

Exams policy

2016/17

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
Date of next review	

Purpose of the policy

The centre is committed to ensuring that the exams management and administration process is run effectively and efficiently. This exam policy will ensure that:

- all aspects of the centre exam process is documented and other relevant exams-related policies, procedures and plans are signposted
- the workforce is well informed and supported
- all centre staff involved in the exams process clearly understand their roles and responsibilities
- all exams and assessments are conducted in accordance with JCQ and awarding body regulations, guidance and instructions.

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure ways of working in the centre are accurately reflected and that exams and assessments are conducted to current JCQ (and awarding body) regulations, instructions and guidance.

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the centre's exam process to read, understand and implement this policy.

Roles and responsibilities overview

"The head of centre is responsible to the awarding bodies for making sure all examinations/assessments are conducted according to the instructions, and the qualification specifications issued by the awarding bodies."

Head of centre

- Understands the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications including:
 - [General regulations for approved centres](#) (GR)
 - [Instructions for conducting examinations](#) (ICE)
 - [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments](#) (AA)
 - [Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments](#) (SMEA)
 - [Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments](#) (NEA) (and the instructions for conducting controlled assessment and coursework)
- Ensures the National Centre Number Register Annual Update (administered on behalf of the JCQ member awarding bodies by OCR) is responded to and approves the Head of Centre formal declaration
- Ensures the exams officer (EO) attends appropriate training events offered by awarding bodies, MIS providers and other external providers to enable the exam process to be effectively managed and administered
- Ensures centre staff are supported and appropriately trained to undertake key tasks within the exams process
- Ensures centre staff undertake key tasks within the exams process and meet internal deadlines set by the EO
- Ensures *"that a teacher who teaches the subject being examined, or a senior member of teaching staff who has had overall responsibility for the candidates preparation for the examination, is not an invigilator during the examination or on-screen test;"*
- Ensures security within the examination process is managed according to JCQ and awarding body regulations, guidance and instructions
- Ensures risks to the exam process are assessed and appropriate risk management processes/contingency plans are in place
- Ensures required internal appeals procedures are in place
- Ensures a disability policy for exams showing the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place
- Ensures the centre has documented processes in place relating to access arrangements and reasonable adjustments
- Ensures staff are only entered for qualifications through the centre where entry through another centre is not available

- Ensures the appropriate steps are taken where a candidate being entered for exams is related to a member of centre staff

Exams officer

- Understands the contents of annually updated JCQ publications including:
 - [*General regulations for approved centres*](#)
 - [*Instructions for conducting examinations*](#)
 - [*Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments*](#)
 - [*Post-results services*](#) (PRS)
- Is familiar with the contents of annually updated information from awarding bodies on administrative procedures, key tasks, key dates and deadlines
- Ensures key tasks are undertaken and key dates and deadlines met
- Recruits, trains and deploys a team of internal/external invigilators; appoints lead invigilators, as required

Senior leaders (SLT)

- Are familiar with the contents, refer to and direct relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications including:
 - [*General regulations for approved centres*](#)
 - [*Instructions for conducting examinations*](#)
 - [*Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*](#)
 - [*Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments*](#)
 - [*Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments*](#) (and the instructions for conducting controlled assessment and coursework)

Special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo)

- Is familiar with the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications including:
 - [*Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*](#)
- Leads on the access arrangements and reasonable adjustments process (referred to in this policy as 'access arrangements')
- If not the qualified access arrangements assessor, works with the person appointed, on all matters relating to assessing candidates and the administration of the assessment process
- Presents when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor's qualification

Curriculum Area Leader (CAL)

- Ensures teaching staff undertake key tasks, as detailed in this policy, within the exams process (exam cycle) and meet internal deadlines set by the EO and SENCo
- Ensures teaching staff keep themselves updated with awarding body teacher-specific information to confirm effective delivery of qualifications
- Ensures teaching staff attend relevant awarding body training and update events

Teaching staff

- Undertake key tasks, as detailed in this policy, within the exams process and meet internal deadlines set by the EO and SENCo
- Keep updated with awarding body teacher-specific information to confirm effective delivery of qualifications
- Attend relevant awarding body training and update events

Invigilators

- Attend training, update, briefing and review sessions as required
- Provide information as requested on their availability to invigilate

- Sign a confidentiality and security agreement and confirm whether they have any current maladministration/malpractice sanctions applied to them

Reception staff

- Support the EO in dealing with exam-related deliveries and dispatches with due regard to the security of confidential materials

Site staff

- Support the EO in relevant matters relating to exam rooms and resources

Candidates

Where applicable in this policy, the term 'candidates' refers to candidates and/or their parents/carers.

The exam cycle

The exams management and administration process that needs to be undertaken for each **exam series** is often referred to as the **exam cycle** and relevant tasks required within this grouped into the following stages:

- planning
- entries
- pre-exams
- exam time
- results and post-results

This policy identifies roles and responsibilities of centre staff within this cycle.

Planning: roles and responsibilities

Information sharing

Head of centre

- Directs relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications including [GR](#), [ICE](#), [AA](#), [SMEA](#) and [NEA](#) (and the instructions for conducting controlled assessment and coursework)

Exams officer

- Signposts relevant centre staff to JCQ publications and awarding body documentation relating to the exams process that has been updated
- Signposts relevant centre staff to JCQ information that should be provided to candidates
- As the centre administrator, approves relevant access rights for centre staff to access awarding body secure extranet sites

Information gathering

Exams officer

- Undertakes an annual information gathering exercise in preparation for each new academic year to ensure data about all qualifications being delivered is up to date and correct
- Researches awarding body guidance to identify administrative processes, key tasks, key dates and deadlines for all relevant qualifications
- Produces an annual exams plan of key tasks and key dates to ensure all external deadlines can be effectively met; informs key centre staff of internal deadlines
- Collects information on internal exams to enable preparation for and conduct of PPE's

CAL

- Responds (or ensures teaching staff respond) to requests from the EO on information gathering
- Meets the internal deadline for the return of information
- Informs the EO of any changes to information in a timely manner minimising the risk of late or other penalty fees being incurred by an awarding body
- Notes the internal deadlines in the annual exams plan and directs teaching staff to meet these

Access arrangements

SENCo

- Assesses candidates (or works with the appointed access arrangements assessor) to identify access arrangements requirements thereby ensuring that
- Gathers **evidence** to support the need for access arrangements for a candidate
- Liaises with teaching staff to gather evidence of **normal way of working** of an affected candidate
- Determines candidate eligibility for arrangements or adjustments that are centre-delegated
- Gathers signed **data protection notices** from candidates where required
- Applies for **approval** through *Access arrangements online (AAO)*, where required or through the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO
- Keeps relevant paperwork and evidence on file for JCQ inspection purposes
- Employs good practice in relation to the Equality Act 2010
- Liaises with the EO regarding exam time arrangements for access arrangement candidates
- Ensures staff appointed to facilitate access arrangements for candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular arrangement(s)
- Provides and annually reviews a centre policy on the **use of word processors** in exams and assessments

Senior Leaders, Head of department, Teaching staff

- Support the SENCo in identifying and implementing appropriate access arrangements

Internal assessment

Head of centre

- Ensures an **internal appeals procedure** is in place for a candidate (or parent/carer) to appeal against an internally assessed marks (see Roles and responsibilities overview)
- Ensures a policy for the **management of controlled assessment** is in place for legacy GCSE qualifications, identifying staff responsibilities and examining potential risks
- Ensures a **non-examination assessment policy** is in place for new GCE and GCSE qualifications
- Ensures irregularities are investigated and any cases of suspected malpractice reported to the awarding body, as required

Senior leaders

- Ensure teaching staff have the necessary and appropriate knowledge, understanding, skills, and training to set tasks, conduct task taking, and to assess, mark and authenticate candidates' work
- Ensure appropriate internal moderation, standardisation and verification processes are in place

CAL

- Ensures teaching staff delivering legacy GCSE qualifications follow JCQ [*Instructions for conducting controlled assessments*](#) and the specification provided by the awarding body

- Ensures teaching staff delivering new GCE & GCSE specifications follow JCQ [Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments](#) and the specification provided by the awarding body
- For other qualifications, ensures teaching staff follow appropriate instructions issued by the awarding body

Teaching staff

- Ensure appropriate instructions for conducting internal assessment are followed
- Ensure candidates are aware of JCQ and awarding body information for candidates on producing work that is internally assessed

Exams officer

- Identifies relevant key dates and administrative processes that need to be followed in relation to internal assessment

Invigilation

Head of centre

- Ensures relevant support is provided to the EO in recruiting, training and deploying a team of invigilators
- Determines if additional invigilators will be deployed in practical exams in addition to the subject teacher

Exams officer

- Recruits additional invigilators where required to effectively cover all exam periods/series' throughout the academic year
- Collects information on new recruits to identify if they have invigilated previously and if any current maladministration/malpractice sanctions are applied to them
- Provides an annual training event for new invigilators and an update event for invigilators on the conduct of exams
- Ensures invigilators supervising access arrangement candidates understand their role (and the role of a facilitator who may be supporting a candidate) and the rules and regulations of the access arrangement(s)
- Ensures invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues

Entries: roles and responsibilities

Estimated entries

Exams officer

- Requests estimated or early entry information, where this may be required by awarding bodies, from CAL's in a timely manner to ensure awarding body external deadlines for submission can be met

CAL

- Provides information requested by the EO to the internal deadline
- Informs the EO immediately of any subsequent changes to information

Final entries

Exams officer

- Requests final entry information from CAL's in a timely manner to ensure awarding body external deadlines for submission can be met
- Informs CAL's of subsequent deadlines for making changes to final entry information without charge
- Confirms with CAL's final entry information that has been submitted to awarding bodies

- Ensures as far as possible that entry processes minimise the risk of entries or registrations being missed reducing the potential for late or other penalty fees being charged by awarding bodies

CAL

- Provides information requested by the EO to the internal deadline
- Informs the EO immediately, or at the very least prior to the deadlines, of any subsequent changes to final entry information, which includes
 - changes to candidate personal details
 - amendments to existing entries
 - withdrawals of existing entries
- Checks final entry submission information provided by the EO and confirms information is correct

Entry fees

- The centre will pay all normal exam fees on behalf of candidates. Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the departments.
- Candidates or departments will not be charged for changes of tiers/withdrawals made within proper procedures.

Late entries

Exams officer

- Has clear entry procedures in place to minimise the risk of late entries
- Charges any late or other penalty fees to departmental budgets

CAL

- Minimises the risk of late entries by
 - following procedures identified by the EO in relation to making final entries on time
 - meeting internal deadlines identified by the EO for making final entries

Candidate statements of entry

Exams officer

- In January the EO provides candidates with statements of entry for checking

Teaching staff

- Ensure candidates check statements of entry and return any relevant confirmation required to the EO

Candidates

- Confirm entry information is correct or notify the EO of any discrepancies

Pre-exams: roles and responsibilities

Access arrangements

SENCo

- Ensures appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for candidates where they are disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act (unless a temporary emergency arrangement is required at the time of an exam)
- Ensures a candidate is involved in any decisions about arrangements, adjustments and /or adaptations that may be put in place for him/her
- Ensures exam information (JCQ information for candidates information, individual exam timetable etc.) is adapted where this may be required for a disabled candidate to access it
- Allocates appropriately trained centre staff to facilitate access arrangements for candidates in exams and assessments

Briefing candidates

Exams officer

- Issues individual exam timetable information to candidates
- Issues relevant JCQ information for candidates documents
- Where relevant, issues relevant awarding body information to candidates
- Issues centre exam information to candidates including information on:
 - exam clashes
 - arriving late for an exam
 - absence or illness during exams
 - food and drink in exam rooms
 - when and how results will be issued
 - the post-results services
 - when and how certificates will be issued

Dispatch of exam scripts

Exams officer

- Identifies and confirms arrangements for the dispatch of candidate exam scripts with the DfE 'yellow label service' or the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of the service

Internal assessment

Head of centre

- Ensures procedures are in place for candidates to appeal internally assessed marks or request a review of the centre's marking of an assessment (when a centre is required to make reviews available)

SENCo

- Liaises with teaching staff to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates undertaking internal assessments

Teaching staff

- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates undertaking internal assessments
- Ensure candidates are informed of internal assessment decisions prior to marks being submitted to awarding bodies

CAL

- Ensures teaching staff provide marks for internally assessed components of qualifications to the EO to the internal deadline
- Ensures teaching staff authenticate candidates' work to the awarding body requirements
- Ensures teaching staff provide required samples of work for moderation to the EO to the internal deadline

Exams officer

- Submits marks and samples to awarding bodies/moderators to meet the external deadline
- Keeps a record to track what has been sent
- Logs moderated work returned to the centre
- Ensures teaching staff are aware of the requirements in terms of retention and subsequent disposal of candidates' work

Candidates

- Authenticate their work as required by the awarding body

Invigilation

Exams officer

- Provides an invigilation handbook or briefs invigilators accordingly
- Deploys invigilators effectively to exam rooms throughout an exam series (including the provision of a roving invigilator to check the rooms where a candidate and invigilator are accommodated on a 1:1 basis)
- Allocates invigilators to exam rooms according to the required ratios
- Liaises with the SENCo regarding the facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates

SENCo

- Liaises with the EO regarding facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates

Invigilators

- Provide information as requested on their availability to invigilate throughout an exam series

Seating and identifying candidates in exam rooms

Exams officer

- Ensures a procedure is in place to verify candidate identity including private candidates
- Ensures invigilators are aware of the procedure
- Provides seating plans for exam rooms according to JCQ and awarding body requirements

Invigilators

- Follow the procedure for verifying candidate identity provided by the EO
- Seat candidates in exam rooms as instructed by the EO/on the seating plan

Security of exam materials

Exams officer

- Has a process in place to record confidential materials delivered to the centre and issued to authorised staff
- Has in place a recording system to track confidential materials taken from or returned to secure storage throughout the time the material is confidential
- Receives, checks and securely stores question papers and other exam materials according to JCQ and awarding body requirements

Reception staff

- Follow the process to record confidential materials delivered to the centre and issued to authorised staff

Teaching staff

- Adhere to the recording system to track confidential materials taken from or returned to secure storage throughout the time the material is confidential

Timetabling and rooming

Exams officer

- Produces a master centre exam timetable for each exam series
- Identifies and resolves candidate exam clashes
- Identifies exam rooms and specialist equipment requirements
- Allocates invigilators to exam rooms according to required ratios
- Liaises with site staff to ensure exam rooms are set up according to JCQ and awarding body requirements
- Liaises with the SENCo regarding rooming of access arrangement candidates

SENCo

- Liaises with the EO regarding rooming of access arrangement candidates
- Liaises with other relevant centre staff to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams

Site staff

- Liaise with the EO to ensure exam rooms are set up according to JCQ and awarding body requirements

Transferred candidate arrangements

Exams officer

- Liaises with the host or entering centre, as required
- Processes requests to the awarding body deadline
- Where relevant (for an internal candidate) informs the candidate of the arrangements that have been made for their transferred candidate arrangements

Internal exams

Exams officer

- Prepares for the conduct of internal exams under external conditions
- Provides a centre exam timetable of subjects and rooms
- Provides seating plans for exam rooms
- Requests internal exam papers from teaching staff
- Arranges invigilation

SENCo

- Liaises with teaching staff to make appropriate arrangements for access arrangement candidates

Teaching staff

- Provide exam papers and materials to the EO
- Support the SENCo in making appropriate arrangements for access arrangement candidates

Exam time: roles and responsibilities

Access arrangements

Exams officer

- Provides cover sheets for access arrangement candidates' scripts where required for particular arrangements
- Has a process in place to deal with emergency access arrangements as they arise at the time of exams
 - applies for approval through AAO where required or through the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO

Candidate absence

Invigilators

- Are informed of the policy/process for dealing with absent candidates through training
- Ensure that confirmed absent candidates are clearly marked as such on the attendance register and seating plan

Candidates

- Are re-charged relevant entry fees for unauthorised absence from exams

Candidate late arrival

Exams officer

- Ensures that candidates who arrive very late for an exam are reported to the awarding body as soon as practically possible after the exam has taken place
- Warns candidates that their work may not be accepted by the awarding body

Invigilators

- Are informed of the policy/process for dealing with late/very late arrival candidates through training
- Ensure that relevant information is recorded on the exam room incident log

Conducting exams

Head of centre

- Ensures venues used for conducting exams meet the requirements of JCQ and awarding bodies

Exams officer

- Ensures exams are conducted according to JCQ and awarding body instructions
- Uses an *exam day checklist* to ensure each exam session is fully prepared for, unplanned events can be dealt with and associated follow-up is completed

Dispatch of exam scripts

Exams officer

- Dispatches scripts as instructed by JCQ and awarding bodies
- Keeps appropriate records to track dispatch

Exam papers and materials

Exams officer

- Organises exam question papers and associated confidential resources in date order in secure storage
- Attaches erratum notices received to relevant exam question paper packets
- Collates attendance registers and examiner details in date order
- Regularly checks mail or inbox for updates from awarding bodies
- In order to avoid potential breaches of security, ensures prior to question paper packets being opened that another member of staff or an invigilator checks the time, date and paper details
- Where allowed by the awarding body, only releases exam papers and materials to teaching departments for teaching and learning purposes after the published finishing time of the exam, or until any clash candidates have completed the exam

Exam rooms

Head of centre

- Ensures only approved centre staff are present in exam rooms
- Ensures information relating to food and drink that may be allowed in exam rooms is clearly communicated to candidates

Exams officer

- Ensures exam rooms are set up as required in the regulations
- Provides invigilators with appropriate resources to effectively conduct exams
- Briefs invigilators on exams to be conducted on a session by session basis
- Ensures sole invigilators have an appropriate means of summoning assistance
- Ensures invigilators understand how to deal with candidates who may need to leave the exam room temporarily
- Provides authorised exam materials which candidates are not expected to provide themselves
- Ensures invigilators and candidates are aware of the emergency evacuation procedure
- Ensures invigilators are aware of arrangements in place for a candidate with a disability who may need assistance if an exam room is evacuated

Senior leaders

- Ensure a documented emergency evacuation procedure for exam rooms is in place
- Ensure arrangements are in place for a candidate with a disability who may need assistance if an exam room is evacuated

Site staff

- Ensure exam rooms are available and set up as requested by the EO
- Ensure grounds or centre maintenance work does not disturb exam candidates in exam rooms
- Ensure fire alarm testing does not take place during exam sessions

Invigilators

- Conduct exams in every exam room as instructed in training/update events and briefing sessions

Candidates

- Are required to remain in the exam room for the full duration of the exam

Irregularities

Head of centre

- Ensures any cases of suspected malpractice (by centre staff, candidates, invigilators) are investigated and reported to the awarding body as required

Senior leaders

- Ensure support is provided for the EO and invigilators when dealing with disruptive candidates in exam rooms
- Ensure that internal disciplinary procedures relating to candidate behaviour are instigated, when appropriate

Exams officer

- Provides an exam room incident log in all exam rooms for recording any incidents or irregularities
- Actions any required follow-up and reports to awarding bodies as soon as practically possible after the exam has taken place

Invigilators

- Record any incidents or irregularities on the exam room incident log (for example, late/very late arrival, candidate or centre staff suspected malpractice, candidate illness, disruption or disturbance in the exam room, emergency evacuation)

Special consideration

Exams officer

- Processes appropriate requests for special consideration to awarding bodies
- Gathers evidence which may need to be provided by other staff in centre or candidates
- Submits requests to awarding bodies to the external deadline

Candidates

- Provide appropriate evidence to support special consideration requests, where required

Invigilators

- Are informed of the arrangements through training

Internal exams

Exams officer

- Briefs invigilators on conducting internal exams
- Returns candidate scripts to teaching staff for marking

Invigilators

- Conduct internal exams as briefed by the EO

Results and post-results: roles and responsibilities

Internal assessment

CAL

- Ensures teaching staff keep candidates' work, whether part of the moderation sample or not, secure and for the required period stated by JCQ and awarding bodies
- Ensures work is returned to candidates or disposed of according to the requirements

Managing results day(s)

Senior leaders

- Identify centre staff who will be involved in the main summer results day(s) and their role
- Ensures senior members of staff are accessible to candidates after the publication of results

Exams officer

- Works with senior leaders to ensure procedures for managing the main summer results day(s) (a results day programme) are in place

Site staff

- Ensure the centre is open and accessible to centre staff and candidates, as required

Accessing results

Exams officer

- Informs candidates in advance of when and how results will be released to them
- Accesses results from awarding bodies under restricted release of results, where this is provided by the awarding body
- Resolves any missing or incomplete results with awarding bodies
- Issues statements of results to candidates on issue of results date

Post-results services

Head of centre

- Ensures **internal appeals procedures** are available where candidates disagree with a centre decision
 - not to support an enquiry about results
 - not to appeal against the outcome of an enquiry about results

Exams officer

- Provides information to candidates and staff on the services provided by awarding bodies and the fees charged
- Publishes internal deadlines for requesting the services to ensure the external deadlines can be effectively met
- Provides a process to record requests for services and collect candidate informed consent and fees where relevant
- Submits requests to awarding bodies to meet the external deadline
- Tracks requests to conclusion and informs candidates and relevant centre staff of outcomes

Teaching staff

- Meet internal deadlines to request the services and gain relevant candidate informed consent
- Identify the budget to which fees should be charged

Candidates

- Meet internal deadlines to request the services
- Provide informed consent and fees, where relevant

Certificates

- Certificates are provided to centres by awarding bodies after results have been confirmed. Certificates are presented in person or collected and signed for.

Candidates

- May arrange for certificates to be collected on their behalf by providing the EO with written or email permission/authorisation; authorised persons must provide ID evidence on collection of certificates

Review: roles and responsibilities

Exams officer

- Provides SLT with an overview of the exam year, highlighting what went well and what could be developed/improved in terms of exams management and administrative processes within the stages of the exam cycle
- Collects and evaluates feedback from staff, candidates and invigilators to inform review

Senior leaders

- Work with the EO to produce a plan to action any required improvements identified in the review

Retention of records: roles and responsibilities

Exams officer

- Keeps records as required by JCQ and awarding bodies for the required period
- Keeps records as required by the centre's records management policy

