

UTC Leeds Examination Contingency Plan 2021 - 2022

Adopted by the Governing Board: November 2021

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SLT: Alex Berry

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Key staff involved in contingency planning

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	Hannah Wilson
Exams officer line manager (Senior Leader)	Alex Berry
Exams officer	Charlotte Portwood
SENCo	Sarah Ellis
Health & Safety Coordinator	George Lindley

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Purpose of the plan

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

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

- This plan also confirms UTC Leeds is compliant with the JCQ regulation (section 5.3, General Regulations for Approved Centres 2020-21) that the centre has in place a written examination contingency plan which covers all aspects of examination administration. This will allow members of the senior leadership team to act immediately in the event of an emergency or staff absence. The examination contingency plan should reinforce procedures in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations, or on results day, owing to an unforeseen emergency.

Possible causes of disruption to the exam process

1. Exam officer extended absence at key points in the exam process (cycle)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

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

Planning

- *annual data collection exercise not undertaken to collate information on qualifications and awarding body specifications being delivered*
- *annual exams plan not produced identifying essential key tasks, key dates and deadlines*
- *sufficient invigilators not recruited*

Entries

- *awarding bodies not being informed of early/estimated entries which prompts release of early information required by teaching staff*
- *candidates not being entered with awarding bodies for external exams/assessment*
- *awarding body entry deadlines missed or late or other penalty fees being incurred*

Pre-exams

- *invigilators not trained or updated on changes to instructions for conducting exams*
- *exam timetabling, rooming allocation; and invigilation schedules not prepared*
- *candidates not briefed on exam timetables and awarding body information for candidates*
- *confidential exam/assessment materials and candidates' work not stored under required secure conditions*
- *internal assessment marks and samples of candidates' work not submitted to awarding bodies/external moderators*

Exam time

- *exams/assessments not taken under the conditions prescribed by awarding bodies*
- *required reports/requests not submitted to awarding bodies during exam/assessment periods, for example very late arrival, suspected malpractice, special consideration*
- *candidates' scripts not dispatched as required for marking to awarding bodies*

Results and post-results

- *access to examination results affecting the distribution of results to candidates*

- *the facilitation of the post-results services*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- In a period of unplanned absence the Assistant Principal for Exams would take responsibility for carrying out the duties of the Exams Officer.
- In a period of planned extended absence, UTC Leeds would endeavour to recruit a suitably qualified individual to fulfil the role of Exams Officer.
- All members of the invigilating team regularly receive training and colleagues involved in the administration of key processes are trained on how to carry out processes and who to contact in extremis.

2. SENCo extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Key tasks required in the management and administration of the access arrangements process within the exam cycle not undertaken including:

Planning

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

Pre-exams

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

Exam time

- *access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- In the event of the extended absence of the SENCo, appropriate back-filling of responsibilities would be decided upon by the Head of Centre.

3. 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

- In the event of a period of extended absence of a member of the teaching staff, the Head of Department for the curriculum area would arrange teaching cover from within the staff team and/or the wider staffing establishment at the College.
- New staff providing cover would be briefed as part of their induction process on arrangements for assessment and examinations. Their practice in terms of assessments would be monitored by the Head of Department.

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

- New invigilators undergo training by the Exams Officer and the Designated Safeguarding Lead. They are permitted to work independently once they, and the Exams Officer are happy that they are competent and confident in processes and procedures. Annual training sessions are held in October for all invigilators in order to refresh their knowledge and communicate JCQ regulation changes and update local information. The College retains a pool of approximately 5 invigilators. When invigilators resign/retire from the pool, recruitment procedures are begun.
- Within the wider College staff, colleagues are required to assist during main exam sessions (mainly GCSE English and Mathematics) and are trained by the Exams Officer with regard to their responsibilities and duties. Minor absence issues (such as an invigilator calling in sick) are covered by a member of the Exams team or attempts are made to contact another invigilator from the pool.

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

- The majority of exams are accommodated in the Lecture theatre and S01 and standard size classrooms and the exam team works closely in order to utilise rooms effectively.
- If the college was unavailable due to building damage, exams office staff (with the assistance of other members of the Admin team) would seek approval from the relevant awarding organisation and arrange for the exam to be held in an available building locally i.e. a hotel meeting room or local sports centre, if approved.

6. Failure of IT systems

Criteria for implementation of the plan

MIS system failure at final entry deadline

MIS system failure during exams preparation

MIS system failure at results release time

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The college endeavours to minimise any IT disruption via resilient design and preventative maintenance. In the event of an issue this would be dealt with the IT support team who test and update the systems on a regular basis. Where such failure impacted on scheduled exams, steps would be taken to resolve the problem as quickly as possible. Remote support is also provided by the IT support company to this end.
- If during an active exam (such as a computer-based Computer Science exam) Candidates would be kept under supervision by invigilators until the exam was able to commence or be formally cancelled and the awarding organisation informed.

7. Emergency evacuation / invacuation of the exam room

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Whole centre evacuation / invacuation 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

- Where a short-term disruption occurs during an examination, Exams staff (including invigilators) will follow the action plan set out in the Emergency Evacuation / Invacuation Policy documents (available on the shared drive or from the Exams office).
- Where candidates are allowed to restart the exam, time will be allowed to settle candidates before recommencing the remaining time allowed.
- Where candidates cannot restart the exam, for whatever reason, the candidates will remain under supervision for the duration of the exam time set and the Exams Officer will contact the relevant awarding body to confirm further action. This may include withdrawing the candidates from the examination and re-entering them for a later series or applying for special consideration depending on the situation.
- In either case, the Exams Officer will contact the relevant awarding body for advice and to report the disruption.

8. Disruption of teaching time in the weeks before an exam – centre closed for an extended period

Criteria for implementation of the plan

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

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Where there is disruption to teaching time and students miss teaching and learning, it remains the responsibility of centres to prepare students, as usual, for examinations.
- In the case of modular courses, UTC Leeds may advise candidates to sit examinations in an alternative series.
- UTC Leeds has plans in place to facilitate alternative methods of learning, such as via online learning portals and home visits. UTC Leeds can provide the technology required to access these, where necessary.

9. Candidates at risk of being unable to take examinations– centre remains open

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Candidates are at risk of being unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Response is dependent on the type of issue.
- The procedure for absence is outlined in the examinations policy. A hardcopy is given to all candidates in April of each academic year and is available on the college's website. If a candidate is able to sit the exam but cannot attend the Centre due to a crisis, appropriate communication with the relevant Awarding Bodies would be undertaken by the Exams Officer and alternative options would be explored (home, hospital, alternative Centre etc.).
- Appropriate use of Special Consideration policies would be applied should the candidate/candidates be unable to attend due to unforeseen circumstances and where alternative arrangements could not be made or are not agreed by the Awarding Body.

10. Centre at risk of being unable to open as normal during the examination period

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

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Centre at risk of being unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- In the event of the Centre not being able to open as normal, appropriate communication with the relevant Awarding Bodies would be undertaken by the Exams Officer and alternative options would be explored such as moving exams to an external location (such as leisure centres, hotels, local schools, etc. and appropriate transport arrangements would be made). All arrangements would be agreed with the Awarding Body before being put in place.
- In such instances, details would be communicated to candidates via the school's website, email and text facilities. Staff involved in exams (including invigilators) would be contacted by email, telephone and text.

11. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Disruption to the distribution of examination papers to the centre in advance of examinations

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Awarding organisations may provide centres with electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network.
- The Exams Officer, in contact with the awarding organisation, would ensure that copies are received, produced under secure conditions (reprographics room) and stored under secure conditions (Exams Secure Room). Awarding organisations would provide guidance on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances.
- As a last resort, and in close collaboration with centres and regulators, awarding organisations to consider scheduling of the examination on an alternative date.

12. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

Criteria for implementation of the plan

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

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- All scripts are returned using the designated dispatch methods prescribed by the Awarding Body concerned. Where this becomes unavailable or inappropriate, the Awarding Body will be contacted to discuss suitable alternatives.
- Where examinations are part of the national 'yellow label' service or where awarding bodies arrange collections, UTC Leeds will contact the relevant awarding bodies for advice and instructions and should not make their own arrangements for transportation unless told to do so by the awarding body.
- For any examinations where centres make their own arrangements for transportation, UTC Leeds will investigate alternative options that comply with the requirements detailed in the JCQ publication *Instructions for Conducting Examinations*.
- UTC Leeds will ensure secure storage of completed examination scripts until collection.

13. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked

Completed examination scripts/assessment evidence does not reach awarding organisations

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- In the event of large scale damage or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked, the Exam Officer would notify the Awarding Body immediately for advice and further instructions. Student marks would be submitted based on appropriate evidence and candidates would be given the opportunity to retake in a subsequent series.
- Awarding organisations will 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.

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

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

Criteria for implementation of the plan

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

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Response is dependent on the type of issue.
- If the college building is unfit for results distribution for whatever reason, UTC Leeds will make arrangements to access its results at an alternative site, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation. UTC Leeds will make arrangements to coordinate access to post-results services from an alternative site (sharing facilities with other centres if this is possible, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation.) UTC Leeds will contact the relevant awarding organisation if electronic post results requests are not possible
- Where the Centre is open to staff but students may not/cannot attend in person (such as in the case of a national lockdown), students may request their results by email to exams@utcleeds.co.uk and a personalised results email will be sent by response. In this case, members of Senior Leadership / Subject Leads and the Exams Officer will be available to the students by phone/video call and email in order to facilitate post-results services. UTC Leeds considers an email request for post results services to be a formal written request and as such will be actioned.

- Where learners simply do not arrive to collect their results in person, these will be distributed by post.

Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning

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:

1.1 Covid specific guidance:

- [actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak](#) from the Department for Education in England
- [actions for FE colleges and providers during the coronavirus outbreak](#) from the Department for Education in England
- [responsibility for exams](#) from the Department for Education in England
- [vocational, technical and other general qualifications in 2022](#) from Ofqual (regulator)
- [GCSE, AS and A level qualifications in 2022](#) from Ofqual (regulator)
- [education and childcare: coronavirus](#) from Welsh Government
- [Qualifications Wales homepage](#) from Qualifications Wales (regulator)
- [coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance for school and educational settings in Northern Ireland](#) from Department of Education in Northern Ireland
- [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) \(information from CCEA\)](#) – information on vocational, technical and general qualifications from CCEA Regulation

1.2 General contingency guidance

- [emergency planning and response](#) from the Department for Education in England
- [school organisation: local-authority-maintained schools](#) from the Department for Education in England
- [exceptional closure days](#) from the Department of Education in Northern Ireland
- [checklist - exceptional closure of schools](#) from the Department of Education in Northern Ireland
- [School closures](#) from NI Direct
- [school terms and school closures](#) from NI Direct
- [opening schools in extremely bad weather](#) - guidance for schools from the Welsh Government
- [Procedures for handling bomb threats](#) from the National Counter Terrorism Security Office
- [bomb threats](#) procedures for handling bomb threats from the National Counter Terrorism Security Office

2. Disruption to assessments or exams

In the absence of any instruction from the relevant awarding organisation, you should make sure that any exam or timetabled assessment takes place if it is possible to hold it. This may mean relocating to alternative premises.

You should discuss alternative arrangements with your awarding organisation if:

- the exam or assessment cannot take place
- a student misses an exam or loses their assessment due to an emergency, or other event, outside of the student's control

See also:

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

3. Steps you should take

3.1 Exam planning

Review contingency plans well in advance of each exam or assessment series. Consider how, if the contingency plan is invoked, you will comply with the awarding organisation's requirements.

3.2 In the event of disruption

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

3.3 After the exam

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

4. Steps the awarding organisation should take

4.1 Exam planning

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

4.2 In the event of disruption

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

4.3 After the exam

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

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

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

Decisions about special consideration, when it is or is not appropriate, is for each awarding organisation to make. Their decisions might be different for different qualifications and for different subjects.

See also:

- JCQ's guidance on special considerations

6. Wider communications

The regulators, Ofqual in England, Qualifications Wales in Wales and CCEA Regulation in Northern Ireland, will share timely and accurate information, as required, with awarding organisations, government departments and other stakeholders.

The Department for Education in England, the Department of Education in Northern Ireland and the Welsh Government will inform the relevant government ministers as soon as it becomes apparent that there will be significant local or national disruption; and ensure that they are kept updated until the matter is resolved.

Awarding organisations will alert the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) and the Central Applications Office (CAO) about any impact of the disruption on their deadlines and liaise regarding student progression to further and higher education.

Awarding organisations will alert relevant professional bodies or employer groups if the impact of disruption particularly affects them.

7. Widespread national disruption to the taking of examinations or assessments

The governments' view across England, Wales and Northern Ireland is education should continue in 2021 to 2022 with schools remaining open and that examinations and assessments will go ahead in both autumn 2021 and summer 2022.

As education is devolved, in the event of any widespread sustained national disruption to examinations or assessments, national government departments will communicate with regulators, awarding organisations and centres prior to a public announcement. Regulators will provide advice to government departments on implications for exam timetables.

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

(Ofqual guidance extract above taken directly from the Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland - What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted (updated 01 October 2020)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland/what-schools-and-colleges-should-do-if-exams-or-other-assessments-are-seriously-disrupted>)

JCQ

15.1 The qualification regulators, 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/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 2022. 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 2022, the awarding bodies will liaise with the qualification regulators and government departments to agree the most appropriate option for managing the impact. As a last resort the affected examinations will be rescheduled. Although every effort would be taken to keep the impact to a minimum, it is possible that there could be more than one timetable date affected following the disruption, up to and including the contingency day. Centres will be alerted if it is agreed to reschedule the examinations and the affected candidates will be expected to make themselves available in such circumstances. The decision regarding the rescheduling of examinations will always rest with the awarding body. The centre must conduct the examination on the scheduled date unless instructed to do otherwise by the awarding body.

Where candidates choose not to be available for the rescheduled examination(s) for reasons other than those traditionally covered by special consideration, they will not be eligible for enhanced grading arrangements. Centres must therefore ensure candidates and parents are aware of this contingency arrangement so that they may take it into account when making their plans for the summer. However, the awarding bodies will not insist upon candidates being available throughout the entire timetable period as a matter of course.

(JCQ guidance above taken directly from Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2021-2022 <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>, section 15, Contingency planning)

JCQ Joint Contingency Plan www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/other-documents

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

This Notice is based on guidance provided within the JCQ Joint Contingency Plan, which is available from the JCQ website: www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/other-documents/jcq-joint-contingency-plan

In the event of widespread disruption to the examination system, all centres must have contingency plans in place. There are three main categories of disruption, which are outlined below.

Candidates at risk of being unable to take examinations – centres remain open

Centres' contingency plans should focus on options that enable candidates to take their examinations. As part of these preparations, centres should take into account the guidance provided in the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations: <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>

- consider moving the starting times of the examination for all candidates (see section 6.2 of the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations)
- being aware of the rules for very late arrivals (see section 21 of the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations).

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>

Please do not hesitate to call the relevant awarding body if you require additional support or guidance in the event of disruption to examinations.

Centres at risk of being unable to open as normal during the examination period

As above, centres' contingency plans must focus on enabling candidates to take their examinations if the centre is at risk of being unable to open as normal.

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 in the three country regulators' exam system contingency plan:

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

Special consideration through absence for acceptable reasons is also available as an option if all other avenues have been exhausted and candidates meet the relevant criteria.

Please do not hesitate to call the relevant awarding body if you require additional support or guidance in the event of disruption to your examinations.

Disruption to transporting completed examination scripts

If there is a delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts:

- where examinations are part of the national 'yellow label' service or where awarding bodies arrange collections, centres should contact the relevant awarding bodies for advice and instructions.
- for examinations where centres make their own collection arrangements, they should investigate alternative options that comply with the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations
- completed scripts must be stored securely until they are collected.

Summary of centre and awarding body responsibilities

Examination centres are responsible for:

- preparing plans for any disruption to examinations as part of centres' general emergency planning
- deciding whether the centre can open for examinations as scheduled and informing relevant awarding bodies if the centre is unable to open
- exploring the opportunities for alternative arrangements if the centre cannot open for examinations and agreeing such arrangements with the awarding bodies
- judging whether candidates meet the requirements for special consideration because of any disruption and submitting these requests to the relevant awarding bodies
- assessing their circumstances and liaising with awarding bodies in the event of disruption to the transportation of papers.

Awarding bodies are responsible for:

- ensuring centres receive examination materials for scheduled examinations

- advising centres on possible alternative examination arrangements and declining/approving proposals for alternative examination arrangements
- evaluating and declining/approving requests for special consideration.

Contacting the awarding bodies

In all cases, if there are any concerns, please contact the relevant awarding body for advice:

AQA

0800 197 7162

eos@aqa.org.uk

CCEA

028 9026 1212, 028 9026 1293, 028 9026 1425

centresupport@ccea.org.uk

OCR

01223 553998

support@ocr.org.uk

Pearson

0344 463 2535

WJEC

02920 265 077

exams@wjec.co.uk

(JCQ guidance above taken directly from the notice - Preparing for disruption to examinations effective from 11 October 2021 www.jcq.org.uk/preparing-for-disruption-to-examinations/)

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

GOV.UK

Emergency planning and response: Severe weather; Exam disruption; Coronavirus (COVID-19)
www.gov.uk/guidance/emergencies-and-severe-weather-schools-and-early-years-settings

Opening and closing maintained schools School organisation: local-authority-maintained schools
www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools

Dispatch of exam scripts guide: Ensuring the service runs smoothly; Contingency planning
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-yellow-label-service>