



CANSFIELD
ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE TOGETHER

Contingency Plan

<u>Approval Date</u>	September 2025
<u>Policy Review Date</u>	September 2026
<u>Chair of Governors</u>	<i>Laches</i>
<u>Headteacher</u>	<i>N Daniel</i>

1. Key Staff Involved in Contingency Planning

Role	Name(s)
Head of Centre	Mrs N Daniels
Exams Officer	Mrs D Bonnett
Senior leader(s)	Mrs M Rothwell
SENCo (or equivalent role)	Mrs R Darbyshire

2. Purpose of the Plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the examination and assessment process at Cansfield High School. By outlining actions/procedures to be invoked in case of disruption it is intended to mitigate the impact these disruptions have on our processes.

Alongside internal processes, this plan is informed by the Ofqual (and Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment) **Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland** which provides guidance in the document *What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted*, the **JCQ Joint Contingency Plan** for the Examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the JCQ document **Preparing for disruption to examinations**.

This plan also confirms Cansfield High School compliance with JCQ's **General Regulations for Approved Centre's** (GR 5.3)) that the centre has in place for inspection that must be reviewed and updated annually by a member of the senior leadership team and communicated within the centre:

- a written contingency plan which covers all aspects of examination/assessment administration and delivery

Contingency arrangements

In accordance with the regulations (GR 3.17-19), Cansfield High School **must** have an up to date written contingency plan.

The contingency plan **must** cover all aspects of examination/assessment administration and delivery. Senior leaders **must** have robust contingency arrangements in place that will minimise the risk to examination/assessment administration and delivery and any adverse impact on candidates.

The plan must cover the following scenarios:

- The head of centre, relevant senior leader(s) with oversight of examination and assessment administration, SENCo (or equivalent role), examinations officer or any other key staff essential to the examination process being absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle
- the potential impact of other events such as flooding which could lead to all or parts of the centre becoming unavailable
- potential issues with the centre's IT systems

As part of the contingency plan the centre **must** identify an alternative site or alternative sites which can be used if examinations cannot be conducted at the registered address. Larger centres may require more than one potential alternative site or different sites for different year groups.

Cansfield High School **must** have at least one senior member of staff (senior designated contact) who is available to manage emergency requests from awarding bodies that are results related during the summer holidays. However, a number of contacts can be provided to reduce the risk of this falling on one individual throughout the summer holidays.

Cansfield High School **must ensure where candidates' work is produced electronically it** is backed-up and should consider the contingency of candidates' work being backed-up on two separate devices, including one off-site back-up **via the Cloud**. Appropriate security arrangements must be implemented which protect candidates' work in the event of IT system corruption and cyber-attacks.

2.1 National Centre Number Register and other information requirements

In accordance with the regulations (GR 5.3), the head of centre will ensure that Cansfield High School **completes** the National Centre Number Register annual update by the end of October every year **(even if there are no changes to centre details)** which includes providing senior designated contact details (this might include a personal mobile number and/or email address). These must be the contact details of someone who can be reached in an emergency if the centre is closed over the summer and who can mobilise resources to respond to the issue. (GR 5.3)

2.2 Head of centre/**senior leader(s) with oversight of examination and assessment administration** absence at a critical stage of the exam cycle

Where the head of centre/**senior leader** may be absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle, main duties and responsibilities will escalate in accordance with the centres written escalation process.

3. Possible Causes of Disruption to the Exam process

3.1 Exam Officer 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 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

Mrs Rothwell and MIS & Data Manager (Mrs N Fagan) will step in with the running of exams. Invigilators informed of the EO absence. Mrs Rothwell together with MIS & Data Manager (Exam officer in previous school) will then run external examinations. Both have good knowledge of the procedures to follow during the exam cycle. Help also available from local schools.

3.2 SENCo (or equivalent role) 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

- Mrs M Rothwell to cover period of absence. EO to work closely with Mrs M Rothwell to ensure regular testing of students continues.
- SENCo assistant (Mrs Gladwin) to identify any candidates not yet approved by Awarding Bodies and complete.
- Examinations Officer to identify any shortfalls in invigilation requirements and ensure that gaps are filled.
- Once gaps are filled, Examinations Officer to arrange suitable rooms and SENCo assistant to provide training

3.3 Teaching Staff (or other key staff essential to the examination process) extended Absence at a critical stage of 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 (including controlled assessments and coursework) 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

- EO to issue own internal deadlines, which if not met are referred to teaching staff's line manager. Mrs M Rothwell will also take ownership of requests from EO in the event of subject leader's absence.

- All deadlines are calendared with flags raised 4 weeks prior to the deadlines to ensure key dates are not missed
- Curriculum Leader or Mrs M Rothwell to ensure Examinations Officer is provided with Estimated Grades/Coursework Marks and that Coursework samples are transmitted to Moderators.
- Class teachers are required to advise students of their centre assessment marks two weeks prior to the exam board deadline.

3.4 Invigilators – Lack of Appropriately Trained Invigilators or Invigilator Absence

<p>CRITERIA FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to recruit and train sufficient invigilators to conduct exams • Invigilator shortage on peak exam days • Invigilator absence on the day of an exam
<p>CENTRE ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EO to review, in September, numbers and quality of invigilators on an annual basis, recruiting and providing training as necessary. • Examinations Officer to maintain a panel of suitable Invigilators which can be called upon in the event of a shortfall • Conduct a review of available invigilators and their availability for the next examination series • Identify where there may be a shortfall of invigilators • Mrs M Rothwell responsible for Cover to provide additional Invigilator resource in the event of a shortfall at short notice • Staff agencies to be contacted if none of the above is successful

3.5 Exam Rooms – Lack of Appropriate Rooms of Main Venues Available at Short Notice

<p>CRITERIA FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
<p>CENTRE ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With our current numbers on role we have enough accommodation, other rooms that can be used when required in an emergency • Rooms are planned 3 months prior to the examination season • Designated contingency rooms are allocated if needed on the day these rooms are refectory, music block, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51 and 52 • Plan alternative rooms/venues for the duration of the incident. This would include the rooms above and Willow Grove • Willow Grove back up plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 ○ The plan for the transportation of students is firstly call up Grayways coaches for them to support student pickup. This would be in groups of 72 including invigilators. If the coaches are not available then students would be able to walk to the venue under centre supervision. This would be done in groups of no more than 30 at a time. The other students would be held in the leisure centre under centre supervision. ○ Transportation of all examination materials including tables and chairs would be done by the site team using a van which they have access to. ○ Site team to move tables and chairs first before the room. • On-line submission if the centre intends to conduct an examination for any candidates to an address other than the centre's registered address. • Contact exam boards/JCQ for advice to ensure rules and regulations are followed. • Identify whether the exam or timetabled assessment can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding body (Willow Grove)

- We will communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue. This would be done via text messages to candidates and parents, as well as a notice on the school website. Students would make their own way to the new venue if it was known prior to the event. The school will ensure transportation is available from Cansfield if they do not see this message in time.
- 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

3.6 Cyber security

CRITERIA FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

- Where any incidents might compromise any aspect of assessment delivery such as a cyber-attack

CENTRE ACTIONS TO MITIGATE THE IMPACT OF THE DISRUPTION

- All deadlines are calendared with flags raised 4 weeks prior to the deadlines to ensure key dates are not missed
- Entries are never left to deadline day. EO sets internal deadline in advance of the exam board deadline day. EO & SLT are aware of the key results dates in August.
- The EO, in consultation with SLT, will make the entries from another venue direct to the Awarding Bodies. Results may also be accessed directly from the Awarding Bodies. At all times during the system failure the EO will liaise with the Awarding Boarding to minimise the disruption.
- Any cyber-attack will be reported to the NCSC and RPA. The school will contact local law enforcement and Action Fraud. We will also inform the DfE by emailing: sector.securityenquiries@education.gov.uk
- Awarding bodies to be informed of the disruption and an extension to the deadline should be requested.
- MIS contractor and ICT team on standby to repair damage quickly.
- Special Consideration can be applied for in the event of a serious disruption.
- In the event of a Cyber-attack exam and results information is not stored on site or within the school network. Access can be provided from home computers if the school network is affected.
- MIS Provider will be contacted to request information required for results to ensure students can still receive them.
- Isolate the affect systems to prevent further compromise.
- Provide alternative arrangements were required to ensure the exams goes ahead as per the contingency policy.

(This will include the required arrangements for cyber security)

(GR 3.21). Ensure there are procedures in place to maintain the security of user accounts by:

- a) ensuring that all members of centre staff who access awarding bodies' online systems undertake annual cyber security training.

The training includes:

- the importance of creating strong, unique passwords for all accounts;
- keeping all account details strictly confidential;
- the critical role of Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) in protecting against unauthorised access;
- how to properly set up and use MFA for both centre and awarding bodies' systems;
- an awareness of all types of social engineering/phishing attempts;
- the importance of staff quickly reporting any suspicious activity, events, incidents and encouraging a safe and supportive reporting culture.

Certificates of completed staff cyber training must be downloaded and held on file for inspection. The NCSC training resource provides a certificate of completion of cyber training.

- b) developing and maintaining a comprehensive cyber security policy for the centre. The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) provides resources to assist centres in creating such policies;
- c) implementing and enforcing robust security measures, including:

- mandatory MFA for all accounts and systems containing exam-related information, including those that interface between awarding body and centre systems, to enhance security and protect sensitive data;
 - regularly reviewing and updating security settings to align with current best practices;
- d) updating any passwords that may have been exposed
 - e) setting up secure account recovery options
 - f) reviewing and managing connected applications
 - g) monitoring accounts and regularly reviewing account access, including removing access when no longer required
 - h) ensuring authorised members of staff securely access awarding bodies' online systems in line with awarding body regulations regarding cyber security and the JCQ document *Guidance for centres on cyber security*
Authorised staff will have access, where necessary, to a device which complies with awarding bodies' MFA requirements.
 - i) reporting any actual or suspected compromise of an awarding body's online systems immediately to the relevant awarding body

3.7 Failure of IT Systems

CRITERIA FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

- IT system corruption affecting candidates' work
- MIS system failure at final entry deadline
- MIS system failure during exams preparation
- power outage immediately prior to or during an on-screen test
- MIS system failure at results release time

CENTRE ACTIONS

- All deadlines are calendared with flags raised 4 weeks prior to the deadlines to ensure key dates are not missed
 - Entries are never left to deadline day. EO sets internal deadline in advance of the exam board deadline day. EO & SLT are aware of the key results dates in August.
 - The EO, in consultation with SLT, will make the entries from another venue direct to the Awarding Bodies. Results may also be accessed directly from the Awarding Bodies. At all times during the system failure the EO will liaise with the Awarding Boarding to minimise the disruption.
 - Any cyber-attack will be reported to the NCSC and RPA. The school will contact local law enforcement and Action Fraud. We will also inform the DfE by emailing: sector.securityenquiries@education.gov.uk
 - Awarding bodies to be informed of the disruption and an extension to the deadline should be requested.
 - MIS contractor and ICT team on standby to repair damage quickly.
 - Special Consideration can be applied for in the event of a serious disruption.
 - In the event of a Cyber-attack exam and results information is not stored on site or within the school network. Access can be provided from home computers if the school network is affected.
 - MIS Provider will be contacted to request information required for results to ensure students can still receive them.
 - (This will include the security arrangements put in place which protect candidates' work)
- (GR 3.19) Ensure where candidates' work is produced electronically that it is backed-up and should consider the contingency of candidates' work being backed-up on two separate devices, including one off-site back-up via the Cloud. Implement appropriate security arrangements which protect candidates' work in the event of IT system corruption and cyber-attacks.

3.8 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

- Follow the Centre Emergency Evacuation Procedure.
- 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

3.9 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

- Recognise it remains the responsibility of the centre to prepare students, as usual, for examinations
- Where there is disruption to teaching time and students miss teaching and learning, Cansfield High School would use creative methods (remote learning to take place via google classrooms) to prepare students to the usual high standards for examinations.
- SLT members of staff to teach these lessons during this period, where non subject specialists are available. Use rooming cleverly to allow for specialists to teach the group with SLT presence for behaviour support.
- Communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) information relating to alternative methods of learning
- In the case of modular courses, Cansfield High School may advise candidates to sit examinations in an alternative series.
- Cansfield High School has in place plans to facilitate alternative methods of learning.
- 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

3.10 Candidates may not be able to take examinations - centre remains open

CRITERIA FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

- Candidates are unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal because of a crisis

CENTRE ACTIONS

- (Centres' contingency plans must focus on enabling candidates to take their examinations if the centre is at risk of not being able to open as normal)
- Make alternative arrangements for the site to support the candidate to sit the exam if possible following the JCQ regulations. To do this we will 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
- 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
- Advise Exam Boards of reason for crisis and obtain documentary proof
- Cansfield High School would follow procedures and use an alternative site (Willow Grove Primary School) for candidate affected
- 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

- Focus on options that enable candidates to take their examinations.
- Consider moving the starting time of the examination for all candidates (see section 6.2 of the JCQ document Instructions for conducting examinations). Be aware of the rules for very late arrivals (see section 21 of the JCQ document Instructions for conducting examinations). Wherever possible, it is always in the best interest for candidates to sit the examination. However, special consideration is an option where a candidate is unable to sit the examination (see Chapter 4 of the JCQ document A guide to the special consideration process) ☐ The relevant awarding body should be contacted if additional support or guidance in the event of disruption to examinations is required

3.11 Centre may not be able to open for examinations

(including in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency)

CRITERIA FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

- Centre may not be able to open as normal for scheduled examinations

CENTRE ACTIONS TO MITIGATE THE IMPACT OF THE DISRUPTION

- (Centres' contingency plans must focus on enabling candidates to take their examinations if the centre is at risk of not being able to open as normal)
 - Take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether the centre is able to open
 - Exams Officer – Donna Bonnett to liaise with Headteacher Nicola Daniels and Site Manager Jeff Picton as to the suitability of the site. Advise Exam Boards where necessary.
 - If required, we would follow procedures to attend an alternative site (Willow Grove Primary School) for candidates affected. Please see section 3.5 for arrangements of transportation
 - If required, we would escort students using Cansfield High School invigilators in the correct ratio to the alternative site where the hall will be ready for students to sit the examination up to JCQ standards.
 - Contact the relevant awarding body as soon as possible and follow its instructions (This could include implementing alternative arrangements for the conducting of examinations and notifying the JCQ Centre Inspection Service of an alternative site arrangement by submitting the JCQ Alternative Site form online, using the Centre Admin Portal (CAP).)
 - 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
 - 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
- The decision on 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. Special consideration is an option if all other avenues have been exhausted and candidates meet the published criteria. The relevant awarding body should be contacted if additional support or guidance in the event of disruption to examinations is required

Alternative site(s) details: (Willow Grove Primary School)

3.12 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

- Exam boards always send papers at least a week in advance so Exams officer to keep checking centres log and inform Awarding Bodies if papers have not arrived

- Awarding organisations to provide Cansfield High School with electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network. Cansfield High School would need to ensure that copies are received, made and stored under secure conditions and should have plans in place to facilitate such an action. Awarding organisations would provide guidance on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances.
- Follow guidance provided by the awarding body on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances
- As last resort, and in close collaboration with Cansfield High School and regulators, awarding organisations to consider scheduling of the examination on an alternative date)
- Cansfield High School will communicate with candidates (and where appropriate, parents/carers) any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue

3.13 Delay in collection arrangements for completed examination scripts

CRITERIA FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

- Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts/assessment evidence

CENTRE ACTIONS

- Where examinations are part of the national 'yellow label' service or where awarding bodies arrange collections, Cansfield High School should contact the relevant awarding bodies for advice and instructions and will not make their own arrangements for transportation unless told to do so by the awarding organisation.
- For any examinations where Cansfield High School make their own collection arrangements, they should investigate alternative options that comply with the JCQ document Instructions for conducting examinations.
- Cansfield High School would ensure secure storage of completed examination papers until as close to the collection time as possible.

3.14 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

- Provide full report to Exam Boards on the reasons for the damage/destruction
- Awarding organisations to generate candidate marks for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement as defined by the awarding organisations
- Where marks cannot be generated by awarding organisations candidates may need to retake affected assessment in a subsequent assessment series

3.15 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

- Distribution of results:
- Make arrangements to access its results at an alternative site (Willow Grove Primary School), in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation
- Make arrangements to coordinate access to post results services from an alternative site (Willow Grove Primary School), in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation.
- Share facilities with other centres if this is possible, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation.
- Facilitation of post results services:
- Make arrangements to make post results requests at an alternative location
- Contact the relevant awarding organisation 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 will be conducted via the school website and text messages.

3.16 Resilience in examinations

CRITERIA FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

- A student is unable to sit an examination which relates to the resilience in examinations framework.

CENTRE ACTIONS

- During both PPE 1 and PPE2 student evidence is collated and papers retained for evidence purposes. These PPEs are completed in exam conditions and are sufficient to enable alternative methods of awarding grades, such as teacher assessed grades (TAGs).
- PPE 1 is conducted in June (year 10) and PPE 2 is conducted in December this provides students with two opportunities to conduct examinations under exam conditions at times when sufficient content has been covered.
- Students are assessed under exam-like conditions and, wherever possible, at the same time or using different materials at different times.
- Assessment materials used are previous exam papers or adapted exam papers to cover the content taught at that time to ensure they are as useful as possible for students preparing to take summer exams – similar to full or parts of exam papers.
- Students are assessed on a wide range of content.
- Total time spent assessing students should not normally exceed the total time students would spend taking exams for the relevant qualification, plus any time spent on non-exam assessment.
- Students are told before each assessment their performance would be used as part of evidence to determine a teacher assessed grade.
- Reasonable adjustments: the same adjustments made for disabled students taking exams in the summer should be applied, where possible, to assessments. This includes where a second paper has not been sat that the overall grade reflects that of the examination sat.
- Special consideration: if a student's performance was affected by an event such as illness or family bereavement, the teacher should mark the assessment as normal but record the issues so they can be taken into account later.
- Teachers mark in line with published exam board mark schemes and guidance but be aware that the grade boundaries from Autumn 2020, 2021 and Summer 2022 reflect the grading arrangements in place during the pandemic, which were more lenient.
- Students do not conduct the same assessment twice for the purpose of evidence collection.
- Teachers tell the student the grade at which their performance in the assessment indicates they have performed.
- Students are given a copy or the original of their work.
- Students are supported to complete their non-exam assessment (NEA) wherever possible.

Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning

DfE

Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges

- [Cyber Security Standards in schools and colleges](#)

Ofqual

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

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 document was updated in October 2023 to include Ofqual's final decisions on long-term resilience arrangements, and the Department for Education (DfE)'s guidance for education settings with confirmed reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC).

In addition to this guidance, you will need to be aware of your specific responsibilities for local and national school preparations and contingencies. You should also follow advice from relevant public health bodies.

Contingency planning

Awarding organisations are required to establish, maintain and comply with an up-to-date detailed written contingency plan, to mitigate any incident they have identified may occur. This includes having communication plans for external parties ([Ofqual General Condition of Recognition A6](#)). Schools and colleges should also be prepared for possible disruption to exams and assessments and make sure staff are aware of these plans.

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

You may also wish to see the [JCQ's notice to centres on exam contingency plans](#) and [JCQ's notice on preparing for disruption to examinations](#) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland for qualifications within its scope.

Steps you should take

Exam planning

Review your 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.

Schools, colleges and other exam centres must speak to the relevant awarding organisations as soon as possible if they are expecting any disruption that might affect the sitting of exams and assessments.

In the event of disruption

- Contact the relevant awarding organisation and follow its instructions.
- Take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether your centre is able to open.
- 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.
- Where accommodation is limited, prioritise students whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned.
- In the event of an evacuation during an examination please refer to JCQ's [Centre emergency evacuation procedure](#).
- Communicate with students, parents and carers any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue.
- Communicate with any external assessors or relevant third parties regarding any changes to the exam or assessment timetable.

After the exam

- Consider whether any students' ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply to the relevant awarding organisation for special consideration.
- Advise students, where appropriate, of the opportunities to take their exam or assessment at a later date.
- Ensure that scripts are stored under secure conditions.
- 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

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

- 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 are able to 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.

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, depending on their specific policies.

See also [JCQ's guidance on 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 [DfE in England](#), the [DfE 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

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 examinations and assessments, including exam timetables.

In September 2023, Ofqual and the DfE published [joint consultation decisions on long-term resilience arrangements](#). As in 2023, Ofqual has provided [guidance on collecting evidence of student performance to ensure resilience in the qualifications system](#) for students entering GCSEs, AS and A levels, the Advanced Extension Award and Project qualifications. For VTQs and other qualifications used alongside or instead of GCSEs, AS and A levels, awarding organisations will provide guidance where needed and will contact schools and colleges with more information.

In December 2022, Qualifications Wales published [guidance for contingency assessment arrangements](#) for GCSEs, AS and A levels and Skills Challenge Certificates in the event that a national decision is made to cancel exams. This guidance is still relevant for the current academic year.

The DfE has updated its guidance on [handling strike action in schools](#) in England in light of the industrial action in 2023. The guidance recommends schools should prioritise the running of examinations and assessments on any strike days, and should review their contingency plans to make this happen. Schools, colleges and other exam centres must speak to the relevant awarding organisations if they are expecting any disruption that might affect the sitting of exams and assessments.

The DfE has also issued [guidance for education settings with confirmed reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete \(RAAC\)](#) in their buildings. It includes the need for contingencies for possible disruption to examinations and links to the existing emergency planning guidance.

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

General contingency guidance

- [emergency planning and response for education, childcare and children's social care settings](#) from the DfE in England
- [handling strike action in schools](#) from the DfE in England
- [school organisation: local-authority-maintained schools](#) from the DfE in England
- [reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete: guidance for education settings with confirmed RAAC](#) from the DfE 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 terms and school closures](#) from NI Direct
- [opening schools as well as childcare and play settings in extreme bad weather and extreme hot weather](#) - guidance for schools from the Welsh Government
- [emergency planning and response guidance for education and childcare settings](#)- guidance for schools and education settings from the Welsh Government
- [protective security and preparedness for education settings](#) from the DfE
- [police guidance](#) from National Counter Terrorism Security Office and partners on preparing for threats
- [cyber security guidance for schools and colleges](#) from the National Cyber Security Centre"

(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** (last updated 7 May 2024) <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>)

4.2 JCQ

JCQ guidance taken directly from [Instructions for conducting examinations 2023-2024](#) section 15,

Contingency planning

15.1 The qualification regulators, awarding bodies and government departments responsible for education have prepared and agreed information for schools and colleges in the event of examinations being seriously disrupted.

This jointly agreed information will ensure consistency of response in the event of major disruption to the examinations system affecting significant numbers of candidates.

Further information may be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland>

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

15.3 All centres must have a written examination contingency plan which covers all aspects of examination administration. This will allow members of the senior leadership team to act immediately in the event of an emergency or where the head of centre, examinations officer or SENCo is absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle. The examination contingency plan should reinforce procedures in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency.

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

15.4 **If** the head of centre decides the centre cannot be opened for scheduled examinations, the centre's contingency plan must be invoked, utilising the centre's alternative site(s) and the relevant awarding bodies must be informed as soon as possible. Awarding bodies will be able to offer advice regarding the alternative arrangements for conducting examinations that may be available and the options for candidates who have not been able to take scheduled examinations.

15.5 The awarding bodies will designate 'contingency sessions' for examinations, summer **2026**. This is consistent with the qualification regulators' document [Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland](#).

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

15.7 In the event that there is national disruption to a day of examinations in summer **2026**, 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, **if** the affected examinations will be rescheduled. Although every effort would be taken to keep the impact to a minimum, it is possible that there could be more than one timetable date affected following the disruption, up to and including the last contingency day. Centres will be alerted if it was agreed to reschedule the examinations and the affected candidates will be expected to make themselves available in such circumstances. The decision regarding the rescheduling of examinations will always rest with the awarding body. The centre must conduct the examination on the scheduled date unless instructed to do otherwise by the awarding body.

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

(JCQ guidance above taken directly from **Instructions for conducting examinations 2025-2026**

<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

JCQ Preparing for disruption to examinations www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/

General Regulations for Approved Centres www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations

Guidance notes on alternative site arrangements www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms

Guidance notes for transferred candidates www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms

Instructions for conducting examinations 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

Guidance for centres on cyber security (Effective from November 2023; **Revised July 2025**) www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/

5 tips to get exam ready and stay cyber safe! www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/blogs/

GOV.UK

Emergency planning and response: Exam and assessment disruption

www.gov.uk/government/publications/emergency-planning-and-response-for-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care-settings

Dispatch of exam scripts guide: Contingency planning

www.gov.uk/government/publications/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-yellow-label-service

Wales

School closures: examinations gov.wales/school-closures-examinations

Opening schools as well as childcare and play settings in extreme bad weather and extreme hot weather:

www.gov.wales/opening-schools-well-childcare-and-play-settings-extreme-bad-weather-and-extreme-hot-weather

Northern Ireland

Exceptional closure days – Northern Ireland www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/exceptional-closure-days

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

National Cyber Security Centre

Cyber Security for Schools www.ncsc.gov.uk/section/education-skills/cyber-security-schools

Cyber security training for school staff www.ncsc.gov.uk/information/cyber-security-training-schools