



Examinations Policy 25/26

Last reviewed: Feb 2026

Next review due: Feb 2027

We do things differently.....

H.E.R.E

High Standards
Empathy
Resilience
Emotional Response

Contents

Scope.....	2
Purpose of the policy	2
Roles and responsibilities overview (JCQ)	3
Head of Centre.....	3
Exams contingency plan and resilience arrangements.....	4
Linked statutory and centre policies.....	4
Exams Officer (EO)	4
Senior Leaders (SLT).....	5
Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCo)	5
Deputy/Assistant Head i/c Exams.....	5
Teaching Staff	5
Invigilators / Teaching Assistants.....	5
Reception and Site Staff.....	6
Candidates	6
The Exam Cycle	6
Planning stage (summary)	6
Entries stage (summary)	6
Pre-exams stage (summary)	6
Exam time	6
Security of exam materials	7
Irregularities and malpractice.....	7
Results and post-results.....	7
Certificates.....	7
Records retention	7
Policy review	7

Scope

This policy applies to all examinations and assessments delivered by the centre across all exam series, all awarding bodies and all qualifications, including GCSEs, AS and A levels, Project Qualifications, Advanced Extension Awards and relevant vocational and technical qualifications.

Purpose of the policy

The centre is committed to ensuring that examinations management and administration are conducted effectively, efficiently and in full compliance with regulatory requirements. This policy ensures that:

- all aspects of the centre's exams process are documented and support the exams

contingency plan, with other relevant exams-related policies, procedures and plans clearly signposted;

- staff involved in the exams process are well informed, supported and appropriately trained;
- all centre staff clearly understand their roles and responsibilities within the exams process;
- examinations and assessments are conducted according to JCQ and awarding body regulations, guidance and instructions, maintaining the integrity and security of the examination system at all times;
- candidates (and where relevant, their parents/carers) understand the examinations process and what is expected of them.

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure it reflects current practice and remains compliant with current JCQ and awarding body regulations, instructions and guidance. The policy is communicated to all relevant staff.

Roles and responsibilities overview (JCQ)

“The head of centre is the individual who is accountable to the awarding bodies for ensuring that the centre is compliant with the published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements in order to ensure the security and integrity of the examinations/assessments at all times.

The examinations officer is the person appointed by the head of centre to act on behalf of, and be the main point of contact for, the centre in matters relating to the general administration of awarding body examinations and assessments.

The head of centre may not appoint themselves as the examinations officer. A head of centre and an examinations officer are two distinct and separate roles.”

Head of Centre

The Head of Centre:

- understands the contents of, refers to and directs relevant 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 coursework instructions where applicable);
- ensures the centre has appropriate accommodation for the size of cohorts taught, including suitable accommodation for candidates requiring access arrangements;
- completes the National Centre Number (NCN) annual update and signs and returns the Head of Centre declaration by the required deadline, retaining evidence for inspection purposes;
- ensures the Exams Officer (EO) receives appropriate support, training and professional development opportunities;
- ensures a named member of staff acts as the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCo);
- ensures staff are appropriately trained to undertake exams-related duties and meet internal deadlines set by the EO;

- ensures that teachers who teach the subject being examined, or who have had overall responsibility for candidates' preparation, do not act as invigilators during timetabled written examinations or on-screen tests (ICE);
- ensures the confidentiality and security of examinations are managed in accordance with JCQ and awarding body requirements, including:
 - maintaining a secure room and secure storage facility that meet JCQ requirements;
 - restricting access to secure storage to 2–4 authorised key holders, including the EO;
 - ensuring confidential materials are delivered only to authorised staff;
 - immediately informing awarding bodies if the security of question papers or confidential instructions is compromised;
 - ensuring correct question paper packets are opened by authorised staff following verification checks;
- takes all reasonable steps to prevent malpractice (including maladministration);
- ensures suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration is investigated and reported immediately to awarding bodies in line with SMEA;
- ensures risk assessments and contingency arrangements are in place to respond to emergencies or staff absence;
- ensures internal appeals procedures are in place and communicated to candidates and parents/carers where relevant.

Exams contingency plan and resilience arrangements

The government does not expect a situation where examinations do not take place; however, appropriate contingency arrangements are maintained.

The centre follows Ofqual guidance on gathering evidence of student performance to support resilience in the qualifications system. Evidence will be gathered in line with existing assessment arrangements, avoiding over-assessment (for example, one set of mock examinations is likely to be sufficient).

For vocational and technical qualifications, where evidence may not already exist, the centre will follow awarding organisation guidance.

This section is reviewed annually to ensure alignment with current Ofqual guidance.

Linked statutory and centre policies

- The Head of Centre ensures the following policies are in place, current and compliant:
 - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments policy (Equality Act 2010)
 - Complaints and Appeals procedure
 - Safeguarding and Child Protection policy (including DBS compliance)
 - Data Protection policy (UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018)
 - Emergency evacuation procedure for exam rooms
 - Word Processor policy (exams)
 - Separate Invigilation policy
 - Exams archiving and retention policy

Exams Officer (EO)

The Exams Officer:

- understands and applies annually updated JCQ publications (GR, ICE, AA, SMEA, NEA);
- is familiar with awarding body administrative procedures, key dates and deadlines;
- ensures all key tasks are completed accurately and on time;
- recruits, trains and deploys invigilators and retains training records for the required period;
- supports the Head of Centre in declaring conflicts of interest;
- briefs staff involved in handling confidential exam materials;
- manages access to awarding body secure systems where appropriate.

Senior Leaders (SLT)

Senior leaders:

- are familiar with relevant JCQ publications;
- ensure teaching and support staff are appropriately trained and supported;
- support compliance with awarding body and JCQ requirements.

Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCo)

The SENDCo:

- leads the access arrangements process in line with JCQ AA;
- gathers evidence of need and normal way of working;
- works with the appointed assessor where applicable;
- applies for approvals via AAO/CAP or awarding bodies as required;
- ensures facilitators are appropriately trained and records retained;
- annually reviews the Word Processor and Separate Invigilation policies.

Deputy/Assistant Head i/c Exams

The Deputy/Assistant Head:

- supports compliance with JCQ regulations;
- ensures teaching staff meet exams-related deadlines;
- deputises for the Exams Officer when required.

Teaching Staff

Teaching staff:

- comply with internal deadlines set by the EO and SENDCo;
- follow awarding body specifications and JCQ instructions;
- attend relevant training;
- assess, authenticate and submit internal assessment marks as required;
- inform candidates of centre-assessed marks prior to submission.

Invigilators / Teaching Assistants

Invigilators:

- attend training and briefings;
- sign confidentiality and security declarations;

- declare any malpractice sanctions;
- conduct exams in accordance with ICE and centre instructions.

Reception and Site Staff

Reception staff support the secure receipt and logging of confidential materials.

Site staff ensure exam rooms are appropriately prepared and that maintenance or fire testing does not disrupt exams.

Candidates

“Candidates” refers to candidates and/or their parents/carers where appropriate.

Candidates must comply with JCQ Information for Candidates and centre exam rules.

The Exam Cycle

The exam cycle consists of:

- Planning
- Entries
- Pre-exams
- Exam time
- Results and post-results

Roles and responsibilities are defined at each stage.

Planning stage (summary)

The EO gathers qualification and exam information, produces an annual exams plan, and communicates deadlines.

Teaching staff respond accurately and promptly.

Entries stage (summary)

The EO manages estimated, final and late entries in line with awarding body deadlines.

Teaching staff verify entry information.

Candidates check statements of entry and report discrepancies.

Pre-exams stage (summary)

- Individual timetables issued
- JCQ Information for Candidates issued
- Access arrangements implemented
- Exam rooming and invigilation planned
- Secure storage checks completed

Exam time

Exams are conducted in accordance with ICE.

Candidate late arrival, absence, illness, malpractice and emergency evacuation procedures are followed and documented.

Very late arrivals are reported to awarding bodies, and candidates are informed that acceptance of work is at the awarding body's discretion.

Security of exam materials

- Secure storage restricted to 2–4 authorised key holders
- Receipt, movement and dispatch logs maintained
- Question paper packets verified before opening
- Confidential materials handled only by authorised staff

Irregularities and malpractice

All suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration is:

- recorded,
- investigated,
- reported immediately to awarding bodies in line with SMEA.

Results and post-results

Results are released securely and confidentially.

- Candidates are informed of:
- results release arrangements,
- post-results services,
- appeals procedures and deadlines.

The EO manages post-results services and communicates outcomes.

Certificates

Certificates are issued to candidates in line with awarding body guidance.

Candidates may authorise third-party collection in writing; ID is required.

Records retention

The EO retains records in line with:

- JCQ retention requirements,
- awarding body guidance,
- the centre's records management policy.

Secure disposal is used at the end of retention periods.

Policy review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Head of Centre and Senior Leadership Team to ensure continued compliance with JCQ regulations, awarding body requirements and UK legislation.