

**Exam Contingency**

**Plan**

2020/21

This plan is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Key staff involved in contingency planning

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| **Role** | **Name(s)** |
| Head of centre | **Ms L McVeigh** |
| Exams officer line manager (Senior Leader) | **Mr G Mills** |
| Exams officer | **Mrs M Payne** |
| ALS lead/SENCo | **Mr A Cave** |
| Senior leader(s) | **Mr C Vallance, Mr D Broomhead, Mr I James, Mr C Bennett, Mr G Mills, Mrs M Fletcher** |

Contents

[Purpose of the plan 4](#_Toc52892222)

[Possible causes of disruption to the exam process 4](#_Toc52892223)

[1. Exam officer extended absence at key points in the exam process (cycle) 4](#_Toc52892224)

[2. ALS lead/SENCo extended absence at key points in the exam cycle 5](#_Toc52892225)

[3. Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle 5](#_Toc52892226)

[4. Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence 6](#_Toc52892227)

[5. Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice 6](#_Toc52892228)

[6. Failure of IT systems 6](#_Toc52892229)

[7. Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lock down) 7](#_Toc52892230)

[8. Disruption of teaching time in the weeks before an exam – centre closed for an extended period 7](#_Toc52892231)

[9. Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open 7](#_Toc52892232)

[10. Centre unable to open as normal during the examination period 7](#_Toc52892233)

[11. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers 8](#_Toc52892234)

[12. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts 8](#_Toc52892235)

[13. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked 8](#_Toc52892236)

[14. Centre unable to distribute results as normal or facilitate post results services 8](#_Toc52892237)

[Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning 10](#_Toc52892238)

[Ofqual 10](#_Toc52892239)

[1.1 Covid specific guidance: 10](#_Toc52892240)

[7. Widespread national disruption to the taking of examinations / assessments 11](#_Toc52892241)

[JCQ 12](#_Toc52892242)

[GOV.UK 12](#_Toc52892243)

[Wales 13](#_Toc52892244)

[Northern Ireland 13](#_Toc52892245)

[National Counter Terrorism Security Office 13](#_Toc52892246)

Table of contents

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Purpose of the plan

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

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

* This plan also confirms The Samworth Church Academy 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

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

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| 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 the event of the exams officer being absent from the Academy, it is the data manager’s responsibility to ensure that all of the above tasks are carried out. The data manager has an extensive amount of knowledge of the examination process and requirements to ensure no candidate is disadvantaged |

### ALS lead/SENCo extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

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| 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 SENco being absent from the Academy, Miss K Hill has been appropriately trained to carry out the necessary role * Miss Hill to work alongside the exams officer and data manager to ensure all of the issues above have been addressed |

### Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

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| 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 member of teaching staff being absent from the Academy, it is the responsibility of the subject leader to work with the exams officer to ensure entries, coursework and amendments are carried out * In the event of late entry fees this will be addressed as a department issue and be dealt with accordingly with the member of staff’s line manager * Non-examination assessments tasks not being set etc. and candidates not being informed of centre assessed marks will be addressed as a department issue and dealt with accordingly with the members of staff’s line manager |

### Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence

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| 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   * The Academy has trained appropriate support staff who are able to cover for any invigilator absences at short notice |

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

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| 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 exam room plans are organised well in advance of the exam season. We are then able to identify any possible issues. We have sufficient rooms, within the Academy, to allocate room to. In the eventuality of issues, we are able to re-room classes and double up rooms in certain areas to allow the exams to continue * To liaise with local sports centres or other schools, local to the area, should the main exam venue become unavailable due to an unexpected incident |

### Failure of IT systems

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| 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   * In the event of any IT failure, we have an in-house IT team who have set procedures to ensure a speedy recovery of systems required. We have facilities also to be able to access the internet via other sources which enable us to carry out entry procedures and exam arrangements |

### Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lock down)

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| Criteria for implementation of the plan  *Whole centre evacuation (or lock down) during exam time due to serious incident resulting in exam candidates being unable to start, proceed with or complete their exams* |
| Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption   * The Emergency Evacuation Procedure to be followed should an exam have started. The appropriate exam board/s to be notified, informing them of the disruption * An alternative venue to be sourced to enable the exam series to continue, should the Academy rooms no longer be available for use. All exam boards to be notified immediately * Apply for special consideration for all students involved |

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

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| 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   * Plans to be discussed and implemented via the Academy executive team. |

### Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open

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| Criteria for implementation of the plan  *Candidates are unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal* |
| Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption   * The Academy will make alternative arrangements for the candidate/s after consultation with the appropriate exam board/s * Apply for special consideration where required |

### Centre 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)

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| Criteria for implementation of the plan  *Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations* |
| Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption   * The exams officer will inform the relevant exam board/s immediately and discuss arrangements for an alternative exam site |

### Disruption in the distribution of examination papers

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| 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   * The exams officer will inform the relevant exam board/s of any scripts not received. There are daily checks as to which scripts have been received into the centre and which ones are outstanding * The exams officer/data manager to access electronic papers, should the situation be required, to enable the exams to continue. Ensuring the integrity and security of the exam scripts at all times * The exams officer to check, if the disruption of exam papers has been on a national scale, whether the contingency day will be invoked |

### Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

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| 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   * The exams officer to liaise with Parcelforce regarding times for ‘yellow label’ collections * The exams officer to liaise with the relevant exam board, regarding any exam scripts which are not collected by the ‘yellow label’ service. If agreed, exam scripts will be posted recorded delivery |

### Assessment evidence is not available to be marked

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| 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   * Contact the relevant exam board immediately, to seek advice * Submit special consideration * Supply proof to exam boards of postage/collection |

### 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)

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| 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 Academy will make arrangements to access its results at an alternative site, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation * (Facilitation of post results services: the Academy will make arrangements to make post results requests at an alternative location and will contact the relevant awarding organisation if electronic post results requests are not possible |

Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning

Ofqual

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| **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 ~~as part of your emergency planning~~ and make sure y~~our~~ staff are aware of these plans.  When drafting contingency plans, you should consider the following guidance: 1.1 Covid specific guidance:  * [Guidance for schools Covid-19](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/guidance-for-schools-coronavirus-covid-19#safe-working-and-protective-measures) from the Department for Education in England (subject to frequent updates as the situation changes) * [Responsibility for autumn GCSE, AS and A level exam series](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/responsibility-for-autumn-gcse-as-and-a-level-exam-series) from the Department for Education in England * [Action for FE Colleges](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-further-education-provision) from the Department for Education in England * [Public health guidance to support autumn exams](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/responsibility-for-autumn-gcse-as-and-a-level-exam-series/public-health-arrangements-for-autumn-exams) from the Department for Education * [Education and childcare: coronavirus](https://gov.wales/education-coronavirus) from Welsh Government * [Covid-19 - guidance for school and educational settings](https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-school-and-educational-settings-northern-ireland) from Department of Education in Northern Ireland   **1.2 General contingency guidance**   * [Emergency planning and response](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/emergencies-and-severe-weather-schools-and-early-years-settings) from the Department for Education in England * [Opening and closing local-authority-maintained schools](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools) from the Department for Education in England * [Exceptional closure days](https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/exceptional-closure-days) from the Department of Education in Northern Ireland * [Checklist - exceptional closure of schools](https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/checklist-exceptional-closure-schools) from the Department of Education in Northern Ireland * [School closures](https://gov.wales/opening-schools-extremely-bad-weather-guidance-schools) from NI Direct * [Opening schools in extremely bad weather](https://gov.wales/opening-schools-extremely-bad-weather-guidance-schools) - guidance for schools from the Welsh Government * [Procedures for handling bomb threats](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bomb-threats-guidance) 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](https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/other-documents/jcq-joint-contingency-plan/)   **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](https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations/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](https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance) * [~~FAB’s guidance on special considerations~~](https://awarding.org.uk/policy-and-research/fab-guide-the-application-of-reasonable-adjustments-and-special-consideration-in-vocational-qualifications/)   **6. Wider communications**  The regulators, [Ofqual](https://www.gov.uk/ofqual) in England, [Qualifications Wales](http://qualificationswales.org/) in Wales and [CCEA](http://ccea.org.uk/) in Northern Ireland, will share timely and accurate information, as required, with awarding organisations, government departments and other stakeholders.  The [Department for Education](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education) in England, the [Department of Education](https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/) in Northern Ireland and the [Welsh Government](http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/?lang=en) 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](https://www.ucas.com/) (UCAS) and the [Central Applications Office](http://www.cao.ie/) (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 / assessments ~~In the event of widespread sustained national disruption, the government departments will communicate with regulators, awarding organisations and centres prior to a public announcement. Regulators will provide advice to government departments on implications for exam timetables.~~  The governments’ view across England, Wales and Northern Ireland is education should continue in 2020/21 with schools remaining open and that examinations and assessments will go ahead in both autumn 2020 and summer 2021.  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 should national disruption occur with any further relevant links. |

(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

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| 15.1 The qualification regulators, JCQ and government departments responsible for education have prepared and agreed information for schools and colleges in the event of examinations being seriously disrupted. This jointly agreed information will ensure consistency of response in the event of major disruption to the examinations system affecting significant numbers of candidates.  Further information may be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland/what-schools-and-colleges-should-do-if-exams-or-other-assessments-are-seriously-disrupted>  15.2 In addition, awarding bodies have their own well-established contingency plans in place to respond to disruptions. It is important that exams officers who are facing disruption liaise directly with the relevant awarding body/bodies.  15.3 Centres should prepare plans for any disruption to examinations as part of their general emergency planning. It is important to ensure that relevant centre staff are familiar with the plan. Consideration should be given as to how these arrangements will be communicated to candidates, parents and staff should disruption to examinations occur.  15.4 In the event that the head of centre decides the centre cannot be opened for scheduled examinations, the relevant awarding body must be informed as soon as possible. Awarding bodies will be able to offer advice regarding the alternative arrangements for conducting examinations that may be available and the options for candidates who have not been able to take scheduled examinations.  15.5  The awarding bodies will designate a ‘contingency day’ for examinations, summer 2021. This is consistent with the qualification regulators’ document Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland>  The designation of a ‘contingency day’ within the common examination timetable is in the event of national or significant local disruption to examinations. It is part of the awarding bodies’ standard contingency planning for examinations.  In the event of national disruption to a day of examinations in summer 2021, the awarding bodies will liaise with the qualification regulators and government departments to agree the most appropriate option for managing the impact. As a last resort the affected examinations will be rescheduled. Although every effort would be taken to keep the impact to a minimum, it is possible that there could be more than one timetable date affected following the disruption, up to and including the contingency day. Centres will be alerted if it is agreed to reschedule the examinations and the affected candidates will be expected to make themselves available in such circumstances. The decision regarding the rescheduling of examinations will always rest with the awarding body. The centre must conduct the examination on the scheduled date unless instructed to do otherwise by the awarding body.  Where candidates choose not to be available for the rescheduled examination(s) for reasons other than those traditionally covered by special consideration, they will not be eligible for enhanced grading arrangements. Centres must therefore ensure candidates and parents are aware of this contingency arrangement so that they may take it into account when making their plans for the summer. However, the awarding bodies will not insist upon candidates being available throughout the entire timetable period as a matter of course. |

(JCQ guidance above taken directly from Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2020-2021 <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](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/other-documents)

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)

GOV.UK

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

Opening and closing local-authority-maintained schools [www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools](http://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>

Wales

School closures – examinations [gov.wales/school-closures-examinations](https://gov.wales/school-closures-examinations)

Opening schools in extremely bad weather [gov.wales/opening-schools-extremely-bad-weather-guidance-schools](https://gov.wales/opening-schools-extremely-bad-weather-guidance-schools)

Northern Ireland

Exceptional closure days [www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/exceptional-closure-days](http://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/exceptional-closure-days)

Checklist for Principals when considering Opening or Closure of School [www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/checklist-exceptional-closure-schools](http://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/checklist-exceptional-closure-schools)

School closures [www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/school-closures](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/school-closures)

National Counter Terrorism Security Office

Procedures for handling bomb threats [www.gov.uk/government/publications/bomb-threats-guidance/procedures-for-handling-bomb-threats](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bomb-threats-guidance/procedures-for-handling-bomb-threats)