

Centre Closure Support Guide

Providing continuity for your learners



This guidance applies to all UK based, AQA-approved centres that may be closing to learners for any reason, including going into administration or liquidation.

(NB For International centres, contact us for more information, using your existing contact details.)

There are a number of actions you must take to provide continuity for your learners and their qualifications:

1. Please tell us immediately if your centre is likely to close by emailing centreapproval@aqa.org.uk with the heading 'Centre Closure and your centre number'. We'll then send you a 'centre closure' form to complete so we can gather some key information, and we'll then be able to give further guidance. The person filling in the form should ideally be your Head of Centre, but they may delegate the responsibility to the Exams Officer or another member of the SLT, depending on the circumstances.
2. If your centre is closing ahead of an exam series and you already have questions papers in your secure storage facility, please contact Customer Services immediately for guidance on the next steps.

It's essential that you make plans to secure your learner records. This includes their:

- **Personal details** – which are likely to be stored on your MIS, and may include exam entry information for forthcoming exams. It's essential that you still have access to your MIS to be able to access this data throughout the closure process. If this is not possible, you should download and keep the relevant data in either a paper-based or computer-based format.
- **Assessment records** – which may be stored on your MIS or other computer based/cloud platforms. If you're going to lose access to any digital marks data, you should arrange to make suitable physical copies to support the awarding of your learners' qualifications. This includes all learners who've started a qualification and not just those who are due to take exams during the academic year your centre is likely to close.
- **NEA/coursework** - physical or electronic copies must be kept so we can see them if we need to. The work must be stored securely under the current version of the JCQ 'instructions for conducting non-examination assessment' and/or the JCQ 'instructions for conducting coursework'. This could be through your centre, an administrator/liquidator or another approved centre who has agreed to hold them. This includes all learners who have already started a qualification, and not just those who are due to complete it during the academic year your centre is likely to close.

If your centre is likely to close before the next exam series

Your learners will need somewhere to sit their exams, and potentially finish their NEA work, so they can complete their qualifications and receive their results.

You'll need to take the following action:

- Agree with another approved AQA centre that they will take on your learners – including allowing them to sit their final exams, administer their post-results services requests and distribute their final certificates.
- Make sure that all learners' NEA/coursework is verified up to its current point, even if not yet completed, using the relevant AQA forms where possible. This includes any learner currently undertaking a qualification, even if they are not due to sit exams in this academic year (e.g. Year 10 and Year 12 learners should be included).
- Provide written summaries for each NEA/coursework subject, which clearly states what is left to complete.

If your centre will stay open to run the next exam series

You will also need to consider the following:

- Will a designated contact be available within your centre after the exams to act as a point of contact in case of any queries before results day?
- Will your centre be able to issue results to learners? Consider your access to your MIS, A2C etc. and whether you will be able to issue results electronically or in paper format.
- Will your centre be able to administer post-results services for your learners, to the point of completion, including any possible appeals? This may mean someone needs to be available, with access to all your centre systems - including finance administration - until the end of November or possibly later.
- Will your centre be able to distribute certificates to all learners who have been awarded qualifications? You could consider ordering certificates for early delivery through our website, which would mean that your certificates would arrive in early September.

If you're unable to support any of the above key processes, you'll need to find another approved AQA centre to act on your behalf to fulfil these responsibilities

A suitable alternative AQA centre may include:

- a sister centre in the same trust as your centre
- another approved centre in your local area
- another approved centre in a consortium
- the local education authority (LEA) office

If you're nominating another centre, you'll be asked for this information on the 'centre closure' form. Please do not delay returning the form if you haven't made these arrangements.