



# Exam Contingency Plan Policy

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Reviewed by	Academic Standards, SEN and Educational Trips Committee

Signed: .....

Dated: 11.02.2021

**Chair of Governors**

Signed: .....

Dated: 11.02.2021

**Principal**

**Key staff involved in contingency planning**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name(s)</b>
Head of centre	<b>Francis Galbraith</b>
Exams officer line manager (Senior Leader)	<b>Sarah Thomas</b>
Exams officer	<b>Jodi Henderson</b>
SENCo	<b>Sailesh Roopnarain</b>
SLT member(s)	<b>Jackie Ross</b>
	<b>Will Atkinson</b>
	<b>Leanne Chapman</b>
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## **Purpose of the plan**

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exams process at Goldington Academy. 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 about 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.

This plan also confirms Goldington Academy is compliant with the JCQ regulation (section 5.3, General Regulations for Approved Centres 2020-2021) that the centre has 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.

## Possible causes of disruption to the exam process

### **Extended absence of the head of centre, or a member of the senior leadership team with oversight of examination administration at key points of the exam cycle**

#### Planning

- In the event of the absence of the head of centre, responsibility for implementing JCQ regulations and requirements relating to activity prior to examinations will be escalated to Sarah Thomas, Assistant Headteacher (Exams Officer line manager).
- In the event of the absence of the member of senior leadership with oversight of examination administration, responsibility for implementing JCQ regulations and requirements relating to activity prior to examinations will be escalated to Jacqueline Ross Deputy Vice Principal.
- To support understanding of the regulations and requirements, the following JCQ publications will be referenced:
  - General Regulations for Approved Centres
  - Instructions for conducting examinations
  - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments
  - Instructions for conducting coursework
  - Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments
  - Suspected Malpractice – Policies and Procedures
  - A guide to the special consideration process
- Main duties and responsibilities relate to:
  - Centre status
  - Confidentiality
  - Communication
  - Recruitment, selection and training of staff
  - Internal governance arrangements
  - Delivery of qualifications
  - Public liability
  - Conflicts of interest
  - Controlled assessments, coursework and non-examination assessments
  - Security of assessment materials
  - National Centre Number Register
  - Centre inspections
- Additional JCQ publication for reference:
  - Centre Inspection Service Changes
  - Policies
- Specific JCQ publications for reference:
  - General Regulations for Approved Centres (section 5)
  - Instructions for conducting examinations (section 25)
  - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (section 5)
  - Personal data, freedom of information and copyright
- Additional JCQ publication for reference:
  - Information for candidates – Privacy Notice

#### Centre-specific information for reference

- Refer to the Goldington Academy Exam Policy and Contingency Policy

#### Entries and Pre-exams

- In the event of the absence of the head of centre, responsibility for implementing JCQ regulations and requirements relating to activity prior to examinations will be escalated to Sarah Thomas, Assistant Headteacher (Exams Officer line manager).
- In the event of the absence of the member of senior leadership with oversight of examination administration, responsibility for implementing JCQ regulations and requirements relating to activity prior to examinations will be escalated to Jacqueline Ross Deputy Vice Principal.
- To support understanding of the regulations and requirements, sections of relevant JCQ publications will be specifically referenced including:
  - General Regulations for Approved Centres (section 5)
  - Instructions for conducting examinations (sections 1-15)
  - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (sections 6-8)
  - Main duties and responsibilities relate to:
    - Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments
    - Entries
  - Additional JCQ publications for reference:
    - Key dates in the examination cycle
    - Guidance Notes for Transferred Candidates
    - Alternative Site guidance notes
    - Guidance notes for overnight supervision of candidates with a timetable variation
  - Centre assessed work
  - Additional JCQ publication for reference:
    - Guidance Notes – Centre Consortium Arrangements
  - Candidate information
  - Additional JCQ publications for reference:
    - Information for candidates documents
    - Exam Room Posters

#### Exam Time

- In the event of the absence of the head of centre, responsibility for implementing JCQ regulations and requirements relating to activity prior to examinations will be escalated to Sarah Thomas, Assistant Headteacher (Exams Officer line manager).
- In the event of the absence of the member of senior leadership with oversight of examination administration, responsibility for implementing JCQ regulations and requirements relating to activity prior to examinations will be escalated to Jacqueline Ross Deputy Vice Principal
- To support understanding of the regulations and requirements, sections of relevant JCQ publications will be specifically referenced including:
  - General Regulations for Approved Centres (sections 3, 5)
  - Instructions for conducting examinations (sections 16-30)
  - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (section 8)
  - A guide to the special consideration process (sections 2-7)
  - Main duties and responsibilities relate to:
    - Conducting examinations and assessments
  - Additional JCQ publication for reference:
    - Guidance Notes – Very Late Arrival
  - Malpractice
  - Retention of candidates' work

## Results and Post-Results

- In the event of the absence of the head of centre, responsibility for implementing JCQ regulations and requirements relating to activity prior to examinations will be escalated to Sarah Thomas, Assistant Headteacher (Exams Officer line manager).
- In the event of the absence of the member of senior leadership with oversight of examination administration, responsibility for implementing JCQ regulations and requirements relating to activity prior to examinations will be escalated to Jacqueline Ross Deputy Vice Principal.
- To support understanding of the regulations and requirements, sections of relevant JCQ publications will be specifically referenced including:
  - General Regulations for Approved Centres (section 5)
  - Main duties and responsibilities relate to:
    - Results
  - Additional JCQ publication for reference:
    - Release of Results notice
  - Post-results services and appeals
  - Additional JCQ publications for reference:
    - Post-Results Services
    - JCQ Appeals Booklet (A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes)
  - Certificates

## **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

- Making reference to roles, responsibilities and processes in the centre's Exams policy where the exams officer role may need to be covered by another person
  - Production of an exams officer handbook, exams calendar, annual exams plan, step by step exam guide, exam day checklist, exam room checklist etc.
- SLT to nominate a 'deputy' to cover a role/task
- Work shadowing; job rotation; staff development sessions; briefing sessions
- Buddying up; networking with staff from a local centre; sharing expertise with a local centre
- Refer to [www.theexamsoffice.org](http://www.theexamsoffice.org) for detailed instructions on all exam procedures. (A Valuable source of information)
- Always report long term absence to the Exam Boards

### **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

- Seeking/following awarding body guidance/instructions
- SLT to nominate a 'deputy' to cover a role/task
- Work shadowing; job rotation; staff development sessions; briefing sessions
- Buddying up; networking with staff from a local centre; sharing expertise with a local centre

**Quality Nominee (QN) 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 BTEC quality assurance process within the exam cycle not undertaken including:

Planning

- Programme teams not monitored or supported
- No point of contact for the Centre Quality Reviewer or Standards Verifier
- Effective management of BTEC programmes and good practice within the centre

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Seeking/following awarding body guidance/instructions
- SLT to nominate a 'deputy' to cover a role/task
- Work shadowing; job rotation; staff development sessions; briefing sessions
- Buddying up; networking with staff from a local centre; sharing expertise with a local centre

**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

- Seeking/following awarding body guidance/instructions
- Communicating with parents/carers and students and keeping them informed regarding solutions to the disruption
- Buddying up; networking with staff from a local centre; sharing expertise with a local centre

- Curriculum leaders 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.

### **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

- Invigilation is planned well in advance and always with reserve staff allocated
- Seeking/following awarding body guidance/instructions
- Plans and procedures are in place to recruit appropriately and to deliver formal initial training sessions as well as 2 'update' sessions for existing invigilators and TAs cover the above scenario.
- Furthermore, contingency arrangements to call in invigilators on stand-by and /or to use trained admin staff are also in place. If all fails we will rely on teachers from another subject from the one being examined to fill in any major shortage of invigilators.
- Prioritising candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exams when planned
- Entering candidates for the next available exam series (where available)
- Buddying up; networking with staff from a local centre; sharing expertise with a local centre

### **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

- The majority of exams are accommodated in the Sports Hall and standard size classrooms/ICT suites and the exam team works closely in order to utilise rooms effectively.
- Regardless of the situation the running of exams in the right conditions will always prevail over other existing rooming arrangements
- Senior Invigilators will assist the Exams Officer in maintaining the security of exam papers should a venue be changed a very short notice.
- Exams Officer to ensure that any late-notice rooms comply with regulations as set out in the JCQ ICE book.

- Sourcing alternative venues/facilities - Alternative venue/facilities are available at Castle Newnham School (reciprocal arrangement organised by HOC). Castle Newnham - 01234 303403
- In the event of using Castle Newnham School, Goldington Academy will provide the exam equipment and invigilators. If there is insufficient space to accommodate our cohort for the timetabled examination, the Exams Officer will apply for a variation in timetable with the examining board. Candidates will be supervised from the time the examination was due to begin.
- Applying for special consideration for candidates
- Applying for alternative site arrangements

### **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

- Seeking/following awarding body guidance/instructions
- Taking advice/instructions from relevant local or national agencies
- All Exam entries should be made well in advance of the deadline to avoid any issues.
- Access SIMS through another computer i.e. from home, or another SIMS user – local School.
- Ensure that the IT department are aware of the exam results days to ensure smooth running of downloads.

### **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

- Senior Invigilators, Invigilators, Deputy Head, SLT and Exams Officer to ensure emergency evacuation plan is followed, maintaining the integrity of the exam
- Candidates to be held separately, avoiding contact with other pupils, and ensuring that candidates do not talk to one another until they have been relocated to another venue wherever possible
- Seeking/following awarding body guidance/instructions
- Applying for special consideration for candidates
- Keeping question papers and exam materials secure
- Keeping scripts secure

## Disruption of teaching time – centre closed for an extended period

### Criteria for implementation of the plan

Centre closed or candidates are unable to attend for an extended period during normal teaching or study supported time, interrupting the provision of normal teaching and learning

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

- Invoking actions as detailed in DfE statutory guidance
- Taking advice/instructions from relevant local or national agencies
- Communicating with parents/carers and students and keeping them informed regarding solutions to the disruption
- Posting information on the centre's website; updates on local radio etc.
- Sourcing alternative venues/facilities - Alternative venue/facilities are available at Castle Newnham School (reciprocal arrangement organised by HOC). Castle Newnham - 01234 303403
- In the event of using Castle Newnham School, Goldington Academy will provide the exam equipment and invigilators. If there is insufficient space to accommodate our cohort for the timetabled examination, the Exams Officer will apply for a variation in timetable with the examining board. Candidates will be supervised from the time the examination was due to begin.
- Applying for special consideration for candidates
- Applying for alternative site arrangements
- Prioritising candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exams when planned
- Entering candidates for the next available exam series (where available)
- Keeping question papers and exam materials secure
- Keeping scripts secure
- Where there is disruption to teaching time and students miss teaching and learning, it remains the responsibility of centres to prepare students, as usual, for examinations - in the case of modular courses, centres may advise candidates to sit examinations in an alternative series (centres should have plans in place to facilitate alternative methods of learning.)

## 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

- Seeking/following awarding body guidance/instructions
- Invoking actions as detailed in DfE statutory guidance
- Taking advice/instructions from relevant local or national agencies
- Communicating with parents/carers and students and keeping them informed regarding solutions to the disruption
- Posting information on the centre's website; updates on local radio etc.
- Sourcing alternative venues/facilities - Alternative venue/facilities are available at Castle Newnham School (reciprocal arrangement organised by HOC). Castle Newnham - 01234 303403
- Applying for special consideration for candidates
- Applying for alternative site arrangements
- Prioritising candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exams when planned
- Entering candidates for the next available exam series (where available)
- Keeping question papers and exam materials secure
- Keeping scripts secure

**Centre unable to open as normal during the exams 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

- Seeking/following awarding body guidance/instructions
- Invoking actions as detailed in DfE statutory guidance
- Taking advice/instructions from relevant local or national agencies
- Communicating with parents/carers and students and keeping them informed regarding solutions to the disruption
- Posting information on the centre's website; updates on local radio etc.
- Sourcing alternative venues/facilities - Alternative venue/facilities are available at Castle Newnham School (reciprocal arrangement organised by HOC). Castle Newnham - 01234 303403
- Applying for special consideration for candidates
- Applying for alternative site arrangements
- Applying for transferred candidate arrangements
- Prioritising candidates whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exams when planned
- Entering candidates for the next available exam series (where available)
- Keeping question papers and exam materials secure
- Keeping scripts secure

**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

- Seeking/following awarding body guidance/instructions
- Communicating with parents/carers and students and keeping them informed regarding solutions to the disruption
- Posting information on the centre's website; updates on local radio etc.
- Applying for special consideration for candidates
- Entering candidates for the next available exam series (where available)
- Awarding organisations to provide centres with electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network. The centre would need to ensure that copies are received, made and stored under secure conditions.
- As a last resort, and in close collaboration with centres and regulators, awarding organisations to consider scheduling of the examination on an alternative date

## **Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts**

### Criteria for implementation of the plan

*Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts*

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

- Seeking/following awarding body guidance/instructions
- Keeping scripts secure
- Where examinations are part of the national 'yellow label' service or where awarding organisations arrange collections, centres should seek advice from awarding organisations and should not make their own arrangements for transportation unless told to do so by the awarding organisation

## **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 or completed examination scripts/assessment evidence does not reach awarding organisations

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

- Seeking/following awarding body guidance/instructions
- Awarding bodies 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
- Candidates to retake affected assessment at subsequent assessment window if possible
- Applying for special consideration for candidates
- Keeping question papers and exam materials secure
- Keeping scripts secure

**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

- Seeking/following awarding body guidance/instructions
- Communicating with parents/carers and students and keeping them informed regarding solutions to the disruption
- Arrange to access results at an alternative site, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation
- Arrange to email results out to students
- Posting information on the centre's website; updates on local radio etc.
- Make arrangements to coordinate access to post result services from an alternative site (centres to 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 (centres to contact the relevant awarding organisation if electronic post results requests are not possible)



## Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning

### Appendix 1 - Ofqual

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 assessments and make sure staff are aware of these plans.

When drafting contingency plans, you should consider the following 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

'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**

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 parents, carers and students 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.

##### **3.3 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 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.

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

##### **4.1 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.

#### **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**

In the event of widespread sustained national disruption, the 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.

[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***, (updated 2 March 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>]

## Appendix 2 - 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 taken directly from JCQ *Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2020-2021*

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

**Contingency planning]**

JCQ Joint Contingency Plan <http://www.icq.org.uk/exams-office/other-documents>

## **General regulations for approved centres**

<http://www.icq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>

Guidance notes on *alternative site* arrangements <http://www.icq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms>

Instructions for conducting examinations

<http://www.icq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>

A guide to the special consideration process

<http://www.icq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance>

## **GOV.UK**

Contingency planning for disruption to assessments or exams

<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>

Emergency planning and response: Severe weather; Exam disruption

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/emergencies-and-severe-weather-schools-and-early-years-settings>

Teaching time lost due to severe weather conditions

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-time-lost-due-to-severe-weather-conditions>

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>

Statutory guidance on school closures

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools>