

# **Marshland Exams Contingency Plan and Administration Policy**

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### Purpose of the Exam Contingency 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 Marshland High 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' and the JCQ Joint Contingency Plan for the Examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the JCQ notice Preparing for disruption to examinations (effective from 11 October 2021).

This plan details how Marshland High 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.

### 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

#### **Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above**

##### The centre will:

- Data collections and exam dates- These are saved in Admin 'V' drive – Exams, containing key dates of each exam cycle from which exam will be organised when exam officer is absence, all will be collected at the beginning of the academic year.
- Entries- Estimated entries list will be kept in Admin Drive to provide exam information for the current academic year. When entries are made and list of entry names will be given to the HODs for checking.
- Pre exam time– Record for invigilator training should be kept in the exam folder. Summary timetable should be send to all invigilator prior to the exam season starts and make sure required number of invigilators are available for the day of the exams. Coursework marks must be obtained from the HODs and submitted via secure areas of relevant website, also needed to send them to the relevant awarding body using the postal labels provided by the related boards.
- HOC should make sure all exams taking placing not more than half an hour early or later of the prescribed exam time by the awarding bodies. Any unusual circumstances, if occurs, should be reported to the board with immediate effect.
- Preparation for post result should be started before exam season finishes or before students leave school so that they know the procedures. All information should be updated in the website as well.

## 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

### Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above

The centre will:

- Need to get all related candidates tested before the exam season starts and submit Form 8 to JCQ for the approval. All evidence should be kept in the folder for each student so that at the time of the inspection that can be produced to the Inspector straight away.
- Exam officer should get in contact with SEN coordinator of the school before the exam arrangements are done.

## 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

**Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above**

The centre will:

- HOD or HOC has responsibilities to continue with the plan of actions regarding the pre-release materials distributing to the students when needed. Need to make sure all NEA works been done way before submitting marks deadlines so that students may have time to go with the appeal procedures

**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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above**

The centre will:

- Make sure all invigilators are well trained and have experienced a practice exam before the actual external exams.
- Have a spare invigilator booked for each exam to cover in the event of short notice absence.

**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

**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:

- The centre would make use of our Trust Partners in WNAT, and seek alternative centre provision for the delivery of exams should Marshland High School be unavailable.
- 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:

- Candidates and parents/carers (If appropriate) would be informed of all new details asap using the approved school communications systems.
- Candidates would also be provided with support from staff and pastoral for any issues in accessing the new venue or for any emotional support due to the sudden changes.
- 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

## **6. Failure of IT systems**

**Criteria for implementation of the plan**

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

**Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above**

The centre will:

- Inform the awarding body with immediate effect if the failure would lead to late entries/late results.
- Ensure that entries are made in advance of the deadline to allow for any potential problems.
- Utilise another school within the WNAT and ensure IT were able to create a remote link to access all relevant documentation and software.

## **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:

- The centre would make use of our Trust Partners in WNAT, and seek alternative centre provision for the delivery of exams should Marshland High School be unavailable.
- Need to inform awarding body and use the contingency day for the season set by JCQ

**Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above**

The centre will:

- refer to and invoke its (exams) emergency evacuation policy/procedure in line with JCQ's 'Centre emergency evacuation procedure' (or its (exams) lockdown policy)
- contact the relevant awarding body as soon as possible and follow its instructions
- where accommodation is limited, prioritise candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned
- (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

## **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:

- In the case of modular courses, candidates should sit the examinations in the next available series
- The school should follow plans to facilitate teaching and learning by an alternative method or alternative location.
- The centre would make use of our Trust Partners in WNAT, and seek alternative centre provision for the delivery of exams should Marshland High School be unavailable.

### **Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above**

The centre will:

- recognise it remains the responsibility of the centre to prepare students, as usual, for examinations
- facilitate alternative methods of learning
- communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) information relating to alternative methods of learning

Communication details:

Candidates and parents/carers (If appropriate) would be informed of all new details ASAP using the approved school communications systems.

- take advice offered by the awarding body regarding alternative arrangements for conducting examinations that may be available
- take advice offered by the awarding body on the options for candidates who have not been able to take scheduled examinations
- advise candidates, where appropriate, of the opportunities to take their exam or assessment at a later date

## **9. Candidates at risk of being unable to take examinations - centre remains open**

### **Criteria for implementation of the plan**

- Candidates at risk of being unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal

Other criteria:

- The school can liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with the relevant awarding organisations. JCQ guidance on alternative site arrangements can be accessed through the JCQ website.
- The school can offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series
- The school can apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements.
- Candidates are only eligible for special consideration if they have been fully prepared and have covered the whole course but are affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control.



**Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption listed above**

The centre will:

- take advice offered by the awarding body on the options for candidates who have not been able to take scheduled examinations
- discuss alternative arrangements with the awarding body if a candidate misses an exam or loses their assessment due to an emergency, or other event, outside of the candidate's control
- identify whether the exam or timetabled assessment can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding body, ensuring the secure transportation of questions papers or assessment materials to the alternative venue
- communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue

Communication details:

- A candidate would be informed via email/letter any arrangements that differed from a normal in school examination
- 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

**10. Centre at risk of being 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 at risk of being unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations

Other criteria:

- The centre would make use of our Trust Partners in WNAT, and seek alternative centre provision for the delivery of exams should Marshland High School be unavailable.

**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 would be notified of any emergency arrangements via the school communication systems.
- The school would arrange with the trust in order for transportation to another venue.
- 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

## **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

### **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:

- The awarding organisations would provide the school with electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network. Awarding organisations would email examination papers to centres if electronic transfer is not possible. The Examinations Officer must ensure that copies are received, made and stored under secure conditions.

## **12. Disruption to transporting 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**

The centre will:

- where examinations are part of the national 'yellow label' service or where awarding bodies arrange collections, contact the relevant awarding bodies for advice and instructions 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 collection arrangements, investigate alternative options that comply with the requirements detailed in the JCQ publication 'Instructions for Conducting Examinations'
- ensure the secure storage of completed examination scripts until collection

Other centre actions:

- The school will seek advice from awarding organisations and normal collection agency regarding collection.
- The school must not make arrangements for transportation without approval from awarding organisations.
- The school must ensure secure storage of completed examination scripts until collection.

### **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

#### **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:

- The awarding organisations should 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.
- The candidates should retake affected assessment at subsequent assessment window.

### **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

#### **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:

The school should contact the awarding organisations about alternative options:

- The school will make arrangements to access its results at an alternative site.
- The school will make arrangements to coordinate access to post results services from an alternative site.
- The school will share facilities with other centres where possible.
- 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:

- The school will communicate with the candidates using the school communications system, offering them details and information on how to receive their results.
- The school could issue results electronically via the system to ensure students had access asap.

#### **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**

#### Contingency planning

You should prepare for possible disruption to exams and other assessments and make sure staff are aware of these plans.

#### **Covid specific guidance:**

When drafting contingency plans, you should consider the following guidance:

- **actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak** from the Department for Education in England ([www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak))
- **actions for FE colleges and providers during the coronavirus outbreak** from the Department for Education in England ([www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-further-education-provision](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-further-education-provision))
- **responsibility for exams** from the Department for Education in England ([www.gov.uk/government/publications/responsibility-for-autumn-gcseas-and-a-level-exam-series](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/responsibility-for-autumn-gcseas-and-a-level-exam-series))
- **vocational, technical and other general qualifications in 2022** from Ofqual (regulator) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/vocational-technical-and-other-general-qualifications-in-2022>)
- **GCSE, AS and A level qualifications in 2022** from Ofqual (regulator) ([www.gov.uk/government/collections/gcse-as-and-a-level-qualificationsin-2022](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/gcse-as-and-a-level-qualificationsin-2022))
- **education and childcare: coronavirus** from Welsh Government (<https://gov.wales/education-coronavirus>)
- **Qualifications Wales homepage** from Qualifications Wales (regulator) ([www.qualificationswales.org/english/](http://www.qualificationswales.org/english/))
- **coronavirus (COVID-19):** guidance for school and educational settings in Northern Ireland from Department of Education in Northern Ireland ([www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-school-and-educational-settings-northern-ireland](http://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-school-and-educational-settings-northern-ireland))
- **coronavirus (COVID-19) (information from CCEA)** – information on vocational, technical and general qualifications from CCEA Regulation (<https://ccea.org.uk/regulation/coronavirus>)

#### **General contingency guidance**

- **emergency planning and response** ([www.gov.uk/guidance/emergencies-and-severe-weather-schools-and-early-years-settings](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/emergencies-and-severe-weather-schools-and-early-years-settings)) from the Department for Education in England
- **school organisation: local-authority-maintained schools** from the Department for Education in England ([www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools))
- **exceptional closure days** ([www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/exceptional-closure-days](http://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/exceptional-closure-days)) from the Department of Education in Northern Ireland

- **checklist - exceptional closure of schools** ([www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/checklist-exceptional-closure-schools](http://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/checklist-exceptional-closure-schools)) from the Department of Education in Northern Ireland
- **school terms and school closures from NI Direct** ([www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/school-terms-and-school-closures](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/school-terms-and-school-closures))
- **opening schools in extremely bad weather** (<https://gov.wales/opening-schools-extremely-bad-weather-guidance-schools>) - guidance for schools from the Welsh Government
- **bomb threats** procedures for handling bomb threats from the National Counter Terrorism Security Office ([www.gov.uk/government/publications/crowded-places-guidance/bomb-threats](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/crowded-places-guidance/bomb-threats))

### Disruption to assessments or exams

In the absence of any instruction from the relevant awarding organisation, you should make sure that any exam or timetabled assessment takes place if it is possible to hold it. This may mean relocating to alternative premises. You should discuss alternative arrangements with your awarding organisation if:

- the exam or assessment cannot take place
- a student misses an exam or loses their assessment due to an emergency, or other event, outside of the student's control

See also the JCQ Joint Contingency Plan for the Examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland ([www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/other-documents/jcq-jointcontingency-plan/](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/other-documents/jcq-jointcontingency-plan/))

### Steps you should take

#### 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/](http://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/](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/))

### Wider communications

The regulators, Ofqual in England, Qualifications Wales in Wales and CCEA Regulation in Northern Ireland, will share timely and accurate information, as required, with awarding organisations, government departments and other stakeholders.

The Department for Education in England, the Department of Education in Northern Ireland and the Welsh Government will inform the relevant government ministers as soon as it becomes apparent that there will be significant local or national disruption; and ensure that they are kept updated until the matter is resolved.

Awarding organisations will alert the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) and the Central Applications Office (CAO) about any impact of the disruption on their deadlines and liaise regarding student progression to further and higher education.

Awarding organisations will alert relevant professional bodies or employer groups if the impact of disruption particularly affects them.

### **Widespread national disruption to the taking of examinations or assessments**

The governments' view across England, Wales and Northern Ireland is education should continue in 2021 to 2022 with schools remaining open and that examinations and assessments will go ahead in both autumn 2021 and summer 2022.

As education is devolved, in the event of any widespread sustained national disruption to examinations or assessments, national government departments will communicate with regulators, awarding organisations and centres prior to a public announcement. Regulators will provide advice to government departments on implications for exam timetables.

We will update this page as necessary, with any further relevant links, should national disruption occur.

### **JCQ**

JCQ guidance taken directly from **Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2021-2022** ([www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conductingexaminations/](http://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: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland/what-schools-andcolleges-should-do-if-exams-or-other-assessments-are-seriously-disrupted](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland/what-schools-andcolleges-should-do-if-exams-or-other-assessments-are-seriously-disrupted)

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

15.3 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.

15.4 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.

15.5 The awarding bodies will designate a 'contingency day' for examinations, summer 2022. This is consistent with the qualification regulators' document Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland - [www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland)

The designation of a 'contingency day' 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.

In the event that there is national disruption to a day of examinations in summer 2022, 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 contingency day. Centres will be alerted if it was agreed to reschedule the examinations and the affected candidates will be expected to make themselves available in such circumstances. The decision regarding the re-scheduling 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.

Where candidates choose not to be available for the rescheduled examination(s) for reasons other than those traditionally covered by special consideration, they will not be eligible for enhanced grading arrangements. Centres must therefore ensure candidates and parents are aware of this contingency arrangement so that they may take it into account when making their plans for the summer. However, the awarding bodies will not insist upon candidates being available throughout the entire timetable period as a matter of course.

### **Links to other JCQ documentation**

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

(updated 18 October 2021)

(JCQ guidance taken directly from the notice - **Preparing for disruption to examinations** (effective from 11 October 2021) [www.jcq.org.uk/preparing-for-disruption-to-examinations/](http://www.jcq.org.uk/preparing-for-disruption-to-examinations/))

This Notice is based on guidance provided within the JCQ Joint Contingency Plan, which is available from the JCQ website: [www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/otherdocuments/jcq-joint-contingency-plan](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/otherdocuments/jcq-joint-contingency-plan)

In the event of widespread disruption to the examination system, all centres **must** have contingency plans in place. There are three main categories of disruption, which are outlined below.

### **Candidates at risk of being unable to take examinations – centres remain open**

Centres' contingency plans should focus on options that enable candidates to take their examinations. As part of these preparations, centres should take into account the guidance provided in the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations: <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conductingexaminations>

- consider moving the starting times of the examination for all candidates (see **section 6.2** of the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations)
- being aware of the rules for very late arrivals (see section 21 of the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations).

Wherever possible, it is always in the best interest for candidates to sit the examination. However, if candidates who are unable to sit the examination meet the criteria, special consideration through absence for acceptable reasons is an option (see Chapter 4 of the JCQ publication A guide to the special consideration

process: <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance>

Please do not hesitate to call the relevant awarding body if you require additional support or guidance in the event of disruption to examinations.

### **Centres at risk of being unable to open as normal during the examination period**

As above, centres' contingency plans must focus on enabling candidates to take their examinations if the centre is at risk of being unable to open as normal.



The responsibility for deciding whether it is safe for a centre to open lies with the head of centre who is responsible for taking advice or following instructions from relevant local or national agencies.

Information on what centres should do if examinations or other assessments are seriously disrupted can be found in the three country regulators' exam system contingency plan: [www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/other-documents/jcq-joint-contingency-plan](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/other-documents/jcq-joint-contingency-plan)

Special consideration through absence for acceptable reasons is also available as an option if all other avenues have been exhausted and candidates meet the relevant criteria.

Please do not hesitate to call the relevant awarding body if you require additional support or guidance in the event of disruption to your examinations.

### **Disruption to transporting completed examination scripts**

If there is a delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts:

- where examinations are part of the national 'yellow label' service or where awarding bodies arrange collections, centres should contact the relevant awarding bodies for advice and instructions.
- for examinations where centres make their own collection arrangements, they should investigate alternative options that comply with the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations
- completed scripts must be stored securely until they are collected.

### **Examination centres are responsible for:**

- preparing plans for any disruption to examinations as part of centres' general emergency planning
- deciding whether the centre can open for examinations as scheduled and informing relevant awarding bodies if the centre is unable to open
- exploring the opportunities for alternative arrangements if the centre cannot open for examinations and agreeing such arrangements with the awarding bodies
- judging whether candidates meet the requirements for special consideration because of any disruption and submitting these requests to the relevant awarding bodies
- assessing their circumstances and liaising with awarding bodies in the event of disruption to the transportation of papers.

### **Awarding bodies are responsible for:**

- ensuring centres receive examination materials for scheduled examinations
- advising centres on possible alternative examination arrangements and declining/approving proposals for alternative examination arrangements
- evaluating and declining/approving requests for special consideration.

### **Contacting the awarding bodies**

In all cases, if there are any concerns, please contact the relevant awarding body for advice:

#### **AQA**

0800 197 7162

[eos@aqa.org.uk](mailto:eos@aqa.org.uk)

#### **OCR**

01223 553998

[support@ocr.org.uk](mailto:support@ocr.org.uk)

**Pearson**

0344 463 2535

**WJEC**

02920 265 077

[exams@wjec.co.uk](mailto:exams@wjec.co.uk)

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

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

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

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

A guide to the special consideration process - [jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance](http://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](http://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](http://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-label-service](http://gov.uk/government/publications/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-yellow-label-service)

**Wales**

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

Opening schools in extremely bad weather: guidance for schools - [gov.wales/opening-schools-extremely-bad-weather-guidance-schools](http://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](http://education-ni.gov.uk/articles/exceptional-closure-days)

Checklist - exceptional closure of schools - [education-ni.gov.uk/publications/checklist-exceptional-closure-schools](http://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](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/crowded-places-guidance/bomb-threats)

## **Exams Administration Plan**

In order to safeguard all aspects of examination administration the following systems will be upheld, to ensure that, in the event of staff shortage, the administration of examinations can proceed in a controlled, organised manner.

### **The Examination Administration folder**

The Examination Administration folder contains a list of essential key dates. This list can be used to identify exactly where, in the examination cycle, the school is at any given time and which tasks are relevant for that specific period.

A list of contact details for all examination staff across the Trust can be found in the Examination Administration Folder. All staff are available to provide support for each of the stages below.

### **Entries**

A copy of estimated entries for the current academic year will be kept in the Exam Lists and Amendments folder, contained in the exams office, to provide information on syllabus and examination codes. This will allow for the creation of mark sheets and exam entries. Practical support, if required, will be available from Trust examination staff.

When entries have been made, a list of entry codes and totals will be given to the relevant staff to check and confirm and placed in the Exam Lists and Amendments folder.

Entries and registrations are made annually. Registrations for non-GCSE subjects are made within 6 weeks of the students starting in Year 10. GCSE Entries are made in February in the examination year for the student. All data used for registrations/entries are pulled from the school's management system of which information is gathered and checked yearly with parents. On entry students are also provided with a copy of their entry document in which they are asked to check and ensure all details are correct. Any errors identified are then resolved with the examination boards as required and the school system is also updated.

### **Non-examination assessments**

NEA marks must be obtained from relevant Heads of Department and/or subject teachers and submitted via the secure areas for relevant exam boards. Exam boards differ in their requirements regarding NEA and care must be taken to ensure these are adhered to. Sample requests will be received in due course (or can be obtained from the secure areas) and moderator samples can then be dispatched.

On entering NEA marks to external sites of systems the Exams officer will work alongside another member of staff to ensure that all data inputted is accurate and correct and the data will be checked thoroughly before submission.

### **Invigilation**

The Invigilator folder contains contact and availability details for all invigilators currently employed by the school.

### **Access Arrangements**

Details of all students entitled to examination concessions are available in the SEN & Access Arrangements folder.

## **Timetabling/examination scheduling and examination organisation**

Examination timetables will be publicly distributed on the school website and a master copy will be kept in the Examination Administration folder. This will provide information on rooming and scheduling of examinations. More detailed timetables, detailing invigilation and access arrangements will be distributed to invigilators and held in the Examination Administration folder.

## **Examination packs**

Exam packs are provided for each examination room. They contain:

- Coversheets detailing all information relevant to a specific exam. These include paper references, duration, rooming, number of candidates, stationary requirements and any details of students entitled to exam concessions and erratum notices.
- Seating plans.
- Attendance registers.
- Scribe and word processor cover sheets.
- Specific details and instructions for invigilators.

Examination packs are assembled in advance of examinations and stored securely with the relevant examination papers.

## **Storage/access to papers**

Access to papers and the secure storage will be restricted. However, the keys to the secure storage will be kept securely in the school so that access can be given to the appointed person by the Head of Centre. Papers are to be logged at reception on delivery and moved immediately to the secure storage. When unpacked they should be checked carefully to ensure the correct numbers/paper references.

## **Examination day**

In the event of absence on an examination day, given that timetabling and exam packing will have been completed in advance, invigilators will be able to organise the running of the exam. Invigilators will attend an annual training session to ensure that they have the knowledge needed to uphold the integrity of the examinations.

## **Dispatch of Scripts**

Step by step instructions on dispatching scripts will be kept in the Examinations Administration folder. These will include details of where the relevant stationary is stored and contact details for the exam boards.

## **Special Consideration Applications**

Applications for Special consideration must be made to the relevant boards within seven days of the last examination in the series in each subject. An on- going record of special consideration and any evidence will be kept in the Special Consideration folder.

## **Pre-results preparation**

Necessary SIMS updates will be installed by IT. Named envelopes are to be prepared, ready for Candidates' Statements of Results.

## **Results**

Results will be printed on the early release days. Results will then be placed in named envelopes ready for distribution on the results release days.

## **Post-Results**

Teaching Staff will be sent relevant forms and given relevant information on the post-results services prior to results days. Students will be made aware of their right to request Post-Results Services and their right to appeal as detailed in the ATS, EAR & Appeals Policy.

## **Certification**

On receipt of candidate certificates the Exams Officer is responsible for ensuring that all data present on the certificates is correct. Each certificate is checked to ensure that the candidate number, name and grade/marks displayed match what was awarded on results day. If any errors are identified the Exams officer will immediately contact the Exam board responsible and fix the error. If an error is identified after the student has received the certificate and is information that should've been checked by a student. The student will be made aware that any changes that incur a cost at this point will be passed onto them due to the number of occasions the information was asked to be checked and confirmed. The student exams handbook also covers this notice and students are made aware how important it is to fully check all information.

For subjects with no assessments and submitted marks the certificates will also be checked to ensure that claimed units match that was assessed and submitted.

Certificates will be stored alphabetically and in labelled folders securely with the exams officer until all certificates are accounted for and checked. The certificates will then be sealed in named envelopes for presentation in an annual ceremony around November/December time. If a student is unable to attend the evening instructions will be provided on either collecting the certificates or having them posted out. Certificates are held for 12 months from the issue date and then securely destroyed as per JCQ guidelines. Their destruction is logged on a destruction record should any queries arise.

## **In the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations or on results day**

In the event that the centre is unavailable for examinations the head of centre will liaise with awarding bodies in order to make provision for students to sit their examinations at an alternative site. It is likely this would be one of the three other high schools within the West Norfolk Academies Trust. Applications for special consideration would then be made for all students affected.

In the event that the centre is unavailable on results day the head of centre will either make arrangements for the use of an alternative venue (a long standing agreement exists with the primary school adjacent to the centre) or results will be sent out to students via email.