

## **SLT conference – January & February 2026**

**‘JCQ from ICE and General Regulations changes to Inspection:  
Understanding JCQ updates and centre compliance for summer 2026’**

**Nick Lait and Lynne Dustan**

## Why inspections and centre inspection service?

- Condition G8 - G8.1 An awarding organisation must take all reasonable steps to ensure that, in relation to qualifications which it makes available –
  - (a) evidence generated by a Learner in an assessment is generated by that Learner (or includes evidence generated by that Learner as a contribution to group work), and
  - (b) where an assessment is required to be completed under specified conditions, Learners complete the assessment under those conditions (other than where any Reasonable Adjustments or Special Consideration require alternative conditions).

Part of the regulatory expectation here is that Awarding Organisations carry out regular checks, some unannounced.

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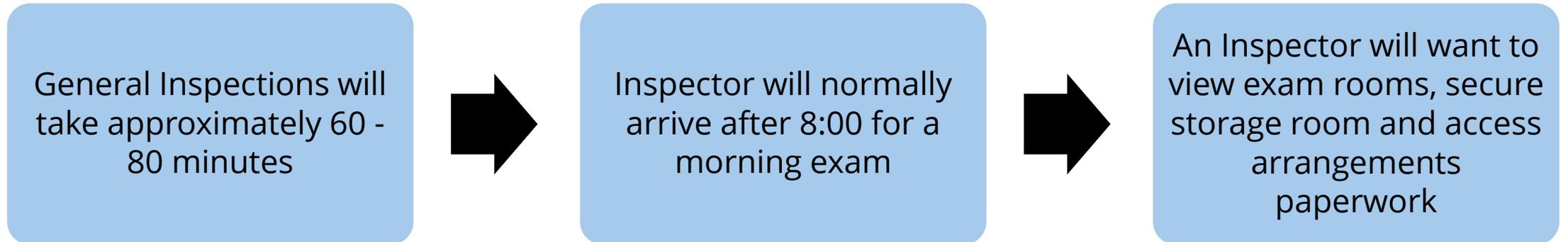
# Statistics



Type of inspection	Number completed 2024/25	% with no action required	Number completed 2023/24	% with no action required
General	6140	57%	6045	45%
Access Arrangement	657	46%	677	33%
QPI	1276		717	
Readiness	97		107	20%
Review	49	30%	177	41%
Total	8219		7723	

- Top issues identified in General Inspections: Secure material handling (9%), invigilation (5%), exam room setup (5%).
- Access Arrangement issues: Data consent forms (24%), Form 9 (18%), incomplete Form 8 (15%).

## The General Inspection



The output from a series inspection is a report with areas to action

## The General Inspection and your role as Senior Leaders

- Be familiar with the current JCQ publications, JCQ General Regulations, JCQ Instructions for conducting examinations (JCQ ICE), JCQ Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures
  - Understand the role of the exams officer and the SENCo in the examination process
  - Have in place up to date policies as listed in the JCQ General Regulations 2025-2026 booklet
  - Take the opportunity to meet the inspector and ask questions
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## Your responsibility as a Senior Leader

- Enable the SENCo and exams officer to attend training/update courses.
- Support invigilator recruitment.
- Ensure NCN is notified of any address and/or personnel changes.



## Your role in compliance



- Support exams officer with room allocation for exams.
- Identify suitable location and space for the secure storage room to enable the exams officer to comply with regulations.
- Be familiar with exams contingency plans, including power outage, site unavailable on day of exams.

## Your role in compliance

As your school or college prepares for the summer exam series undertake pre-exam checks with your exams officer.

There is a pre-series checklist which you and your exams officer may find helpful. The checklist can be found at: <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations/>

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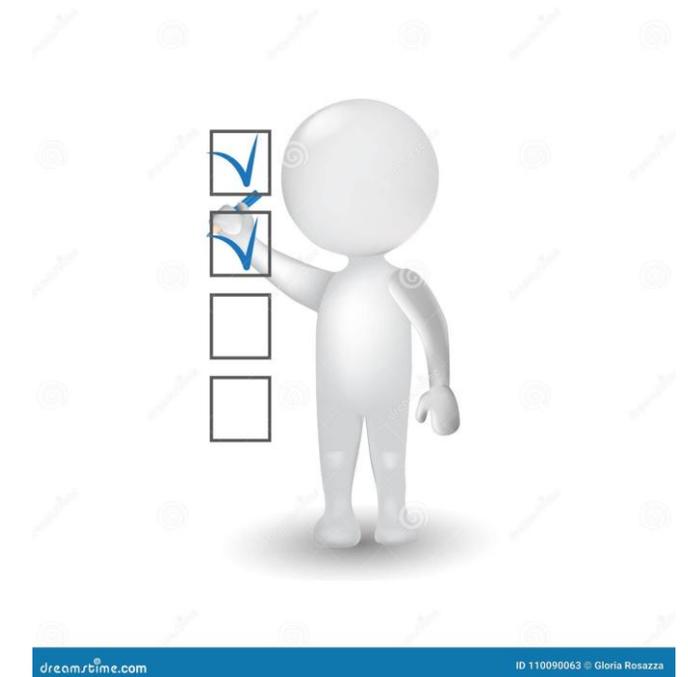
## On the day of the inspection

- The inspector will ask for you to be notified of the inspection on their arrival
- You are welcome to ask them for any feedback from the inspection
- Actions arising from the inspection will be sent to the exams officer to complete



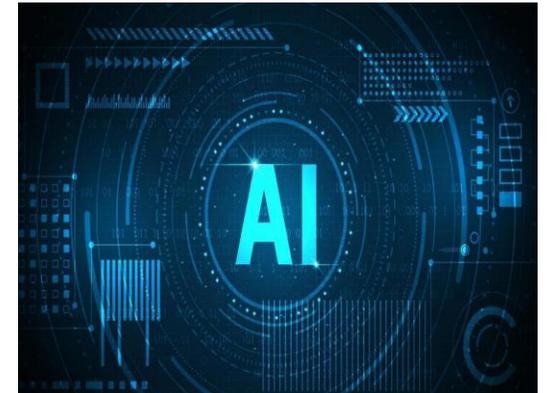
## Policies

- A malpractice policy questionnaire was issued in Dec 2025 to a random selection of heads of centres
- Closing date is 6 March, non completion is escalated to Awarding organisations
- Already received 80% response rate



## Points to note on centre exam policies including the use of AI

- In principle Awarding organisations support the use of technology to save time/reduce the administrative burden.
- Exam polices play a pivotal role in the management, administration and conducting of examinations within each centre as they confirm processes/procedures and support contingency and succession planning.
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- Policies must be an accurate reflection of the processes/procedures which take place within centres.



## 2025/26 A guide to the special consideration process

The centre **must** decide whether the candidate meets the published criteria for special consideration. An awarding body **cannot** determine the candidate's eligibility and make the decision for the centre

Applications **must** only be processed where they are supported by the centre and the candidate meets the published criteria for special consideration with evidence in place

If the centre does not support an online application for special consideration, then it **must not** be submitted to the relevant awarding body or bodies. Speculative applications for special consideration **cannot** be accepted

# New JCQ document for 2025/26



## Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (Vocational and Technical Qualifications)

1 September 2025 to 31 August 2026

**This document covers the following qualifications:**

- AQA Applied General qualifications
- BTEC qualifications (BTEC Firsts, BTEC Technicals, BTEC Nationals, BTEC Tech Awards)
- CCEA Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational qualifications
- City & Guilds Level 2 and Level 3 Technical qualifications
- NCFE Alternative Academic Qualifications
- NCFE CACHE Level 1/2 Technical Awards
- NCFE Level 1/2 Technical Awards
- OCR Level 1/Level 2 Cambridge Nationals (Technical Awards)
- OCR Level 3 Cambridge Advanced Nationals (Alternative Academic Qualifications)
- T Levels (Technical qualifications)
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational Awards
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational Awards (Technical Awards)
- WJEC Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualifications
- WJEC Level 3 Applied Certificates, Diplomas and Extended Diplomas

For the attention of heads of centre,  
senior leaders and subject leaders

Produced on behalf of:



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# Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (VTQs)

- covers all awarding bodies' vocational qualifications
- provides guidance on the setting, supervision, authentication, marking, internal standardisation and external moderation of VTQ non-examination assessments



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## Provisional summer 2027 timetables

The awarding bodies will be publishing their provisional summer 2027 GCSE, GCE AS and A level examination timetables for consultation on Monday 2 February 2026. They will be subject to a six-week consultation running until Friday 20 March 2026.

Points to note:

- Due to the positioning of the late Spring bank holiday in May 2027 (Monday 31 May 2027) there will be three weeks of examinations in May (week commencing Monday 10 May 2027) and three weeks of examinations in June. No examinations will be scheduled week commencing Monday 31 May 2027.
  - It is proposed that the June 2027 examination timetable will start on Monday 10 May 2027 and not Thursday 6 May 2027.
  - The contingency day is scheduled for Wednesday 23 June 2027.
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## **Resilience and contingency arrangements**

### **Senior designated contacts**

In May 2026, your Headteacher/Principal will be asked by the National Centre Number Team, working on behalf of the JCQ member awarding bodies, to provide details of those senior members of staff who will be available outside of term time to resolve any issues such as suspected malpractice, safeguarding concerns, missing script queries or invalid certification claims.

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## Resilience and contingency arrangements

Information on senior designated contacts is important as it allows the awarding bodies to work with schools and colleges to ensure candidates receive their results on time.

There must be at least one senior contact who is available to manage emergency requests during the summer holidays. However, Headteachers/Principals working with their senior leaders can provide as many senior contacts as they wish to reduce the risk of this falling on one individual throughout the summer holidays

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THANK YOU!