

# Examination timetable clash Policy

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## Examination Clashes Policy

Exams office staff and the senior leadership team should be aware of the rules and regulations. The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) provides clear guidance in Instructions for Conducting Examinations.

An exam clash occurs when a student has two or more exams timetabled in the same session or multiple exams timetabled for the same day and the duration of these papers is more than: six hours for GCE, AS and A2 exams or 5.5 hours for GCSE examinations (including extra time and/or supervised rest breaks).

In the instance of two or more exams in one session the school may:

- Decide the order in which to hold the exams.
- Give candidates a short-supervised break between papers within a session.
- If the total time of two or more exams in one session is more than three hours including extra time and/or supervised rest breaks you may conduct an exam in a later or earlier session within the same day (no paperwork required or prior permission needed from the awarding body), but “clash” candidates must be adequately supervised.

If multiple exams are timetabled for the same day (and the duration of exams is more than that specified above) candidates may be allowed to take an exam the following morning, including Saturdays. If “overnight supervision” is to be implemented, the school must ensure that:

- Candidates who take an exam on a later day than that published in the timetable must either be sitting exams or under centre supervision from 30 minutes after the published starting time for the delayed exam until they begin their exam. This is to make sure there is no contact with other candidates.
- A member of centre staff or an invigilator is appointed to supervise the candidate at all times while he/she is on the premises.
- The supervision of a candidate on journeys to and from the school and overnight is undertaken by the candidate’s parent/carer or centre staff. The school must determine a method of supervision which ensures the candidate’s wellbeing.
- The JCQ form Timetable Variation and Confidentiality Declaration for Overnight Supervision is completed (available on the JCQ website).
- The parties involved (parents, candidates etc) are told that any infringement of the conditions governing overnight supervision may lead to the application of penalties and sanctions as detailed in the JCQ publication Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments: Policies and Procedures.
- They are satisfied that arrangements maintain the integrity and security of the examination.
- All completed forms are kept and made available in college for inspection until the closing date for enquiries about results has passed.
- The relevant awarding body is informed immediately of any known or suspected contravention of the arrangements for overnight supervision.
- The headteacher is satisfied of any arrangement for overnight supervision and accepts full responsibility for the security of the exams throughout.

Exam must never be taken on an earlier day than that scheduled and if candidates are taking an exam on a later day than other candidates, all copies of the question paper used on the earlier day must be sealed in an envelope and returned to secure storage until all candidates at your centre have taken that exam.

In summary, here are 10 practical tips for dealing with exam clashes:

1. Identify exam clashes as early as possible. Ask your exams officer to identify when exam clashes will occur and the students that will be affected.
2. Be clear over the JCQ guidelines for dealing with exam clashes. You must be aware of what you can/cannot do when an exam clash occurs.
3. Keep parents and candidates fully informed at all times. Contact parents as early as possible once an exam clash is identified. Clearly explain the regulations in such instances and the measures you have put in place to support their son/daughter. Notify the candidate of the arrangements in writing.
4. Examinations can never be taken on an earlier day than that scheduled on the timetable. This is the “golden rule” when dealing with exam clashes.
5. Discuss all options with the candidate(s).
6. Avoid overnight supervision if possible. This adds anxiety over a longer period for the candidate(s) and in the age of social media is much harder to administer.
7. Make use of a twilight session if possible. This will provide the candidate(s) with time to relax and gather thoughts in-between exams.
8. Submit a request for special consideration to the relevant awarding body for the final paper.
9. Clearly identify the “exam clash” candidate(s) in the exam room and ensure that invigilators know what the supervision arrangements are for them.
10. Have you considered Access Arrangements? If a candidate is eligible for an access arrangement, then ensure that this is incorporated into your planning and is made available.

## JCQ Roles related to timetable clashes:

### **7. Timetable clashes**

7.1 You **must not** vary the timetable if a timetabled examination clashes with any of the following:

- a) work experience;
- b) a school function or closure;
- c) field trip;
- d) sporting events below international level;
- e) holidays and weddings;
- f) a candidate's personal arrangements;
- g) a clash between papers of different awarding bodies or specifications in the same subject at the same qualification level.

7.2 **In exceptional circumstances** where the size of the cohort means that it is not possible for all candidates to sit the examination(s) at the same time, you may split the cohort into two groups.

One group of candidates will sit the examination earlier than or later than the published start time.

**The security of the examination(s) must be maintained at all times. You must supervise candidates in line with paragraph 7.5, page 12. There is no need to complete any paperwork and prior permission from an awarding body is not required.**

7.3 **If candidates are taking two or more examinations in a session and the total time is three hours or less**, you may decide the order **within the timetabled session** in which to hold them.

You may also give candidates a supervised break of **no more than twenty minutes between papers within a session. This must be conducted within the examination room, under formal examination conditions at all times\***. Therefore candidates **cannot** revise.

\*This **does not** apply to candidates with approved supervised rest breaks.

**7.4 If candidates are taking two or more papers timetabled in a session and the total time is more than three hours including extra time and/or supervised rest breaks†, you may conduct an examination in a later or earlier session within the same day, without the need to complete any paperwork. Prior permission from an awarding body is not required.**

However, the security of the examination **must** still be maintained. You **must** supervise candidates in line with the requirements in **paragraph 7.5, page 12**.

Candidates may revise using their own notes whilst under centre supervision between examinations.

However, candidates **must not** be in possession of an electronic communication/storage device or have access to the internet.

†Where reference is made to supervised rest breaks, this is a supervised rest break as defined in **section 5.1** of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.

a) **Candidates who take an examination earlier than the awarding body's published starting time must be kept under centre supervision (which you must arrange) until one hour after the published starting time for that examination.** Question papers used by those candidates **must** be kept in the centre's secure storage facility until one hour after the awarding body's published starting time for that examination.

b) **For examinations that last less than one hour, candidates must be supervised and question papers must be kept in the centre's secure storage facility until the published finishing time for that examination.**

c) **Candidates who take an examination later than the awarding body's published starting time must be kept under centre supervision from 30 minutes after the published starting time for that examination until they begin it.**

d) If some candidates are allowed to take an examination in a different session from other candidates at your centre, you **must** seal all copies of the question paper used in the earlier session in an envelope and return them to the centre's secure storage facility.

**7.5 In all circumstances the candidate(s) must be supervised. Supervision requires that a member of centre staff or an invigilator will be in the same room as the candidate(s) at all times.** The standard invigilation ratios apply as per **paragraph 12.3, page 21**.

The candidate(s) **must not**:

a) be in possession of an electronic communication/storage device or have access to the internet;

b) have contact with any candidate who has sat the examination.

## **8- Overnight supervision arrangements**

**Overnight supervision arrangements must only be applied in rare and exceptional circumstances and as a last resort.**

8.1 When candidates are entered for **multiple examinations (three or more examinations)** timetabled for the same day and the total duration for those papers is:

a) **more than** six hours for GCE examinations (AS, A2, A-level), **including extra time and/or supervised rest breaks**; or

b) **more than** five and a half hours for GCSE examinations, **including extra time and/or supervised rest breaks**;

**candidates may be allowed to take an examination the following morning, including Saturdays (see paragraph 8.4, page 14).**

**Candidates are not allowed to take examinations on an earlier day than that scheduled on the timetable.**

8.2 Where a candidate is allowed to take an examination the following morning, **the centre must appoint a member of centre staff or an invigilator to supervise the candidate at all times** while he/she is on the premises sitting examinations. The candidate **must** be under centre supervision from 30 minutes after the awarding body's published starting time for the delayed examination. The centre **must** ensure there is no contact with other candidates.

The supervision of a candidate on journeys to and from the centre and overnight may be undertaken by the candidate's parent/carer or centre staff. The centre **must** determine a method of supervision which ensures the candidate's well being.

8.3 The JCQ form Timetable variation and confidentiality declaration for overnight supervision **must** be completed **before** the overnight supervision is to commence.

**You must:**

a) **inform the parties involved that any infringement of the conditions governing overnight supervision arrangements may lead to the application of penalties to the candidate's examinations taken in the relevant series, as detailed in the JCQ publication Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments: Policies and Procedures** ; <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice>

b) be satisfied that the arrangements maintain the integrity and security of the examination;

c) **keep all completed forms available in your centre for inspection until the deadline for reviews of marking has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later. Forms may be stored electronically or in hard copy paper format and must not be sent to an awarding body, unless specifically requested;**

d) inform the relevant awarding body **immediately** of any known or suspected contravention of the arrangements for overnight supervision of a candidate.

**The awarding body may use appropriate means to check that the conditions for overnight supervision have been adhered to and will take action if there is evidence of any contravention. This could lead to the disqualification of any candidates involved and could affect whether the awarding body would allow such concessions to be made in the future.**

The head of centre **must** be satisfied of any arrangement for overnight supervision of a candidate where necessary and accepts full responsibility for the security of the examinations throughout.

8.4 **You must re-arrange for the following morning any examination that cannot be taken in the scheduled afternoon session. If an examination from Friday afternoon is deferred, it must be taken the following morning, i.e. Saturday morning.**

8.5 If some candidates are allowed to take an examination on a later day than other candidates at your centre, all copies of the question paper used on the earlier day **must** be sealed in an envelope and returned to the centre's secure storage facility until all candidates at your centre have taken that examination