

Updated Friday 8 January 2010

JCO statement: Examinations during severe weather conditions

JCO awarding bodies recognise the disruption which the bad weather has caused to many schools and colleges this week and have given very careful consideration to alternative strategies including rescheduling of examinations.

Rescheduling the examinations would have a significant impact on the teaching and learning programmes for schools and colleges in the lead up to the summer series. It is also impossible to guarantee the integrity of question papers by asking all centres to postpone the examination when not all schools may be affected. Taking these factors in to account and in consultation with the regulator, Ofqual, awarding bodies have agreed:

Wherever possible the examinations should be conducted according to the centre's published examination timetable. However, if the weather is so severe that a decision is made to close the school, whether by the local authority or the senior leadership team, or where a school or centre remains open but some individual candidates are unable to reach it because of extreme weather conditions then the options are

- Where candidates are sitting one or two units and this is not their terminal (final examination series), they may be entered for the June 2010 series.
- Where candidates are sitting units within a 'new AS' specification and expecting a qualification grade in March 2010, but the units are available again in June, they may be entered for the June 2010 series.
- Where candidates are sitting units as part of their terminal examination series and no further re-sit opportunity is available, such as candidates sitting legacy GCE A2 units, which are available for the final time in January 2010, then an application for Special Consideration may be made. The candidate must meet the published criteria for Special Consideration as indicated in the JCO publication, Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration.

There is a published contingency plan for the examinations system at <http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/files/2009-10-23-joint-exam-contingency-plan-02.pdf>

Ends.