



Joint Council for  
Qualifications

## Frequently Asked Questions – 2018/19 examination administration

The JCQ and its awarding body members (AQA, CCEA, OCR, Pearson and WJEC) have produced the following Frequently Asked Questions. They reflect the 'hot topics' in terms of queries received by the JCQ and the awarding bodies, and raised at examination officer Network Meetings during the autumn of 2018. The clarification provided will help examination officers in their day to day work and the vital role they play in effective examination administration.

### **The awarding bodies will be providing clarification on the Conflict of Interest/Declarations process in early January 2019.**

If there is any perceived conflict between the respective JCQ documents and these 'FAQs', then the information in this document will take precedence.

#### **I. Private candidates and non-examination assessments (General Regulations, paragraph 5.3o and Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments, Appendix 3)**

##### **Can I enter a private candidate for a subject with non-examination assessment?**

**Yes:** for UK centres approved by the JCQ awarding bodies, there is no restriction on entry in any subject for private candidates. However, before making an entry for a private candidate, the centre **must** be confident that they will be able to satisfy the conditions specified for managing non-examination assessments, particularly being able to ensure the authenticity of candidates' work, allowing appropriate time for supervised completion and safe storage of work throughout.

The A Level Science Practical Skills Endorsement and the GCSE English Language Spoken Language Endorsement are mandatory parts of those qualifications. Centres **must** offer all candidates the opportunity to undertake them, and encourage them as far as possible to do so.

## 2. Internal Appeals Procedure (General Regulations, paragraph 5.7d)

### Is my centre required to have an Internal Appeals Procedure?

**Yes:** all centres **must** have a written Internal Appeals Procedure relating to internal assessment decisions in all qualifications. Details of this procedure **must** be communicated, made widely available and accessible to all candidates. Informing candidates of their marks is an important part of this procedure.

Further information may be found at:

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/non-examination-assessments/notice-to-centres---reviews-of-marking-centre-assessed-marks>

## 3. Contingency day, June 2019 examination series

### How might the contingency day be used in the June 2019 examination series?

In the highly unlikely event that there is national disruption to a day of examinations in summer 2019, the awarding bodies will liaise with the qualification regulators and the DfE 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 on 26 June 2019.

Centres will be alerted if it was agreed to reschedule the examinations and the affected candidates will be expected to make themselves available in such circumstances.

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.

The contingency day will become a standard feature of subsequent examination timetables.

## 4. Storage of examination stationery ('ICE', Section 3)

### Where should I store examination stationery?

Confidential examination materials, such as question papers and pre-release materials, as issued by the awarding bodies, **must** always be stored in the centre's secure storage facility, e.g. safe, security cabinet.

The associated examination stationery, such as answer booklets and formula booklets, **must** be stored in the secure room. Although it is good practice to store this material in the secure storage facility, it is not mandatory.

5. The examination room ('ICE', paragraphs 11.16 and 19.1)

**Can we hold internal school tests, mock examinations, revision sessions or coach candidates in a 'designated examination room' on the day of the examination?**

Not when it is 'designated' as an examination room (see below for an explanation). During these periods you **cannot** use it for any purpose other than conducting external examinations. Formal examination conditions **must** be maintained for those candidates taking external examinations. At all other times the room may be used for alternative purposes.

**At what point does a room become a 'designated examination room'?**

A room becomes a 'designated examination room' as soon as exams office staff begin to check and prepare it to ensure compliance with **section 11** of the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting examinations*.

As soon as preparation for the examination begins, no other activity can take place in that room. Candidates sitting examinations **must not** be allowed into the room until the preparation is complete and they are invited to enter the room, under supervised conditions, to start their examination.

The room remains a 'designated examination room' up to the point when all candidates have left and all related materials such as candidates' scripts, question papers and resource materials have been removed from the room.

You **must** ensure that there is adequate time allowed for the set up and clearing of the room before and after the scheduled examination time, throughout which period the room is 'designated' and cannot be used for any other activity. Centres will need to determine what constitutes 'adequate time' to meet their individual needs, which will be influenced by factors such as the size of the room and the number and nature of the examinations being conducted.