensure when copies are received/made these are stored under secure conditions follow guidance provided by the awarding body on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances

16. Any other cause of disruption to the exam process

Cause of disruption

No further causes identified

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

Not applicable

4. Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning

Ofqual

Ofqual guidance extract taken directly from the **Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland - What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted**

Exam planning

Review contingency plans well in advance of each exam or assessment series. Consider how, if the contingency plan is invoked, you will comply with the awarding organisation's requirements.

In the event of disruption

1. Contact the relevant awarding organisation and follow its instructions.
2. Take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether your centre is able to open.
3. Identify whether the exam or timetabled assessment can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation, ensuring the secure transportation of questions papers or assessment materials to the alternative venue.
4. Where accommodation is limited, prioritise students whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned.
5. In the event of an evacuation during an examination please refer to JCQ's 'Centre emergency evacuation procedure' (www.jcq.org.uk/examsoffice/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations/).
6. Communicate with parents, carers and students any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue.
7. Communicate with any external assessors or relevant third parties regarding any changes to the exam or assessment timetable.

After the exam

1. Consider whether any students' ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration.
2. Advise students, where appropriate, of the opportunities to take their exam or assessment at a later date.

3. Ensure that scripts are stored under secure conditions.
4. Return scripts to awarding organisations in line with their instructions. Never make alternative arrangements for the transportation of completed exam scripts, unless told to do so by the awarding organisation.

Steps the awarding organisation should take

Exam planning

1. Establish and maintain, and at all times comply with, an up-to-date, written contingency plan.

2. Ensure that the arrangements in place with centres and other third parties enable them to deliver and award qualifications in accordance with their conditions of recognition. **In the event of disruption**

1. Take all reasonable steps to mitigate any adverse effect, in relation to their qualifications, arising from any disruption.
2. Provide effective guidance to any of their centres delivering qualifications.
3. Ensure that where an assessment must be completed under specified conditions, students complete the assessment under those conditions (other than where any reasonable adjustments or special considerations require alternative conditions).
4. Promptly notify the relevant regulators about any event which could have an adverse effect on students, standards or public confidence.
5. Coordinate its communications with the relevant regulators where the disruption has an impact on multiple centres or a wide range of learners.

After the exam

Consider any requests for special consideration for affected students. For example, those who may have lost their internally assessed work or whose performance in assessments or exams could have been affected by the disruption.

If any students miss an exam or are disadvantaged by the disruption

If some of the students have been adversely affected by the disruption, you should ask the awarding organisation about applying for special consideration.

Decisions about special consideration, when it is or is not appropriate, is for each awarding organisation to make. Their decisions might be different for different qualifications and for different subjects.

See also JCQ's guidance on special considerations (www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/)

JCQ guidance taken directly from **Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2024-2025** (www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conductingexaminations/) section 15, **Contingency planning**

15.1 The qualification regulators, awarding bodies and government departments responsible for education have prepared and agreed information for schools and colleges in the event of examinations being seriously disrupted. This jointly agreed information will ensure consistency of response in the event of major disruption to the examinations system affecting significant numbers of candidates. Further information may be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-englandwales-and-northern-ireland>

15.2 In addition, awarding bodies have their own well-established contingency plans in place to respond to disruptions. It is important that exam officers who are facing disruption liaise directly with the relevant awarding body/bodies.

15.3 All centres 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. All relevant centre staff must be familiar with the examination contingency plan. Consideration should be given as to how these arrangements will be communicated to candidates, parents and staff should disruption to examinations occur.

15.4 If the head of centre decides the centre cannot be opened for scheduled examinations, the centre's contingency plan must be invoked, utilising the centre's alternative site(s) and the relevant awarding bodies 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.

15.5 The awarding bodies will designate 'contingency sessions' for examinations, summer 2025. This is consistent with the qualification regulators' document Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

15.6 The designation of 'contingency sessions' within the common examination timetable is in the event of national or significant local disruption to examinations. It is part of the awarding bodies' standard contingency planning for examinations.

15.7 In the event of national disruption to a day of examinations in summer 2025, the awarding bodies will liaise with the qualification regulators and government departments to agree the most appropriate option for managing the impact. As a last resort the affected examinations will be rescheduled. Although every effort would be taken to keep the impact to a minimum, it is possible that there could be more than one timetable date affected following the disruption, up to and including the last contingency day. Centres will be alerted if it is agreed to reschedule the examinations and the affected candidates will be expected to make themselves available in such circumstances. The decision regarding the rescheduling of examinations will always rest with the awarding body. The centre must conduct the examination on the scheduled date unless instructed to do otherwise by the awarding body.

15.8 Where candidates choose not to be available for the rescheduled examination(s) for reasons other than those covered by special consideration, they will not be eligible for enhanced grading. Centres must therefore ensure candidates and parents are aware of the contingency arrangements so that they take them into account when making their plans for the summer.

Links to other JCQ documentation

JCQ Joint Contingency Plan - [jqc.org.uk/exams-office/other-documents](https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/other-documents)

General Regulations for Approved Centres - [jqc.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations](https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations)

Guidance notes on alternative site arrangements - [jqc.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms](https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms)

Guidance notes for transferred candidates - [jqc.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms](https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms)

Instructions for Conducting Examinations - [jqc.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations](https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations)

A guide to the special consideration process - [jqc.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance](https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance)

GOV.UK

(updated 2021/22) Emergency planning and response: Severe weather; Exam disruption; Coronavirus (COVID-19) - [gov.uk/guidance/emergencies-and-severe-weather-schools-and-early-years-settings](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/emergencies-and-severe-weather-schools-and-early-years-settings)

School organisation: local-authority-maintained schools - [gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools)

Dispatch of exam scripts guide: Ensuring the service runs smoothly; Contingency planning - [gov.uk/government/publications/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-yellow-labelservice](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-yellow-labelservice)

Wales

School closures: examinations - [gov.wales/school-closures-examinations](https://www.gov.wales/school-closures-examinations)

Opening schools in extremely bad weather: guidance for schools -
gov.wales/opening-schools-extremely-bad-weather-guidance-schools

Northern Ireland

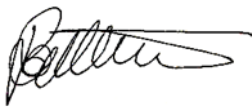
(updated 2021/22) Exceptional closure days - education-ni.gov.uk/articles/exceptional-closure-days

Checklist - exceptional closure of schools - education-ni.gov.uk/publications/checklist-exceptional-closure-schools

National Counter Terrorism Security Office

Guidance - Bomb Threats - www.gov.uk/government/publications/crowded-places-guidance/bomb-threats

Approved by the AQT Governors Committee at their meeting of 6th November 2025



Signed:

(Chair of AQT Governors Committee)

Appendix:

The Bishop Of Hereford 's Bluecoat School Contingency Venue Arrangements

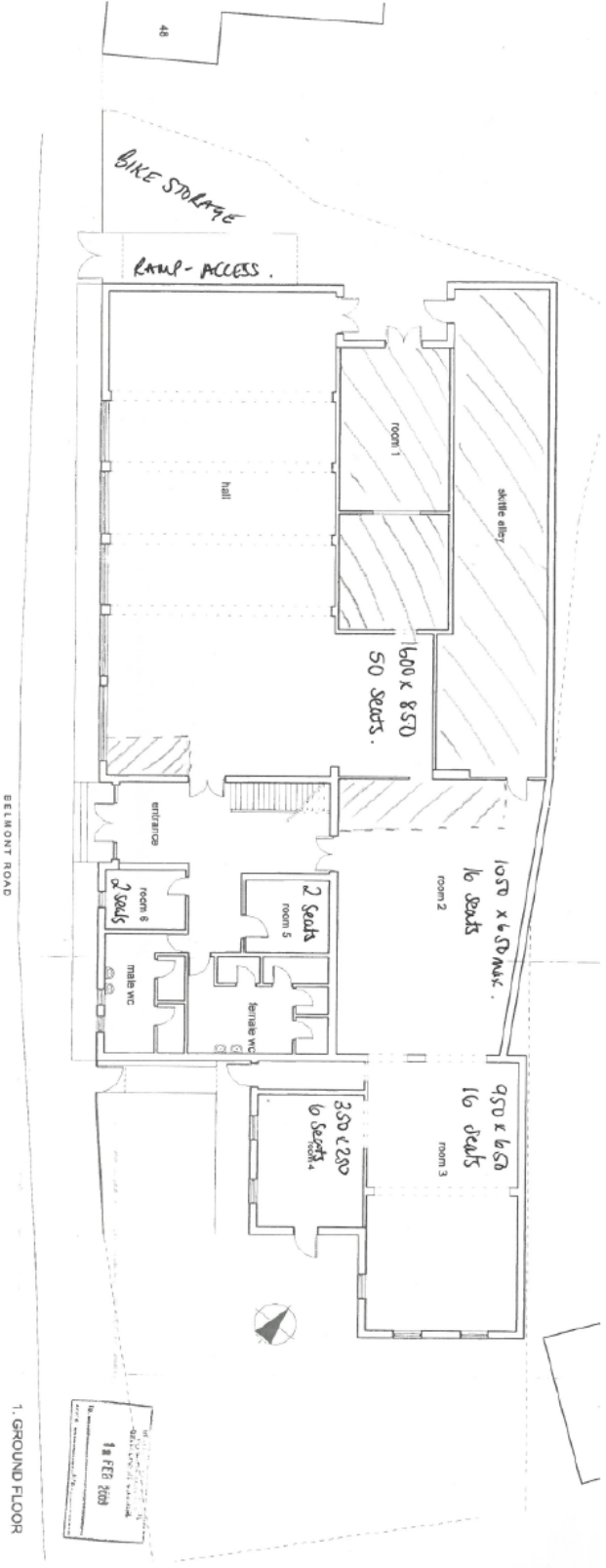
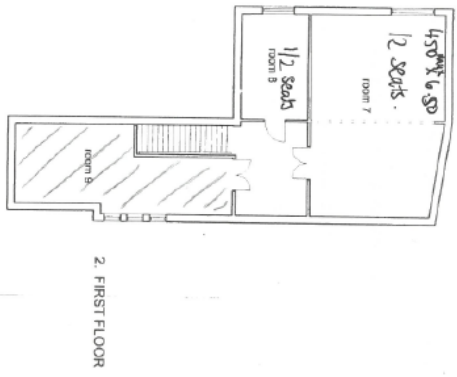
Challenge Church
 40 Belmont Road
 Hereford
 HR2 7JW

Access gained via Marion Roberts

Measurements are approx in mm
 Total Seats: 102

Transport/Parking:
 Shrs in Asda Superstore
 Drop off available in local retail park
 Venue on main bus route from Hereford City Centre
 Bike Storage on site
 10/15 min walk from Hereford City Centre (approx)

Disabled Access via side ramp
 Delivery Access for exam furniture via side ramp



1. GROUND FLOOR