



Joint Council for
Qualifications^{CIC}

Guidance notes on alternative site arrangements for the academic year 2026/27

NB The use of an alternative site **is not** an arrangement that requires advance approval. The online form is completed to notify the JCQ Centre Inspection Service that the centre will be conducting examinations away from the registered address. Once the form has been submitted, it **is not** necessary to contact the JCQ Centre Inspection Service for confirmation that the arrangement has been approved.

Produced on behalf of:



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In addition to these guidance notes, centres **must** also refer to the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations*:

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>

1 An online submission **must only** be made for timetabled written examinations in the following qualifications:

- AEA
- AQA Applied General qualifications
- AQA Level 2 Certificate in Further Maths
- AQA Level 3 Certificate in Mathematical Studies
- BTEC qualifications (BTEC Firsts, BTEC Nationals and BTEC Tech Awards)
- Cambridge Advanced Nationals
- Cambridge Nationals
- Cambridge OCR Level 3 Award
- Cambridge OCR Level 3 Certificates
- Cambridge Technicals
- Edexcel Awards
- Edexcel International GCSE
- ELC
- FSMQ
- GCE
- GCSE
- WJEC General Foundation qualifications
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 General qualifications
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational Awards and Certificates
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational Awards (Technical Awards)
- WJEC Level 3 Applied Certificates, Diplomas and Extended Diplomas (including Alternative Academic Qualifications).
- WJEC VCSE qualifications

For any other qualification please contact the relevant awarding body for guidance.

An online submission is made via the Centre Admin Portal (CAP). CAP can be accessed via any of the awarding bodies' secure extranet sites.

2 An online submission **must not** be made for:

- GCSE controlled assessment units
- GCE coursework units
- GCE/GCSE non-examination assessment components
- MFL Speaking assessments
- practical assessments.

If an alternative site is required for a non-timetabled assessment, centres **must** contact the relevant awarding body for guidance.

- 3** An online submission **must only** be made when a centre intends to conduct an examination for any candidates at an address other than the centre's registered address (see the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations*).
- 4** Where an online submission is being made for an individual candidate or a group of candidates to sit examinations at an alternative site, each examination must be selected. The category 'all timetabled written examinations for the entire series will be conducted at an alternative site' **must not** be selected for an individual candidate or a group of candidates. This must only be selected for an entire cohort.
- 5** Alternative site arrangements **do not** cover transferred candidate arrangements.
- 6** Any queries about the suitability of the proposed site **must** be discussed with the JCQ Centre Inspection Service before completing the online form.

- 7** Question paper packets and examination stationery **must** be kept under secure conditions at the centre's registered address until **90 minutes before the awarding body's published starting time for the examination**.

A PDF copy of the standard question paper can only be downloaded from the awarding body's secure extranet site **60 minutes before the awarding body's published starting time for the examination**.

The question paper(s) will then be taken to the examination venue by a member of centre staff. This can be an invigilator appointed by the centre. A taxi may be used to take the question paper(s) to the alternative site, but a member of centre staff **must** be present.

- 8** **It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that question papers and examination stationery are securely packaged and transported securely within 90 minutes of the awarding body's published starting time for the examination.**

- 9** Material **must not** be transported **under any circumstances** before the day of the examination.

- 10** The entering centre is responsible for invigilating the examination(s), ensuring the examination(s) will be conducted as detailed in the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations*. This also includes the display of the relevant posters and invigilator's announcement.

- 11** The completed scripts **must** be securely transported to the entering centre. Scripts **must** be packed in the same order as candidates appear on the attendance register before being despatched.

- 12** Scripts and accompanying attendance registers **must** be despatched to the address provided on the same day of the examination wherever possible and **must** be despatched no later than the next working day.

Scripts **must** be retained in the entering centre's secure room if kept within the centre overnight.

- 13** **Unused question papers must not be released to any individual until 24 hours after the awarding body's published finishing time for the examination.**

Where a candidate is sitting an examination scheduled for the afternoon session on the following morning under an overnight supervision arrangement, unused question papers for that examination must not be released to any individual until the candidate has completed that examination.

The notification of intent to conduct examinations at an alternative site **must** be submitted online no later than six weeks before the start of the examination series.

However, if the notification is for a candidate to sit examinations at home or in hospital due to a medical condition, it may not be possible to submit the information six weeks in advance. A late submission should be made as soon as the details are known.

Medical evidence **is not** required to allow a candidate to sit their examinations at home or in hospital.

If the centre subsequently identifies that the alternative site arrangement is no longer required, then it should be withdrawn online using the Centre Admin Portal

For advice:

Centres in England and Scotland

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Tel: 01483 556 271

Centres in Wales

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