



# Inclusion School (exams) Contingency Plan 2023/24

DfE no: 850/6107



Approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'MA', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Name: Matthew Atkinson

Last review: Jan24

Date: Jan24

Position: Headteacher

Next review by: Jan25

## Monitoring arrangements

This policy is reviewed annually by the SLT to ensure compliance with current regulations

Author: Paula Ball	Title:Contingency Plan 23/24	Ref: Exams Office	Date: 31/01/2024
Inclusion Education is the working name of Inclusion Hampshire CIO registered number 1162711			

## Purpose of the Plan

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

Alongside internal processes, this plan is informed by the **Ofqual Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland** which provides guidance in the publication *What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted* and the **JCQ Joint Contingency Plan for the Examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland**.

This plan also confirms the Inclusion School's compliance with JCQ's **General Regulations for Approved Centres** (section 5.3) 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 where the head of centre, examinations officer or SEND Lead 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, or on results day, owing to an unforeseen emergency. The potential impact of a cyber-attack should also be considered.*

## National Centre Number Register and other information requirements

The head of centre will also ensure that Inclusion School as a contingency to enable the prompt handling of urgent issues only, responds to the awarding bodies' request for information regarding the contact details of a senior member of staff (which might include a personal mobile number and/or email address). This will ensure that any urgent matters which might adversely affect candidates which arise outside of term time, and which potentially put qualification awards at risk, can be addressed by awarding bodies with the support of that member of staff. Heads of centre should ensure that this member of staff has the necessary authority to mobilise resources to provide this support, which might include resolving issues within the centre itself.

## Head of Centre absence at a critical stage of the exam cycle

The SLT Lead for Exams will continue to oversee the exam process and will take on any additional responsibilities that may fall to the Head of Centre.

## Possible causes of disruption to the exam process

### Exam officer 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 including:

Planning:

- annual data collection 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 are 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 organisation has a second member of staff who has received the exams officer training to be able to support the exams officer assistant to take on these actions.
- Deputy Head (QofE) is the SLT Lead for Exams and is able to support
- Training and work shadowing is ongoing to ensure this available support is kept up to date
- All procedures should be documented. With further support available via;
  - The Key Tasks section of the Exams Office website
  - The Examination Administration section of the DfE website
  - Awarding Organisation's online support and helplines
  - The Examinations office Section of the JCQ website

SEND Lead 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 access arrangements process within the exam cycle not undertaken including:

Planning

- candidates not tested/assessed to identify potential access arrangement requirements
- centre fails to recognise its duties towards disabled candidates as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010
- evidence of need and evidence to support normal way of working not collated

Pre-exams

- approval for access arrangements not applied for to the awarding body
- centre-delegated arrangements not put in place
- modified paper requirements not identified in a timely manner to enable ordering to meet external deadline
- staff (facilitators) providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained.

Exam time

- access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- SLT Lead for Exams to arrange for the services of an approved assessor for the period of assessment of the cohort if required
- SLT Lead for Exams to ensure all reasonable adjustments and access arrangements paperwork is complete and approved

- Teaching staff to ensure learners usual way of working is recorded to assist with reasonable adjustment applications
- Exams Officer / Admin assistant / SLT Lead for Exams to perform administration for pre-exams and exam time arrangements.

### Teaching staff 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 in 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

- SLT Lead for Exams to ensure the above takes place.

### Invigilators/practical assistants - lack of appropriately training or absence

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Failure to recruit and train sufficient invigilators / practical assistant to conduct exams
- Invigilator / practical assistants shortage on peak exam days
- Invigilator / practical assistants absence on the day of an exam

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

- Exams Officer to oversee the training of all suitable staff to be invigilators / practical assistants to be called upon in the event of a shortfall on an exam day
- Exams Officer to conduct a review of available invigilators and their availability for the next exam series, recruit and train additional invigilators if felt necessary
- Use the provisional exam timetable to determine invigilator numbers to assess availability at the earliest opportunity
- SLT to source cover to be able to provide additional invigilators in the event of a shortfall at short notice

### Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Exams officer / SLT Lead for Exams unable to identify sufficient/appropriate rooms during exams timetable planning
- Insufficient rooms available on peak exam days.
- Main exam rooms unavailable due to an unexpected incident at exam time

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

- Exams Officer and SLT Lead for Exams will identify additional suitable rooms if extra space is required
- Prepare learners for a change to usual teaching rooms if one or more is to be utilised for the exam period or as a reserve if necessary
- Liaise with alternative Inclusion Education sites to enable exams to take place there
- If applicable; 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 Awarding organisations/JCQ for advice to ensure rules and regulations are followed

### Failure of IT systems and Cyber-attack

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

- School/MIS system failure at final entry deadline
- School/MIS system failure during exams preparation
- Power outage immediately prior to or during an on-screen test
- School/MIS system failure at results release time
- Where a cyber-attack may compromise any aspect of delivery

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

- Awarding organisations to be informed of the disruption and an extension to deadlines should be requested if appropriate
- Exams Officer ensures all stages of the process of exam preparation is recorded in such a way as no one system failure means we have lost the relevant information required
- The centre IT support and MIS contractors teams be available to respond quickly
- Refer to awarding organisation guidance regarding power outage for on-screen test.
- Special consideration can be applied for the event of a serious disruption
- Results can be obtained at an alternative site
- In the event of a Cyber attack exam and results information is not stored solely within the school network
- Results information can be accessed and downloaded via the awarding organisations secure sites. This can be accessed via home computers if the school network is affected.

### Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre 'stay put' plan is activated)

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

Whole centre evacuation (or 'Stay put') during an exam 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

- The centre to notify the awarding organisation/JCQ as soon as possible if the start of an exam is affected by an emergency evacuation that impacts the exam being held and action accordingly
- Fire alarm will sound to signal the need to evacuate
  - The exam time will be stopped. Invigilators make a note of the time to ensure candidates get the full exam time if the exam is able to continue.
  - Candidates are asked to stop working. All papers and materials are left face down in the exam room
  - Candidates are escorted to the assembly area slightly away from the rest of the school. The invigilators are to supervise to ensure candidates to not speak with each other
  - The awarding organisation will be notified following the disruption and special consideration applied for if appropriate.
  - If the all clear is given, the exams officer will be first back in the building to ensure the security of the papers. The exam can resume once all candidates have returned to the room and are ready.
- The agreed Stay Put alarm will sound
  - Candidates and invigilators will remain in the exam room and will lock or will barrier the door (ie with a desk)
  - Everyone should sit on the floor under desks if possible, or along the walls out of eyesight of doors and windows
  - The exam time will be stopped and papers will remain on desks, face down.

- Depending on the outcome of the situation and when the all clear is given, the exam can continue if appropriate and the candidates are not disadvantaged to do so, otherwise the Awarding organisation will be contacted for advice.
- The awarding organisation will be notified following the disruption and special consideration applied for if appropriate.

### Disruption of teaching time in the weeks before an exam - centre closed for an extended period

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

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

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

- Where there is disruption to teaching time and learners miss teaching and learning, it remains the responsibility of the centre to prepare learners, as usual, for examinations. The centre will refer to the schools emergency and business continuity plan.
- The Centre to liaise with JCQ/Awarding organisations and other local centres to find suitable alternative venues as well as alternative Inclusion Education sites
- The Centre to ensure good communication with learners, parents and carers about any potential disruption to teaching and plans to address this
- If applicable; 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 awarding organisation/JCQ for advice to ensure all rules and regulations are followed
- In some cases, the Centre may advise candidates to sit examinations in an alternative series.

### Candidates may not be able to take examinations because of a crisis - centre remains open

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

Candidates may not be able to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal

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

- The centre to communicate with parents/carers and learners keeping them informed regarding solutions to the disruption.
- Liaise with alternative Inclusion Education sites, for the candidates to take their exams there.
- If applicable; 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)
- The Centre to apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for those candidates that would be eligible (this will not apply if a candidate chooses not to sit the exam)
- Contact the awarding organisation/JCQ for advice to ensure all rules and regulations are followed
- In some cases, the Centre may advise candidates to sit examinations in an alternative series.

### Centre may not be able to open as normal during the exams period

#### 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

- It remains the responsibility of the centre to prepare the learners, as usual, for exams
- In the event the Head of Centre decides the centre cannot be opened for scheduled exams, the relevant awarding organisation will be informed as soon as possible, and any advice given will be acted on
- The Centre to open for exams and exam candidates only, if possible
- Liaise with Inclusion Education sites regarding holding examinations there

- If applicable; 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)
- Special consideration may be used where candidates are unable to achieve a result due to one of the above factors and within the criteria
- In some cases, the Centre may advise candidates to sit exams in an alternative series

### 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

- In the first instance the Centre to seek advice from the awarding organisation
- Awarding organisations to provide the Centre with electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network.
- The Exams Officer 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.
- Source alternative couriers for the delivery of hardcopies
- As a last resort, and in close collaboration with the centre and regulators, awarding organisations consider scheduling 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/assessment evidence

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

- where examinations are part of the national 'yellow label' service or where awarding organisations arrange collections, the Centre should seek advice from awarding organisations and should not make their own arrangements for transportation unless told to do so by the awarding body
- For any examinations where the Centre make their arrangements for transportation, the Centre should investigate alternative dispatch options that comply with the requirements detailed in the JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations.
- The Centre to ensure secure storage of completed examination papers until collection.
- The centre to communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to resolve the issue.

### Assessment evidence is not available to be marked

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked
- Completed examination scripts/assessment evidence does not reach awarding organisations

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

- The Centre to contact the awarding organisations who may 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
- The centre ensures all internal assessments are recorded in the event they are required as evidence.

### 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

#### Distribution of results:

- The Centre to make arrangements to access its results at an alternative site, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation
- The Centre to make arrangements to coordinate access to post results services from an alternative site
- The Centre to share facilities with other centres if this is possible, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation.
- As a Centre with a small number of candidates, the Head of Centre will notify each learner with their results and will send postal confirmation of the result, if appropriate to do so.

#### Facilitation of post results services:

- The Centre to make arrangements to make post results requests at an alternative location
- The Centre to contact the relevant awarding organisation if electronic post results requests are not possible



## Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning

DfE:

[Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges;](#)

[Cyber Security Standards for schools and colleges](#)

[Cyber crime and cyber security: a guide for education providers](#)

[DfE Cyber Security Guidance - March 2023](#)

### 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.

#### 1. 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.

#### 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

[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.

#### 3. Steps you should take:

##### 3.1 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.

##### 3.2 In the event of disruption

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

changes to the exam or assessment timetable.

### **3.3 After the exam**

1. Consider whether any students' ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply 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.

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

### **4.1 Exam planning**

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

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

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.

### **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, depending on their specific policies.

See also: [JCQ's guidance on special consideration](#)

## **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 [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.

## 7. Widespread national disruption of 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.

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.

### 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
- [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 5 October 2023)

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

### JCQ

15.1 The qualification regulators, 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/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 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 'contingency days sessions' for examinations, summer 2024. 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 'contingency days sessions' 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 2024, 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.

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 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 2023-2024 <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>, section 15, Contingency planning)

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

JCQ Preparing for disruption to examinations [www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/)

JCQ Notice to Centres - Examination contingency plan/examinations policy [www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/notice-to-centres--exam-contingency-plan/](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/notice-to-centres--exam-contingency-plan/)

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

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

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

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

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

Guidance for centres on cyber security (Effective from November 2023) [www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/)

Information for centres affected by RAAC - the delivery of non-examination assessments and the special consideration process [www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/non-examination-assessments/](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/non-examination-assessments/)

## 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](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/emergency-planning-and-response-for-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care-settings)

Dispatch of exam scripts guide: Ensuring the service runs smoothly; Contingency planning

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-yellow-label-service](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-yellow-label-service)

## National Cyber Security Centre

The NCSC's free [Web Check](#) and [Mail Check](#) services can help protect schools from cyber-attacks. Two NCSC cyber security services, which are already helping thousands of organisations to protect their websites and email servers from cyber-attacks, are now available to **all UK schools**. Both tools are available free of charge, are quick to set up, and thereafter run automatically. More information is available from the [NCSC website](#).

The Department for Education has been asking centres to review **National Cyber Security Centre advice** following increasing number of cyber-attacks involving ransomware infections. The NCSC information supports centres in cyber security preparedness and mitigation work.

Ransomware attacks continue and the Department is reminding centres to review the NCSC advice and to take precautions. This includes ensuring that you have backups in place for your key services and data.

For ease of reference, the Department has highlighted key links relating to the NCSC cyber security guidance below:

1. [Further ransomware attacks on UK education by cyber criminals - NCSC.GOV.UK](#)
2. [Mitigating malware and ransomware attacks](#)
3. [Offline backups in an online world](#)
4. [Backing up your data](#)
5. [Practical resources to help schools improve their cyber security](#)
6. [Building Resilience: Ransomware, the risk to schools and ways to prevent it](#)
7. [School staff offered training to help shore up cyber defences - NCSC.GOV.UK](#)