



Covid-19 - Overview of Key Issues

The GBA has continued to support schools during this time and will continue to do so as usual, as effectively as we possibly can.

There have been a number of issues raised so far, including in relation to the following:

- insurance;
- qualifications;
- 85% funded schools;
- Preparatory Departments;
- employment matters, particularly for non-teaching staff;
- funding concerns in general.

Our staff are working remotely and we are running our Executive Committee meetings on a monthly basis by video conference. We are in daily contact with various stakeholders so please keep feeding through any issues and we will voice any concerns on your behalf.

Northern Ireland Assembly

The Northern Ireland Assembly continues to meet, and the legislative focus has been on the response to COVID-19. The two Committees to watch are the [Education Committee](#) and the [Ad Hoc Committee on the COVID 19 Response](#).

The Education Committee continues to meet, with some members joining remotely. The Department of Education provides the Committee with a contingency update on a weekly basis. In addition, the Committee will receive updates from CCEA and the EA. Please see details of the forward work programme below:

29 April 2020

- Department of Education: contingency update – oral teleconference briefing.
- CCEA: Examinations – oral teleconference briefing (to be confirmed).

6 May 2020

- Department of Education: contingency update – oral teleconference briefing.
- Childcare Sector: oral teleconference briefing (to be confirmed).

13 May 2020

- Department of Education: contingency update – oral teleconference briefing.

- Education Authority: Special Educational Needs statementing final report – oral teleconference briefing (to be confirmed).

20 May 2020

- Department of Education: contingency update – oral teleconference briefing.
- Northern Ireland Teachers' Council – oral teleconference briefing (to be confirmed).

Qualifications Update

As you will be aware, the Education Minister, Mr Peter Weir, announced on 16th April the alternative arrangements for the awarding of GCSE, AS and A Level grades. Full details of the arrangements, FAQs and guidance documents are now online and can be accessed via the following [link](#).

You can listen to Mr Weir's statement and the ensuing question and answer session using this [link](#) . The statement begins 1 hour and 14 minutes into the overall session.

Industrial Action - April Update

It was announced earlier this month that the Teachers' Negotiating Committee, comprised of the Department, employing authorities, sectoral bodies and teaching unions, has reached an agreement on a resolution of the current industrial dispute.

A formal response is expected by the end of this month.

GBA Executive Committee

As mentioned above, we are continuing to run our Executive meetings online. The next GBA Executive meeting will be held on 29th April via Microsoft Teams. If you would like any items to be added to the agenda for discussion at the meeting, please contact: Administrator@gbani.org



Hosting Meetings Online - Best Practice Tips

Are you hosting Board of Governor meetings or other meetings online? You may have questions regarding privacy or what the best platform is to use. We have engaged with the Education Authority on these matters and you may find the following points useful:

- There is no official approved platform, however, based on our experiences to date, Microsoft Teams appears to be the preference.
- A number of schools are using "Guests" in Microsoft Teams including for Board of Governors.

- It is recommended that you test Guests with one account to ensure that you are satisfied with the level of access i.e. that the guest is not seeing/doing too much or too little.
- Overall, Microsoft Teams appears to be a reasonably secure platform as the Principal/ Chair can control who accesses the meeting and what is shared.

We will keep you informed of any other developments and/or guidance on this topic.

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