



Langley Park School for Boys

Contingency Plan

2025/26

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations:

Approved/reviewed by	
P Sarson/P Appel	
Date of next review	October 2026

Key staff involved in the plan:

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	S Munday
Duty Head Teacher (Senior Leader in charge of exams)	P Sarson
Exams officer	P Appel
SENCo (or equivalent role)	L Game
Access Arrangement Assessor	K Roberts
Senior leader(s)	R Guy, P Sarson, B Jones, S Edwards, L Ogbechie, L Game, T Butterworth, E Stroud

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Purpose of the plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the examination and assessment process at Langley Park School for Boys. 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' and the 'JCQ Joint Contingency Plan' in the event of widespread disruption to the Examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the JCQ document Preparing for disruption to examinations.

This plan also confirms that Langley Park School for Boys is compliant with the JCQ regulation (GR 5.3) that the centre has in place for inspection that must be reviewed and updated annually:

- 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), Langley Park School for Boys 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.

Langley Park School for Boys 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.

Langley Park School for Boys 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. Appropriate security arrangements must be implemented which protect candidates' work in the event of IT system corruption and cyber-attacks.

National Centre Number Register and other information requirements

In accordance with the regulations (GR 5.3), the head of centre will ensure that Langley Park School for Boys 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.

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

In the unlikely event of the absence of Ms Suzanne Munday (Head Teacher/Head of Centre) main duties and responsibilities will be escalated and undertaken by Mr Paul Sarson & Mr Richard Guy (Deputy Head Teachers), in accordance with the LPSB Escalation Process.

In the extremely unlikely event of the absence of both Ms Suzanne Munday (Head Teacher/Head of Centre) and Mr Paul Sarson (Senior Leader with oversight of exams/assessment administration) main duties and responsibilities will be escalated and undertaken by Mr Richard Guy (Deputy Head Teacher), in accordance with the LPSB Escalation Process.

Possible causes of disruption to the exam process

1. Exam officer/exams staff extended absence at a critical stage of the exam cycle

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Key tasks required in the management and administration of the exam cycle not undertaken include:

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.

- The SLT will ensure that there are enough trained staff to cover the extended absence of the Examinations Officer and exams staff.
- Exams Officer to ensure essential information is available to the Deputy Head (Exams)
 - **Exam Guides folder** accessible in room 126. This includes the Annual Exams Plan, LPSB exams guides for SIMS and Awarding Body Guides.
 - **Invigilators folder** accessible X:\Exam Docs\Invigilators.
 - **Policies, Plans & Declarations folder** accessible in room 126.
 - **JCQ Key Dates & Timetables:** <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/key-dates-and-timetables/>
 - **JCQ Regulations:** <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/>
 - Deputy Head (Exams) has access to the secure storage keys and room.
 - Awarding body exam administration guides (including timetables):

AQA	https://www.aqa.org.uk/exams-administration
Pearson/Edexcel	https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-for-you/exam-officers-administrators/exams.html
OCR	https://www.ocr.org.uk/administration/
WJEC/Eduqas	https://www.eduqas.co.uk/home/administration/

- Exams Officer to ensure exam cycle information, policies and procedures are always up to date.

2. SENCo (or equivalent role) extended absence at critical stage of 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 is not arranged for exam rooms.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption.

- SLT will ensure that there are enough trained staff to cover in the extended absence of the SENCO/ALS Lead.
- SENCO/ALS Lead to ensure essential information is available to Deputy Head (Exams).
- Exams Officer to ensure Exam Cycle, policies and procedures are always up to date.

3. Teaching staff (or other key staff essential to the examination process) extended absence at 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 (including controlled assessments and coursework) 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.

The Senior Leadership Team will ensure departmental continuity by requesting an alternative member of staff 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.

- Exams Officer to maintain a panel of suitable invigilators who can be called upon in the event of a shortfall.
- Examinations Officer to recruit and train more invigilators.
- List of invigilators with their availability and contact details to be kept by the exams officer and assistant.

- Consideration given to using teachers in non-related subjects.
- Staff agencies to be contacted if none of the above is successful.

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.

- Pre-planning at all stages is essential.
- Examinations Officer, Senior Administrator and Events Manager to continually review all stages of rooming.
- Refectory and Dance/Drama studios to be first options as alternative venues for emergency accommodation.
- Priority given to public exams and classes moved to make rooms available where necessary.
- Emergency evacuation plan to be in place.
- Alternative venue: Langley Park School for Girls, Langley Park School for Girls, Hawksbrook Lane, South Eden Park Road, Beckenham, Kent, BR3 3BE

6. Cyber security

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Disruptions caused to exams by:

- Internal/external cyber attacks
- Viruses/malware
- Hard disk failure of local machine
- Power failure
- Loss of students work.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

(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 must include:

- 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' multi-factor authentication (MFA) requirements.
- i) reporting any actual or suspected compromise of an awarding body's online systems immediately to the relevant awarding body

• Antivirus installed on all LPSB computers to protect them from any malicious content.

• Computer policies in place which restrict staff and students from running scripts or tools such as "cmd prompt" or "powershell" from running on the network.

• Firewall in place which protects the computers and the network from any outside threats.

• Student work saved directly to the network so their data is protected should the hard disk fail on the local machine.

• Backup policies in place, in which snapshots of the network are taken 3 times a day at 8:00am, 12:00 and 4pm.

• Auto-recovery enabled, which auto-saves students' work every 10 minutes. This ensures recovery of work from the last autosave **only** (i.e. can only recover work from the last 10 minute autosave and not previous ones). This protects student's work in case the computer suddenly fails or loses power.

• Backups are additionally saved to tape and are stored off site in case of a major disaster.

• Controlled separate login accounts used for computer-based examinations. These accounts have restricted access, with passwords that change after each use.

• In the event of a critical cyber-attack, LPSB will lock down our network systems in its entirety to prevent further issues/complications. In order to maintain communication and working channels with awarding bodies and external stakeholders, LPSB will:

- Use an alternative site within the trust to continue work requiring network facilities, on the provision that the alternative site's network has not been affected by the cyber-attack.
- If all sites within the trust have been simultaneously attacked, LPSB staff would have to work from home using their personal internet access which should be protected by anti-virus software.
- LPSB will ensure that any internet/network usage at any of the aforementioned alternative sites have a safe network/internet connection prior to working from that site.
- Email system at LPSB is cloud-based and would not be affected by cyber-attacks to our network. Therefore, email communications would still be in place.
- If required the IT department will supply a stand-alone laptop which does not have connection to the network, to ensure safe working.
- IT department to scan files with anti-virus software prior to sending files to awarding bodies, internal/external agencies.
- If a critical cyber-attack occurs during an exam which is reliant on computer technology/networks, the EO will contact the awarding body immediately to inform them of the situation and to ask for guidance on what needs to be done.

- The above monitored and maintained by IT Trust Network Manager.

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
- MIS system failure at results release time

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption.

(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 Microsoft OneDrive. Implement appropriate security arrangements which protect candidates' work in the event of IT system corruption and cyber-attacks.

IT General

- SLT and/or Exams Officer to contact in-house IT department who in turn contact MIS contactor/provider for assistance.
- Exam Officer to contact all awarding bodies and arrange alternative routes to download/upload information, submit data and/or request an extension to deadlines.
- Exam Officer to apply for Special Consideration if minimum requirements are met.
- Student work saved directly to the network so their data is protected should the hard disk fail on the local machine.
- Backup policies in place, in which snapshots of the network are taken 3 times a day at 8:00am, 12:00 and 4pm.
- Auto-recovery enabled, which auto-saves students' work every 10 minutes. This ensures recovery of work from the last autosave only (i.e. can only recover work from the last 10 minute autosave and not previous ones). This protects student's work in case the computer suddenly fails or loses power.

Results

- Access results via awarding body secure site to produce provisional statements of results.
- If necessary, arrange for results to be obtained from an alternative site (First options to be LPGS or LPPS)

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

Criteria for implementation of the plan

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

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption.

- Exams Officer will ensure that an Exam Emergency Evacuation policy and procedure is in place.
- Exams Officer to advise awarding bodies as soon as appropriate.
- Exam Officer to apply for Special Consideration if minimum requirements are met.

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 to mitigate the impact of the disruption.

- Alternative venues to be prioritised for students with imminent exams.
- SLT to facilitate ongoing teaching and preparation for examinations via alternative methods of learning in line with regulations. This includes online learning using Microsoft Teams, etc.
- Exams Officer to advise awarding bodies as appropriate.
- Exam Officer to apply for Special Consideration if minimum requirements are met.
- In extreme circumstances advise candidate that they may have to sit in an alternative series

10. Candidates may not be able to take examinations – centre remains open.

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Candidates may not be able to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal because of a crisis.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption.

- Exams Officer to contact awarding bodies as soon as possible for advice.
- Exams Officer and SLT to communicate with parents, carers and candidates regarding solutions.
- In situations where a large number of candidates will arrive late due to circumstances beyond their controls (e.g. local traffic incidents) LPSB will consider moving the starting times of the examination for all candidates (see section 6.2 of the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations). In this situation the rules for very late candidates will be observed based on JCQ and awarding organisation guidance.
- Should a significant number of candidates need to be isolated due to sickness, use Drama or Dance studios as a first option.
- Exam Officer to apply for Special Consideration if minimum requirements are met. Wherever possible, it is always in the best interest for candidates to sit the examination. However, if candidates who are unable to sit the examination meet the criteria, special consideration through absence for acceptable reasons is an option (see Chapter 4 of the JCQ publication A guide to the special consideration process: <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance/>)

11. Centre not being 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.

- The responsibility for deciding whether it is safe for a centre to open lies with the head of centre who is responsible for taking advice or following instructions from relevant local or national agencies.
- Information on what centres should do if examinations or other assessments are seriously disrupted can be found on the following government web page ‘What schools, colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted’
<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>
- Exams Officer to contact each awarding body with which exams are due to take place as soon as possible for guidance.
- Centre will remain open for exam candidates only if possible.
- SLT and Exams Officer to arrange the use of alternative venues in agreement with the awarding bodies, for example share facilities with other centres (e.g. LPGS or other public buildings e.g. LPPS, Langley Park Sports Club or St Johns church). In this situation Exam Officer will complete a JCQ alternative site submission.
- Exams Officer to notify the JCQ inspection Service about the alternative site arrangement by submitting the JCQ Alternative Site form via Centre Admin Portal (CAP).
- If the school is unable to open due to a national lockdown (e.g. COVID-19 related lockdown), the school will follow government advice at the time of such an event.
- The Exams Officer will apply for Special Consideration through absence for acceptable reasons where all other avenues have been exhausted and candidates meet the relevant criteria.
- Alternative venue: Langley Park School for Girls, Langley Park School for Girls, Hawksbrook Lane, South Eden Park Road, Beckenham, Kent, BR3

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.

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Awarding organisations to provide centres with electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network. Examinations Officer to liaise with awarding bodies regarding this matter.
- Exams Officer to ensure that any electronic copies are received and printed under secure conditions, which may mean closing the reprographics room to all staff except for exams staff while printing takes place.
- Exams Officer to ensure all papers are kept securely until needed.
- As a last resort, and in close collaboration with centres and regulators, awarding organisations to consider scheduling the examination on an alternative date.

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.

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- For examinations that are part of the DfE ‘yellow label’ service, or where awarding bodies arrange collections, the Exams Officer will seek contact the relevant awarding bodies for advice and instructions.

- The school will not make any arrangements for the transportation of these scripts without the approval of the awarding body.
- For any examinations where the school makes its own collection arrangements for transportation, the school should investigate alternative options that comply with the requirements detailed in the JCQ document Instructions for Conducting Examinations.
- The Exams Officer will ensure secure storage of completed examination scripts until as close to the collection time as possible.

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.

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Exams Officer to seek guidance from the awarding bodies involved.
- Checks are made by exams staff to ensure all exam scripts have been packed for postage.
- Copies of completed awarding body registers and Parcel Force Exam Dispatch logs held on record.
- Awarding organisations to generate candidate marks for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement as defined by the awarding organisations.
- In the extreme circumstance where marks cannot be generated by awarding organisations, candidates may need to retake affected assessment in a subsequent assessment series.

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

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post-results services.

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Exams Officer and SLT to plan to access results from an alternative site in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation. First options of alternative site to consider being LPGS or LPPS.
- Exams Officer and SLT to plan to distribute results from an alternative site. First options of alternative site to consider being LPGS or LPPS.
- Exams Officer and SLT to coordinate access to post result services from an alternative site. First options of alternative site to consider being LPGS or LPPS.
- Exams officer to contact the relevant awarding body if electronic post results requests are not possible.
- Alternative venue: Langley Park School for Girls, Langley Park School for Girls, Hawksbrook Lane, South Eden Park Road, Beckenham, Kent, BR3

16. Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning.

Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges

- Cyber security standards for schools and colleges

Ofqual

What schools and colleges and other centres 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

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 can 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 students, parents and carers any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue.
7. Communicate with any external assessors, invigilators or relevant third parties regarding any changes to the exam or assessment timetable.

After the exam

1. Consider whether any students' ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply to the relevant awarding organisation for special consideration.
2. Advise students, where appropriate, of the opportunities to take their exam or assessment at a later date.
3. Ensure that scripts are stored under secure conditions.
4. Return scripts to awarding organisations in line with their instructions. Never make alternative arrangements for the transportation of completed exam scripts, unless told to do so by the awarding organisation.

Steps the awarding organisation should take:

Exam planning

1. Establish and maintain, and at all times comply with, an up to date, written contingency plan.
2. Ensure that the arrangements in place with centres and other third parties enable them to deliver and award qualifications in accordance with their conditions of recognition.

In the event of disruption

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

After the exam

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

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

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

Decisions about special consideration, when it is or is not appropriate, is for each awarding organisation to make. Their decisions might be different for different qualifications and for different subjects, 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: Northern Ireland](#) 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, 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>

JCQ

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 event that 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 of 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 the affected examinations will be rescheduled. Although every effort would be taken to keep the impact to a minimum, it is possible that there could be more than one timetable date affected following the disruption, up to and including the last contingency day. Centres will be alerted if it is agreed to reschedule the examinations and the affected candidates will be expected to make themselves available in such circumstances.

The decision regarding the rescheduling of examinations will always rest with the awarding body. The centre must conduct the examination on the scheduled date unless instructed to do otherwise by the awarding body.

15.8 Where candidates choose not to be available for the rescheduled examination(s) for reasons other than those 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)

17. Further Guidance & Reading

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/
Government Guidance: 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
Government Guidance: Dispatch of exam scripts guide: Contingency planning https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-yellow-label-service
National Cyber Security Centre Cyber Security for Schools https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/section/education-skills/cyber-security-schools Cyber security training for school staff https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/information/cyber-security-training-schools

18. Awarding body contacts

Cambridge OCR	01223 553998	general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk
Edexcel/Pearson	0344 463 2535	examsofficers@pearson.com
AQA	0800 197 7162	eos@aqa.org.uk
WJEC/Eduqas (Centre Exam Support)	029 2026 5077 / 5089 / 5492 / 5159	exams@wjec.co.uk