



	<p>Queen Mary's Grammar School, Walsall</p> <p><b>Exam Contingency Plan</b> <b>Appendix 1 to the Exams Policy</b> <i>April 2021</i></p>
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### Key staff involved in contingency planning

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	<b>Mr Richard Langton</b>
Deputy Head with responsibility for exams	<b>Mr Michael Lax</b>
Exams Officer line manager	<b>Mrs Angela Johnson</b>
Exams Officer	<b>Mrs Sandra Wilcox</b>
Exams Assistant	<b>Mrs Debra Harrison</b>
SENDCo	<b>Mrs Nicola Youngman</b>
SLT member(s)	<b>Mr Graham Collins</b>
	<b>Mr Timothy Brown</b>
	<b>Mr Anton Kolaric</b>
	<b>Mrs Rita Garbett (Headmaster's Personal Assistant)</b>

This plan is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

<b>Approved/reviewed by</b>	
Queen Mary's Grammar School Local Governing Board	
<b>Date of next review</b>	November 2021

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## Purpose of the plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exams process at Queen Mary's Grammar School. 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.

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 in the event of widespread disruption to the Examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland/what-schools-and-colleges-should-do-if-exams-or-other-assessments-are-seriously-disrupted>

This plan also confirms Queen Mary's Grammar School is compliant with the JCQ regulation (section 5.3, General Regulations for Approved Centres 2020-21) that the centre has in place a written examination contingency plan which covers all aspects of examination administration.

[https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Gen\\_regs\\_approved\\_centres\\_20-21\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Gen_regs_approved_centres_20-21_FINAL.pdf)

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.

## Escalation process:

If the Head of Centre, or Deputy Head with oversight of examination administration, be absent at any point during the exams cycle, remaining members of the SLT will provide support and guidance to the examinations officer and ensure that the integrity and security of examinations and assessments is maintained throughout an examination series. They will also be able to draw on additional support from the Mercian Trust central team (Lois Kelly) and SLT members at other Mercian Trust schools for additional support, as appropriate.

## Possible causes of disruption to the exam process

### 1. Exam officer 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*

#### *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 the post-results services*

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

- On these occasions, the responsibilities for carrying out the roles of the examinations officers will be delegated to the Headmaster and SLT. The Deputy Head, Mr Michael Lax, will assume day-to-day operational control.
- SLT to nominate a 'Deputy' to cover the role / task. This would usually be the immediate Line Manager, Angela Johnson and the Exams Assistant, Deb Harrison
- Extra help could be called on from one of the Lead Invigilators.
- Extra Hours should be allocated to the deputy to ensure there are sufficient hours to cover the work required.
- Extra help could be sought from staff at other local centres, especially from within the Mercian Trust
- Refer to [www.theexamsoffice.org](http://www.theexamsoffice.org) for detailed instructions on all exam procedures. The Exams Officer to ensure that a username and password is available to those that may need to deputise.
- Relief staff to be given access to secure storage procedures, including keys for the doors, usernames and passwords for the staff network and exams websites.
- Always report long term absence to the Exam Boards and Walsall Local Education Authority so they are aware of the situation, they may be able to help: [https://go.walsall.gov.uk/education\\_directory](https://go.walsall.gov.uk/education_directory)

## **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*
- *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

- SLT to nominate a 'Deputy' to cover the role / task. This would usually be the Assistant Head, Mr Graham Collins or the Assistant SENCo, Mrs Sarah Swain.
- If necessary, contact equivalent post-holders within the Mercian Trust for advice and support
- SLT to appoint qualified assessor to test candidates in place of the SENCo. Mr Conrad Bourne, Director of Social Mobility at the Mercian Trust will assist in this matter.
- Approval from exam boards and exam arrangements should be passed to the Exams Office – with sufficient warning and planning time.
- Appointed 'Deputy' SENCo to arrange student support during all exams.

### 3. Head of Department or 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 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

- Heads of Departments should take responsibility for any missing entries, coursework marks and any assessment marks in the absence of a member of teaching staff.
- Entries must be made on time to meet deadlines and avoid late fees. Amendments can always be made at a later date to confirm final entries.
- In the case of absence of a Head of Department, the Deputy Head to ensure departmental continuity by requesting an alternative member of the department takes responsibility for the actions above.

### 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

- Deputy Head, Human Resources Executive & Examinations Officer to liaise over number of exam invigilators trained and available well in advance of the exam season, to recruit as necessary, to review training procedures regularly and put in place additional training as required.
- Check availability of other invigilators who said they were available for the slot with shortages.
- Contact other schools within the Mercian Trust to see if they have any trained invigilators available
- Check 'freed staff' to see if there is anyone else available who has not been used from that teaching period.

- Check with staff cover organiser, Dannie Somers, to see if there are any free cover supervisors available on that day
- See if it is possible to amalgamate any of the access arrangement rooms to release an invigilator.
- As a last resort, call upon SLT to invigilate.

## 5. Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues 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

- A clear rooming plan for exams should be determined. This will include the sports hall (240), Board Room (20), H1-H4 (25 per room), Lecture Theatre (50), Music Rooms 1 & 2, Squash Court (20), working within the current organisation of the school into zones for covid compliance
- Room bookings must be made early enough in advance to ensure there are sufficient rooms for exam students. In the case of Sports Hall, Lecture Theatre, Board Room, Squash Court all external lettings and bookings should be informed of the exams taking place – this is via the Mercian Finance Office
- If there is an emergency on the day, the free room calendar must be checked first and moves made accordingly.
- If all students are in exams at any one time, then the rooms used by that Year group in that period, should be free and can be booked for exams.
- If no possibility of any free rooms, refer to SLT for advice. It may be possible to call on Mercian Trust partners for extra capacity.

## 6. Failure of IT systems

### Criteria for implementation of the plan

*MIS system failure at final entry deadline*

*MIS system failure during exams preparation*

*MIS system failure at results release time*

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

- All exam entries should be made well in advance of the deadline to avoid this issue in the first place. If the entries are left to the last minute and there is an IT failure, firstly ring the relevant exam boards to explain. Ask for any agreement in writing to submit entries late.
- Contact SIPS (SIMS support) for help and advice. They can access our system remotely.
- The ICT Network Manager, Paul Scandrett, and Jamie Hynes should support the Exams Office as an absolute priority in the case of a SIMS failure at this point.
- Try to access SIMS through another computer i.e. another SIMS user. Contact other Mercian Trust schools for that possibility
- Check that the ICT Network Manager, Paul Scandrett, is aware of the exam results days to ensure smooth running of downloads.
- Examinations Officer to contact all Examination Boards for alternative route for dissemination of results.

- Follow National Cyber Security Centre “Guidance for Schools” to improve the school’s cyber security as far as possible: <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/section/education-skills/cyber-security-schools>

## 7. Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lock down)

### Criteria for implementation of the plan

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

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

- Refer to School’s Critical Incident Plan procedures
- Refer to School’s emergency evacuation procedures

## 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*

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

- Where there is disruption to teaching time and students miss teaching and learning, it remains the responsibility of this centre to prepare students, as usual, for examinations and assessments
- The School will communicate with parents, carers and students about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plans to address this.
- In the case of modular courses, we may advise candidates to sit examinations in an alternative series.
- The School will plan to facilitate teaching and learning by an alternative method or alternative location.
- Refer to School’s Remote Learning Policy
- Extra capacity may be available at partner schools in the Mercian Trust or at other local schools
- Guidance on emergency planning, with advice on severe weather, is available on the Department for Education website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/emergencies-and-severe-weather-schools-and-early-years-settings>
- Examinations Officer to advise the Examination Boards as appropriate.

## 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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- 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. Partner schools within the Mercian Trust may be able to provide extra capacity.
- 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. If a candidate chooses not to sit an examination for other reasons they should be aware that special consideration rules will not apply.

- JCQ guidance on special consideration can be accessed through the JCQ website: <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>
- The School will communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to make them aware of the issue and communicate with parents, carers and candidates regarding solutions to the issue.

#### 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*

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

- The responsibility for deciding whether it is safe for the School to open lies with the Headmaster.
- In the event that the Head of Centre decides the centre cannot be opened for scheduled examinations, 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.
- The Headmaster is responsible for taking advice, or following instructions from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether they are able to open.
- The School should open for examinations and examination candidates only if possible.
- The School should use alternative venues in agreement with relevant awarding organisations (e.g. share facilities with other centres, especially within the Mercian Trust or use other public buildings, if possible)
- The School may 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

#### 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

- Awarding organisations to provide the school with electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network.
- The examinations officer will ensure that copies are received, made and stored under secure conditions and will have plans in place to facilitate such an action.
- Awarding organisations to provide guidance on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances.
- As a last resort, and in close collaboration with centres and regulators, awarding organisations to consider scheduling of the examination on an alternative date
- The Exams Officer will check all exam papers upon arrival in school and will alert the appropriate Awarding Bodies of any discrepancies.
- The awarding organisations to source alternative couriers for delivery of hardcopies.
- If this happens on the day of the exam, the awarding organisations should be contacted immediately. They would provide the School with electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network

#### 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*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Where examinations are part of the national 'yellow label' service or where awarding organisations arrange collections, Queen Mary's Grammar School will seek advice from awarding organisations and will not make their own arrangements for transportation unless told to do so by the awarding organisation.
- For any examinations where centres make their own arrangements for transportation, the exams officer will investigate alternative dispatch options that comply with the requirements detailed in the JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations.
- Queen Mary's Grammar School will ensure secure storage of completed examination papers until collection.
- All exams scripts must be stored in the secure Exams Office

**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

- Notify Awarding Bodies immediately and subsequently students and their parents or carers.
- 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.
- Where marks cannot be generated by awarding organisations candidates may need to retake affected assessment in a subsequent assessment series

**14. Centre unable to distribute results as normal or facilitate post results services**

(including in the event of the centre being unavailable on results day owing to an unforeseen emergency)

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

- The School should contact the awarding organisations about alternative options
- Distribution of results:
- The School will make arrangements to access its results at an alternative site, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation
- The School will make arrangements to coordinate access to post results services from an alternative site
- The School will share facilities with other centres if this is possible, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation.
- Facilitation of post results services:
- The School will make arrangements to make post results requests at an alternative location
- The School will contact the relevant awarding organisation if electronic post results requests are not possible
- Inform staff, students and parents as soon as possible of the change in distribution of results.

### What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted

#### 1. Contingency planning

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

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

##### 1.1 Covid specific guidance:

- [Guidance for schools Covid-19](#) from the Department for Education in England (subject to frequent updates as the situation changes)
- [Responsibility for autumn GCSE, AS and A level exam series](#) from the Department for Education in England
- [Action for FE Colleges](#) from the Department for Education in England
- [Public health guidance to support autumn exams](#) from the Department for Education
- [Education and childcare: coronavirus](#) from Welsh Government
- [Covid-19 - guidance for school and educational settings](#) from Department of Education in Northern Ireland

##### 1.2 General contingency guidance

- [Emergency planning and response](#) from the Department for Education in England
- [Opening and closing local-authority-maintained schools](#) from the Department for Education in England
- [Exceptional closure days](#) from the Department of Education in Northern Ireland
- [Checklist - exceptional closure of schools](#) from the Department of Education in Northern Ireland
- [School closures](#) from NI Direct
- [Opening schools in extremely bad weather](#) - guidance for schools from the Welsh Government
- [Procedures for handling bomb threats](#) from the National Counter Terrorism Security Office.

#### 2. 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:

- [JCQ Joint Contingency Plan for the Examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland](#)

#### 3. Steps you should take

##### 3.1 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.

##### 3.2 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](#).
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.

### **3.3 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.

## **4. Steps the awarding organisation should take**

### **4.1 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.

### **4.2 In the event of disruption**

- Take all reasonable steps to mitigate any adverse effect, in relation to their qualifications, arising from any disruption.
- Provide effective guidance to any of their centres delivering qualifications.
- 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).
- Promptly notify the relevant regulators about any event which could have an adverse effect on students, standards or public confidence.
- Coordinate its communications with the relevant regulators where the disruption has an impact on multiple centres or a wide range of learners.

### **4.3 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.

### **5. 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](#)

### **6. Wider communications**

The regulators, [Ofqual](#) in England, [Qualifications Wales](#) in Wales and [CCEA](#) 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.

## **7. Widespread national disruption to the taking of examinations / assessments**

The governments' view across England, Wales and Northern Ireland is education should continue in 2020/21 with schools remaining open and that examinations and assessments will go ahead in both autumn 2020 and summer 2021.

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 should national disruption occur with any further relevant links.

(Ofqual guidance extract above 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 (updated 01 October 2020) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland/what-schools-and-colleges-should-do-if-exams-or-other-assessments-are-seriously-disrupted>)

## **JCQ**

15.1 The qualification regulators, JCQ 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-england-wales-and-northern-ireland/what-schools-and-colleges-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 2021. This is consistent with the qualification regulators' document Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland: <https://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 of national disruption to a day of examinations in summer 2021, 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 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.

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.

(JCQ guidance above taken directly from Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2020-2021

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>, section 15, Contingency planning)

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **GOV.UK**

Emergency planning and response: Severe weather; Exam disruption [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)

Opening and closing local-authority-maintained schools [www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools)

Dispatch of exam scripts guide: Ensuring the service runs smoothly; Contingency planning  
<https://www.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 [gov.wales/opening-schools-extremely-bad-weather-guidance-schools](http://gov.wales/opening-schools-extremely-bad-weather-guidance-schools)

## **Northern Ireland**

Exceptional closure days [www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/exceptional-closure-days](http://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/exceptional-closure-days)

Checklist for Principals when considering Opening or Closure of School [www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/checklist-exceptional-closure-schools](http://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/checklist-exceptional-closure-schools)

School closures [www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/school-closures](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/school-closures)

## **National Counter Terrorism Security Office**

Procedures for handling bomb threats [www.gov.uk/government/publications/bomb-threats-guidance/procedures-for-handling-bomb-threats](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bomb-threats-guidance/procedures-for-handling-bomb-threats)