



# Examination & Certification Policy

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## **1. Purpose**

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy is to outline the principles and processes that must be adhered to during the examinations cycle. As a result of this policy our learners will be registered onto the correct qualification, receive any support they require and be certificated in a timely manner.

## **2. Scope**

- 2.1. This policy applies to all teachers, trainers, assessors, verifiers, learning support staff, examination staff and learners and apprentices within the organisation.

## **3. Overarching Principle(s)**

- 3.1. The College ensures that it adheres to the guidelines set out by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and the awarding organisations learners are registered with. This allows for the correct registration, examination and certification of learners. In addition to the JCQ and awarding body guidelines followed, the College sets out the processes and procedures it follows within this policy to ensure compliance.

## **4. Registrations**

### **4.1. College Registrations**

- 4.1.1. All learners undertaking qualifications must be registered prior to the awarding body deadline. All learners will be automatically registered on the qualification that they are enrolled on by the exams team in the last week of October or first week of November (dependant on Awarding Body deadlines) of the first year of the qualification.
- 4.1.2. The Exams team will register all learners on the appropriate qualification based upon information provided by the Head of Curriculum. Heads of Curriculum confirm all learnings are correct via the College's Business Planning process. When entering the registrations, the exam team will work in pairs to ensure correct details are entered.
- 4.1.3. Heads & Deputy Heads of Curriculum are to submit all withdrawal and transfer change requests before the 42 days. The Data and Funding team will action all change requests during October half term ready for registration.
- 4.1.4. If an awarding body deadline is before the last week of October, registrations will be made by the Exams Officers by the appropriate deadline.
- 4.1.5. If unit information is required for registration this will be communicated to Heads & Deputy Heads of Curriculum by the Exams Manager ensuring all actions are completed by the appropriate deadline.
- 4.1.6. A fortnightly missing registration report is to be ran by the Exams Manager and distributed to Exams Officers to action to ensure any withdrawals, transfers and cancellations are picked up and updated with the awarding body.
- 4.1.7. A deadlines and key dates calendar will be compiled by the Examinations Manager for each academic year. This calendar will detail internal college deadlines and be shared with all relevant staff.

4.1.8. Registrations that fall outside the annual registration cycle will be registered according to awarding body expectations i.e. within four weeks of the course start date

#### 4.2. **Business Development Unit registrations**

4.2.1. All learners undertaking qualifications must be registered prior to the awarding body deadline where possible. Apprenticeships, Distance Learning and Adult Education courses do not necessarily follow the academic year therefore it is not always possible to register them within deadlines that follow the academic year. Internal registration deadlines are listed below:

- Apprenticeships - within 42 days of starting the course
- Adult Education - after 1 week of attendance
- Distance Learning short courses - within 14 days of starting the course

#### 4.3. **Distance Learning and Adult Education**

4.3.1. When a learner is ready to be registered the 'Register for exam' box on ProSolution should be ticked. The exams department have a view set up to identify those that need registering and it is monitored regularly. Exams will complete the registrations within 3-5 working days of the 'Register for exam' box being ticked. The batch number (where applicable) will be added in the 'Batch Number' field.

#### 4.4. **Apprenticeships**

4.4.1. When an apprentice is enrolled on the apprenticeship in ProSolution their offering site, data number, learner surname and forename and any qualifications that they need to be registered on should be added on the Apprenticeship registration tracker. The learners and qualifications will then need to be checked and confirmed by the Director of Apprenticeships and Special Projects before they are added to the tracking document. Exams will complete the registrations within 3 working days of them being added to the tracker and confirm the registrations have been completed by filling in the relevant columns on the tracker.

#### 4.4.2. **Withdrawal of Awarding Body approval - Apprenticeships**

In the unlikely event of an Awarding Organisation removing approval for a qualification, the following options would be considered and the most appropriate option implemented:

*either*

- transfer of learners to an alternative College or Private Training Provider who offers the same qualification and retains approval by the Awarding Organisation;

*or*

- subcontracting of the provision to a recognised College or Private Training Provider who is approved by the Awarding Organisation and is also on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP).

The decision on the above would largely rest with the employer. If the option of subcontracting were chosen, then the College would follow rigorously their own sub-contracting policy and ensure that all due diligence measures had been undertaken with satisfactory results before proceeding. In addition, consultation would take place with the Awarding Organisation to ensure that the new arrangements met with their approval before proceeding.

#### 4.5. **Withdrawals**

- 4.5.1. Withdrawals should be sent to the Exams team from curriculum staff via the change request system. When a withdrawal change request is submitted, the exams team must action the withdrawal with the relevant awarding body within 30 days.

## **5. External examinations**

### **5.1. Entries**

- 5.1.1. All learners enrolled on a qualification are automatically entered for compulsory fixed date external assessments. Once entered the entry lists are sent to Heads & Deputy Heads of Curriculum for checking.
- 5.1.2. A candidate cannot request any changes to their exam e.g. entry, withdrawal, change of level. All changes must be submitted via change request by the Heads & Deputy Heads of Curriculum before they can be actioned by the Exams Officer.
- 5.1.3. Learners will be informed of their fixed date exam arrangements by email at least 3 weeks before the date of the assessment. Rooms will be invigilated in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

### **5.2. Late entries**

- 5.2.1. Deadlines for late entries will be circulated via email by the Exams Manager. Late entries will need to be authorised by the appropriate Assistant Principal. Costs for late entries will be recharged to departments where appropriate.

### **5.3. Re-takes**

- 5.3.1. All learners will be expected to pay to resit an examination, or unit of an examination where the awarding body charges for resits and also any additional costs that may be incurred such as scribe, reader, invigilation, etc. This must be paid before the College re-enters the learner for the examination. Resit fees can be waived at the discretion of Assistant Principal depending on learner circumstances such as good attendance and progress.

## **6. Invigilation and Exam day responsibilities**

- 6.1.1. The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams Manager. Training for invigilators is provided by the Exams Manager annually and as required to advise on JCQ guidelines. A record of all that attended invigilator training sessions will be held on file for inspection.
- 6.1.2. The Exams Manager will ensure all awarding organisation guidelines are followed for examinations
- 6.1.3. Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Exams Officer or Exams Manager. It is also the responsibility of the Exams Manager or Exams Officer to book all examination rooms.
- 6.1.4. The Estates and IT Teams are responsible for ensuring the set-up of the allocated rooms. The Exams Team will give sufficient notice of any special requirements for rooms.
- 6.1.5. Invigilators will run all examinations in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- 6.1.6. Subject staff may be present prior to the start of the examination to assist with identification of candidates but must not advise on which questions are to be attempted. They must leave when instructed to by the invigilator.

- 6.1.7. Examination papers must not be read by subject staff or removed from the examination room before the end of a session. Papers will be distributed to Heads & Deputy Heads of Curriculum 24 hours after the exam finish time.
- 6.1.8. For summer GCSE examinations appropriate support and teaching staff will be assigned as invigilators. Training will be provided to all assigned staff prior to the GCSE days. Leadership should identify staff invigilators by Easter.

## **7. Identification of Examination Candidates**

### **7.1 Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish a robust College procedure for checking learner identification for examination purposes and to ensure the College is compliant and has a consistent approach to identifying candidates.

### **7.2. Scope**

- The Head of Centre is responsible for ensuring the candidate identification procedure is established, applied and updated appropriately.
- The Examinations Manager is responsible for ensuring this policy is understood and applied by Examinations Officers and Invigilators.
- The Examinations Officer is responsible for ensuring staff in examination rooms are briefed on the correct procedures for identifying candidates.
- Invigilators are responsible for ensuring they have read, understood and apply this policy consistently in the examination rooms.
- Learners are responsible for ensuring they adhere to the College policies on displaying College Identity cards when in College buildings

### **7.3. College process for identifying candidates in the examination room**

- All College learners must carry their College identity card at all times. In examination rooms their ID card must be placed, face up on their desk so that the invigilator can easily check the card against the learner's face.
- Where a learner fails to display their ID card on their exam desk the invigilator must ensure they do so
- Where a learner does not have their ID card they must have a new card printed by the Student Services Team before being allowed to sit their examination.
- The Examinations Team have the capability to print seating plans and registers that include learner photographs. In the absence of the learner identity card the seating plan photograph can be used to identify the candidate.
- The teacher for the candidate can be asked to identify a candidate where this no College or official ID card available.
- Other forms of official identification are acceptable if they bear the full name and a photograph of the candidate. This official ID must be currently valid and issued by a UK authority, such as:
  - UK / EU passport
  - UK / EU full driving licence
  - UK provisional driving licence
  - Unacceptable forms of ID include Oystercards, letters, bills, library cards
  - When in doubt the invigilator must refer to the Examinations Officer or Examinations Manager for advice

- Where alternative official identification is being used this must be displayed on the candidate's desk throughout their examination.
- All instances where identification other than the College ID card is used should be recorded on the examination incident log.

#### 7.4. **Religious Head Coverings**

In this circumstance, where a learner's identity cannot be confirmed in the examination room an appropriate invigilator can check the candidate's identity in a more private location such as a nearby room or behind a screen in the examination room. Candidate's who refuse to allow themselves to be identified should be reported to the awarding body for potential malpractice.

#### 7.5. **Malpractice**

Where the following suspected malpractices occur:

- Refusal to be identified
- Refusal to produce valid ID
- Impersonation

The College will report it to the appropriate awarding body according to awarding body or JCQ procedures.

#### 7.6. **Communicating expectations to learners**

The requirement to display the College ID at all times is communicated to learners:

- Through the learner portal
- Through the Warning to Candidates notices
- Through exam briefings provided by teaching staff
- Verbally outside the examination rooms before candidates enter the room
- Verbally inside the examination room before candidates start their exam

### **8. Exams Access Arrangements and Special Considerations**

#### **8.1. Exams Access Arrangements (EAA)**

8.1.1. Access Arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for candidates based on evidence of need and normal way of working. These must be requested prior to assessment taking place. Access Arrangements fall into two distinct categories: some arrangements are delegated to centres; others require prior JCQ awarding body approval.

8.1.2. Access Arrangements allow candidates/learners with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment without changing the demands of the assessment. For example, readers, scribes and Braille question papers. In this way Awarding Bodies will comply with the duty of the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'. This policy references the relevant JCQ and awarding body regulations and is reviewed annually and adjusted according to any changes.

8.1.3. The Equality Act 2010 requires an Awarding Body to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment.

- 8.1.4. A reasonable adjustment for a particular person may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available Access Arrangements.
- 8.1.5. How reasonable the adjustment is will depend on a number of factors including the needs of the disabled candidate/learner. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.
- 8.1.6. There is no duty on the Awarding Bodies to make any adjustment to the assessment objectives being tested in an assessment. (JCQ, 2018)
- 8.1.7. Exams Access Arrangements are applied for through the Additional Learning Support (ALS) department; this allows for a process of checking the validity of any application or applying an assessment process where necessary before permission is sought from the Joint Council of Qualifications (JCQ) to allow the learner to have appropriate arrangements in their exam(s). The Head of ALS will make the final decision.
- 8.1.8. Records of decisions relating to exams access arrangements and special considerations must be kept for 3 academic years.
- 8.1.9. Any specific requirements of awarding organisations regarding requesting reasonable adjustments not covered by this policy must be adhered to at all times.

## 8.2. **Referral and "Normal Way of Working"**

- 8.2.1. A referral should be made for any learner for whom there is evidence of a need for an EAA. It is the teachers' responsibility to complete a 'Normal Way of Working' (NWW) form and this should be sent to the ALS department who will assess the learners needs.
- 8.2.2. The Normal Way of Working statement will outline how the learner normally works in class demonstrating a difference to other learners. This may be, for example but not exclusively, taking additional time, using a scribe or reader, needing rest breaks. The Normal way of Working will also outline how that affects the work of the learner and what strategies the teacher has put in place to enable the learner. This Normal Way of Working statement forms the basis of the process to assess for EAA. Without the NWW, no assessment can be undertaken.
- 8.2.3. Please contact the ALS department to discuss further or use the Referral form to refer a learner.

## 8.3. **Special Considerations**

- 8.3.1. If a candidate is unable to sit an exam due to exceptional circumstances it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre.
- 8.3.2. If a candidate is disadvantaged on the day of their examination, i.e. external disturbance, emergencies, illness that affects their performance the College will support an application for special consideration.
- 8.3.3. Appropriate evidence must be produced within 7 working days of the last exam in that series. The Exams Officer will complete the special consideration form and forward it to the relevant awarding body alongside supporting evidence within 7 working days. Once a decision has been made by the awarding body on whether to accept the special consideration the candidate will be informed within 3 working days of their decision.

#### 8.4. **Appeals**

- 8.4.1. Where the candidate remains unhappy with the decision, an appeal may be made to the Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality who will review the evidence. Their decision is final.

### 9. **Use of Word Processors in Examination Policy**

#### 9.1. **Introduction**

This policy references the relevant JCQ regulations and awarding body regulations and is reviewed annually and adjusted according to any on the publication of updated JCQ regulations and guidance on access arrangements and instructions for conducting exams.

References in this policy to AA and ICE relate to/are directly taken from the current JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments and Instructions for Conducting Examinations publications.

- The use of a word processor in exams and assessments is an available access arrangement/reasonable adjustment.
- The purpose of an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing him/her from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties. The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate.
- Although access arrangements/adjustments are intended to allow access to assessments, they cannot be granted where they will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question.
- Candidates may not require the same access arrangements/reasonable adjustments in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate. ALS leads/SENCoS must consider the need for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments on a subject-by-subject basis.
- The Additional Learning Support lead/SENCo must ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment does not unfairly disadvantage or advantage a candidate.
- The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practice using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustment(s) before his/her first examination.

#### 9.2. **Purpose**

This policy details how the College complies with AA chapter 4 (Managing the needs of candidates and principles for centres), section 5.8 (Word processor) and ICE (sections 14.20-27) when awarding and allocating a candidate the use of word processor in examinations.

The term 'word processor' is used to describe for example, the use of a computer, laptop or tablet. The criteria West London College uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations and assessments

#### 9.3. **Overarching Principle(s)**

The 'normal way of working' for exam candidates, as directed by the head of centre, is that candidates handwrite their exams unless there are exceptions.

The centre will

- Allocate the use of a word processor to a candidate with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) where it is their normal way of working within the centre.
- Award the use of a word processor to a candidate where appropriate to their needs. For example, a candidate with:
  - A learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly.
  - A medical condition.
  - A physical disability.
  - A sensory impairment.
  - Planning and organisational problems when writing by hand.
  - Poor handwriting.
- Only permit the use of a word processor where the integrity of the assessment can be maintained.
- Not grant the use of a word processor where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question.
- Consider on a subject-by-subject basis if the candidate will need to use a word processor in each specification.
- Process access arrangements/reasonable adjustments at the start of the course, or as soon as practicable having firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working, ensuring arrangements are always approved before an examination or assessment.
- Provide the use of word processors to candidates in non-examination assessment components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification.
- The centre will not:
  - Simply grant the use of a word processor to a candidate because he/she now wants to type rather than write in exams or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home.
- The use of a word processor would be considered for a candidate:
  - in the event of a temporary injury or impairment, or a diagnosis of a disability or manifestation of an impairment relating to an existing disability arising after the start of the course (AA 4.2.4)
  - where the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates.

### **Centre specific processes**

The 'normal way of working' for exam candidates, as directed by the head of centre, is that candidates handwrite their exams. An exception to this is where a candidate may have an approved access arrangement in place, for example the use of a scribe/speech recognition technology.

### **The use of word processors**

There are also exceptions where a candidate may be awarded/allocated the use of a word processor in exams where the candidate has a firmly established need, it reflects the candidate's normal way of working and by not being awarded a word processor would be at a substantial disadvantage to other candidates. Needs might include where a candidate has, for example:

- A learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly.

- A medical condition.
- A physical disability.
- A sensory impairment.
- Planning and organisational problems when writing by hand.
- Poor handwriting.

The only exception to the above where the use of a word processor may be considered for a candidate would be

- On a temporary basis as a consequence of a temporary injury at the time of the assessment.
- Where a subject within the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates.

### **Arrangements for the use of word processors at the time of the assessment**

Appropriate exam-compliant word processors will be provided by the IT department in liaison with the ALS lead/SENCo and the exams officer. In exceptional circumstances where the number of appropriate word processors may be insufficient for the cohort of candidates approved to use them in an exam session, the cohort will be split into two groups. One group will sit the exam earlier than or later than the awarding body's published start time. The security of the exam will be maintained at all times and candidates will be supervised in line with section 7 of ICE.

## **10 SENCO / Centre Assessor Qualification Check Policy and Process**

### **10.1. Purpose**

JCQ regulations require that the centre must hold on file for inspection purposes evidence that the assessor(s) are suitably qualified.

The Head of Centre and/or SENCO should hold file copies of relevant qualifications and ensure that these qualifications are checked and confirmed each year or if a new assessor joins the centre.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the process for ensuring that the centre is compliant with these JCQ requirements.

### **10.2. Process**

The SENCO / Head of Centre will check that assessor qualifications meet the JCQ required levels:

- At the beginning of each academic year
- When new assessors are recruited

Copies of the relevant qualifications will be held by the SENCO and a copy distributed to the Examinations Department for inspection purposes.

The College's current specialist assessor is Richard Coates

### **10.3. Relevant Legislation / Regulation**

JCQ General Regulations, JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments, JCQ Instructions Conducting Examinations

e) ensure that where a candidate with a learning difficulty requires an assessment of his/her needs, he/she is assessed by an appropriately qualified assessor as appointed by the head of centre.

Evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) must be obtained before he/she assesses candidates and held on file for inspection;

f) have a written process in place to not only check the qualification(s) of their assessor(s) but that the correct procedures are followed as in Chapter 7 of the JCQ document Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments;

## 11. **Malpractice & Maladministration**

- 11.1. In this instance malpractice is any action which is taken by a member of staff, invigilator or a learner to undermine the validity and integrity of an assessment/examination result. Malpractice which includes maladministration and non-compliance is any activity or practice which deliberately contravenes regulations and compromises the integrity of the internal or external assessment process and/or the validity of results. This covers deliberate actions, neglect or any other practice that either compromises or could compromise results/certification.
- 11.2. Where malpractice is suspected the member of staff or learner should bring it to the attention of the campus Assistant Principal who will instigate investigations.
- 11.3. Where a learner is suspected of cheating in an examination, the Invigilator should observe the candidate's actions during the examination so that they can complete a detailed 'suspected malpractice' form alongside the Exams Manager.
- 11.4. We will ensure that all staff and learners are fully aware of the definitions of malpractice and the implications and sanctions that can be imposed where malpractice is proven to have taken place including the relevant disciplinary procedure.
- 11.5. Instances of malpractice and maladministration will be reported by the College to the appropriate awarding body for investigation. The College will follow all awarding body procedures to support their investigation. Investigation outcomes for malpractice will be communicated to learners by the College. Outcomes and subsequent recommendations from a maladministration investigation will be acted on by the College.
- 11.6. For further details see Assessment and Verification Policy
- 11.7. See section 13 for the Misuse of AI policy.

## 12. **Plagiarism and Collusion**

- 12.1. Plagiarism is the act of presenting the material, ideas, and arguments of another person/persons as one's own. To copy sentences, phrases or even particular striking expressions without acknowledgement, in a manner which may deceive the reader as to the source, is plagiarism.
- 12.2. All staff carrying out internal or external assessed work must make learners aware of the guidelines on plagiarism. This is part of the whole college learner induction and contained in the Learner Handbook and Course Handbook.
- 12.3. All tutors and teachers before the main examination and coursework period must make learners aware of the college plagiarism and assessment malpractice policy.

12.4. Any instance of proven plagiarism is regarded as serious misconduct under the College's Learner Disciplinary Procedure and the matter will be subject to that Procedure and reference will be made to the rules and regulations for coursework and examinations of the Awarding Body or Partner University.

12.5. For further details see Assessment and Verification Policy

### 13. **Misuse of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in External Examinations and Internal Assessments**

#### 13.1. **Purpose**

This policy references current JCQ Guidance:

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/artificial-intelligence/>

The purpose of this policy is to detail the College's processes where a learner has been identified as misusing AI (e.g. ChatGPT and similar) in their internal assessment or external examinations.

#### 13.2. **Internal Assessments**

Misuse of AI within internal assessments is referenced in the College's Assessment and Verification Policy.

Where misuse of AI is identified relating to internal assessments the College's Assessment and Verification Policy should be consulted, specifically Section 6. Academic Misconduct (Learners).

#### 13.3. **External Examinations**

Misuse of AI in externally set examinations should be considered as potential malpractice and be managed as such.

Examples of where a learner is suspected of accessing and using AI during an examination:

- Discovered accessing AI with an unauthorised electronic device during an examination
- Accessing the internet where this is not permitted, for example during a high supervision BTEC controlled assessment
- The awarding body suspects misuse of AI through analysis of the candidate's examination script

Where malpractice is suspected the College should follow the awarding body's procedure for reporting and investigating

### 14. **Claims/Certification**

14.1. Before the College can claim certification for any learner, the following must be completed:

- The learner must have completed all necessary components of the course
- All Internal Verification procedures must have been carried out
- Any amendments/actions identified in the SV/EV reports have been carried out e.g. the report required learners to improve work, centre to check other assessments etc.
- Claims should **not** be submitted to the exams department for learners prior to the above being completed

14.2. The process for claiming learner certification is as follows:

- All grades must be inputted on Markbook, Onefile, Prosolution change requests or an agreed internal tracker
- All grades are to be checked by the Lead IV in consultation with the relevant teachers to ensure accuracy
- Lead IV and a nominated person within each curriculum area is to check and approve the grades
- An internal claim form must be filled out and signed off by the IV and Curriculum Manager/Head of Curriculum and sent to the exams department
- The exams officer is to enter the grades for each candidate and curriculum area on the awarding body website or via a claim form emailed to the Awarding Body or via available EDI facilities
- Whatever means the certificates is claimed it must be checked for accuracy to ensure no admin errors are made
- All certification claims for courses that follow the academic year must be done by the second week of July
- All queries and late claims must be provided to exams no later than 2 weeks before the final funding return (the final return deadline will be communicated by MIS to all College staff)
- There is no guarantee that claims provided to exams less than 2 weeks before the final funding return will be processed
- Certificates will be checked for accuracy by the examinations officer and any inaccuracies will immediately be reported to the awarding body

## 15 **Release of Results and Post Results Services**

### 15.1. **Purpose**

Results and post-results are the final stage of the exam cycle where candidates are issued with their provisional results, where post-results services (PRS) are made available by the awarding bodies and ultimately certificates, to confirm final results, are issued.

This policy outlines the main stages in the process that needs to be managed and highlights the key tasks that may need to be undertaken.

### 15.2. **Scope**

This policy applies to the Examinations Manager, Examinations Officers, MIS staff, MIS Director, Assistant Principals, Deputy Principal – Curriculum and Quality and learners

The policy aims to:

- Provide a process for issuing results to learners
- Provide a process for accessing Post Results Services

### 15.3. **Release of Results & Post Results Services Policy – GCSE & BTEC**

#### 15.3.1 **Pre-Release**

Preparation

- The College will issue GCSE and BTEC results to learners via Prosolution

- The Examinations Manager will ensure final EDI amendment files are submitted prior to importing results to ensure entries and candidate details are up to date
- MIS and Examinations will format a template on Prosolution that will be used to produce standard letters / emails with the overall grade, UMS grade where available, UCI number, ULN, candidate number, centre number, full learner name and date of birth.
- The issuing of results will be tested prior to the results release dates to ensure the template is correctly formatted

Communications with learners – email / website / learner app

- Prior to results days the College will email candidates informing them of the process for receiving and collecting results and the date and times for accessing results. The College will also include information on the PRS available, including relevant charges
- Relevant information regarding results days and the PRS process will be posted on the appropriate page of the College website and through the College's official social media

### 15.3.2. Restricted release

- EDI results files will be imported into Prosolution when made available by the awarding bodies – usually the day before official release
- The Examinations Manager and Examinations Officers will oversee the importing of results to Prosolution. All queries and errors will be resolved prior to release
- MIS will ensure results can only be viewed by examinations staff and nominated members of SLT
- Staff must not communicate results to learners before the official release time. Staff communicating results early will be reported for malpractice
- Results will be prepared for learner collection the day prior to official release
- Electronic viewing and release of results will be embargoed until the official release day and time

### 15.3.3. Results Day

- Results (for BTEC and GCSE qualifications) will not be released until after the awarding body embargo time on the official day of release. Early release is considered a centre malpractice
- Results will be available to collect in person at each of the College centres, available to view on the learner app and sent by email to the learner's College email address and personal email address (where possible)
- Learners collecting results in person must produce either their College ID card or official photographic ID (e.g. passport / driving licence) if collecting results in person
- Third parties can collect results on behalf of learners as long as they meet the following conditions:
  - Have a letter of authorisation signed by the learner
  - The person collecting the results must be named in that letter
  - The person collecting the results must produce official photographic ID (e.g. passport / driving licence) to prove their identity
- Results data will not be shared more widely until after the candidates have received their results.
- All communications such as press releases, statements and performance analysis are embargoed until after 08:30 on official results days. Any breach of these requirements will be considered a centre malpractice

- The Director of MIS will ensure MIS staff are available on the pre-release and official release days to support the importing and distribution of results to candidates
- The Director of MIS will ensure Examinations Officers are available on the pre-release and official release days to support the importing and distribution of results to candidates
- The Director of MIS and the Examinations Manager will ensure the correct level of staff cover is in place for results days. They will also ensure that contingency plans are in place in case of technical issues, staff absence or closure of the centre (see Examinations Contingency Plan)
- Staff access to results will be embargoed until after 08:30 on the official results day. Exceptions to this are Examinations staff, relevant MIS staff and senior managers as nominated by both the Deputy Principal – Curriculum and Quality and the Examinations Manager
- MIS will produce statistical and performance analysis according to the requirements of the Deputy Principal – Curriculum and Quality
- The College will ensure the appropriate support for learners from Faculty and Advice and Guidance is made available to learners on official results days

#### 15.3.4 Post Results Services (PRS)

##### Communications to candidates

- Relevant information on PRSs will be communicated to candidates prior to official results days by the Examinations Department
- This information will include available services, charges, deadlines, processes for candidate consent and availability of advice and guidance

##### Forms and guidance

- The Examinations Manager will ensure an updated PRS form is made available to learners with the current charges and deadlines
- The Examinations Manager will ensure that a candidate consent form is made available
- Candidate consent for all Post results Services (including access to scripts) must be collected for every request
- Emailed candidate consent from the candidate's personal or College email address is acceptable
- Consent for a PRS cannot be given by a third party.
- Candidate consent forms and emails must be kept on file until after certificates are released for the relevant examination series
- Candidates must pay PRS fees in advance. Where a grade changes by a whole grade the College will receive a refund from the awarding body. The College will then refund the PRS fee to the candidate
- With the prior agreement of the Assistant Principal – Curriculum and Quality, the College can waive PRS fees for candidates within an agreed number of marks of achieving the next grade up. Candidate consent must still be obtained.

##### Deadlines and Late Applications

- Deadlines for submitting PRS applications will be communicated clearly to candidates via standard College messages and noticeboards
- The Examinations Manager will set an appropriate internal deadline for PRS applications that will be communicated to candidates
- The College will support late applications for PRSs where it is deemed that the candidate has a viable case

#### 15.3.5. Outcomes and Appeals

- Outcomes of PRS requests will be communicated to the candidate within one day of receiving the outcome
- Any changes to overall grades will be recorded on ProSolution at the time of receipt from the awarding body
- Outcomes will be communicated to the relevant Faculty lead after the candidate has been informed
- Where appropriate (where the grade has changed by one whole grade or more) the College will refund any PRS fees to the candidate
- The College will support candidate appeals regarding PRS where it is deemed the candidate has a genuine case

#### 15.3.6. Resources

- JCQ Notice to Centres - [JCQ Post Results](#)
- AQA - [AQA Post Results Services](#)
- Pearson - [Pearson Post Results Services](#)
- City & Guilds - [City & Guilds Enquiries About Results](#)

#### 15.4. Release of Results & Post Results Services Policy – Vocational / ESOL / Functional Skills Qualifications

Unlike GCSE / A Level and BTEC results, vocational results are generally not issued electronically via the EDI system on a fixed date. Unit results are issued either immediately or within a fixed time period after the online / written / on demand examination is taken. Centre assessed units are claimed and confirmation of completion of the qualification is through the issuing of an overall certificate after all exams are completed and all units claimed.

##### 15.4.1 Communicating Results

- Where Faculty have access to the awarding body online services they can view results directly
- Examinations will communicate results to Faculty directly via the most appropriate method available i.e. download from awarding body portal
- In these circumstances Faculty will communicate results to their learners
- Where examination results are available after an online exam the invigilator can distribute results directly to the candidates after the exam
- Where Faculty have access to the awarding body portal they can also view on demand examination results
- Where Faculty do not have access to the results section of an awarding body portal the Examinations Officer will communicate results to Faculty via the most appropriate method
- In these circumstances Faculty will communicate results to their learners

##### 15.4.2 Post Results Services (PRS) – Vocational Awarding Bodies

- Where Faculty or a candidate require a remark, they should contact the Examinations Officer immediately
- Vocational awarding bodies have different processes and deadlines
- The Examinations Officer should consult with the appropriate awarding body

#### 15.4.3. Certificates

- Confirmation of completion of a vocational qualification is communicated through the issue of the final certificate by the awarding body
- On receipt of final certificates the College will notify learners that they can collect their certificates from the College. When collected this will be recorded at that time on ProSolution
- Certificates should be processed within two weeks of receipt
- During peak load periods i.e. summer examinations, autumn release of certificates the processing of certificates will be completed within 4 weeks of receipt from the awarding body
- Where e-certificates are available the College will forward copies of e-certificates at the request of the learner
- Some vocational awarding bodies issue certificates directly to learners
- In these circumstances it is the learner's responsibility to maintain access to the awarding body's portal and to keep the contact details held by the awarding body up to date

#### 15.4.4. Resources

- [VTCT PRS / Appeals](#)
- City & Guilds PRS Process - [City & Guilds Appeals Processes](#)
- Ascentis Complaints & Appeals Procedure - [Ascentis Complaints Procedure](#)
- NCFE Appeals - [NCFE Enquiries About Results](#)
- Pearson Functional Skills PRS - [Functional Skills Appeals Processes](#)

#### 15.4.5. Relevant Legislation / Regulation

15.5. The following legislation and regulations apply to this policy / procedure:

- <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations/>
- <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/>

## 16. **Certificates**

- 16.1. Certificates are collected by candidates from their centre of study. Once a certificate is processed students will receive a notification email / SMS informing them that their certificate is ready for collection from the relevant centre.
- 16.2. Certificates will be stored securely at the centre receptions and available for collection according to college opening hours.
- 16.3. Certificates for BDU students will be despatched to the student's home address.
- 16.4. Where a certificate is to be posted to a student's home address, they will be despatched by second class post.
- 16.5. The date of certificate processing will be recorded on Prosolution.

### 16.6. **Lost and Replacement Certificates**

- 16.6.1. Certificates lost during despatch will be queried through the Royal Mail.
- 16.6.2. If a certificate cannot be recovered the College will order a replacement on behalf of the learner.
- 16.6.3. If a learner has lost their certificate, they should request a replacement directly from the awarding body.
- 16.6.4. Where the awarding body does not provide a replacement certificate service to learners the college will order a replacement on their behalf. The learner will be liable for relevant costs.
- 16.6.5. Candidates who query certificates not received more than 6 months after the despatch date will be required to request a replacement certificate directly from the awarding body.

### 16.7. **Incorrect personal details**

- 16.5.1. The College will not be liable to pay for any fees incurred as a result of the wrong name or any other details appearing on a learner's certificate. It is the learner's responsibility to inform the College of any changes or errors with their name or any other personal details. This will be assessed on a case by case basis and only in exceptional cases where the College is proven to be at fault will the College pay for a replacement.

## 17. **Examinations Contingency Planning**

### 17.1 **Purpose**

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exams process at West London College. By outlining actions/procedures to be invoked in case of disruption it is intended to mitigate the impact these disruptions have on our exam process.

Alongside internal processes, this plan is informed by the Ofqual (and Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment) Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland which provides guidance in the publication What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted and the JCQ Joint Contingency Plan for the Examination System in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland This plan also confirms West London College's compliance with JCQ's General Regulations for Approved Centres that the centre has in place:

- a written examination contingency plan which covers all aspects of examination administration. This will allow members of the senior leadership team to act immediately in the event of an

emergency or where the head of centre, examinations officer or SENCo is absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle. The examination contingency plan should reinforce procedures in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations, or on results day, owing to an unforeseen emergency. The potential impact of a cyber-attack should also be considered;

## 17.2. **Scope**

Head of Centre, Examinations Manager, SENCO, Senior Examinations Officer, Examinations Officers, Invigilators, Senior Leadership Team, Centre Managers.

## 17.3. **Possible causes of disruption to the exam process**

### 17.3.1 Exams manager extended absence at key points in the exam process (cycle)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Key tasks required in the management and administration of the exam cycle not undertaken including:

#### **Planning**

- annual data collection exercise not undertaken to collate information on qualifications and awarding body specifications being delivered
- annual exams plan not produced identifying essential key tasks, key dates and deadlines
- sufficient invigilators not recruited

#### **Entries**

- awarding bodies not being informed of early/estimated entries which prompts release of early information required by teaching staff
- candidates not being entered with awarding bodies for external exams/assessment
- awarding body entry deadlines missed or late or other penalty fees being incurred

#### **Pre-exams**

- invigilators not trained or updated on changes to instructions for conducting exams
- exam timetabling, rooming allocation; and invigilation schedules not prepared
- candidates not briefed on exam timetables and awarding body information for candidates
- confidential exam/assessment materials and candidates' work not stored under required secure conditions
- internal assessment marks and samples of candidates' work not submitted to awarding bodies/external moderators

#### **Exam time**

- exams/assessments not taken under the conditions prescribed by awarding bodies
- required reports/requests not submitted to awarding bodies during exam/assessment periods, for example very late arrival, suspected malpractice, special consideration
- candidates' scripts not dispatched as required for marking to awarding bodies

#### **Results and post-results**

- access to examination results affecting the distribution of results to candidates
- the facilitation of the post-results services

#### **Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption**

- Senior Exams Officer / Exams Officer to undertake any tasks required using the Exams Manual under direction of MIS Director. SLT to assist where required and awarding bodies to be contacted for advice if necessary. SLT to investigate interim cover for Exams Manager role.

### 17.3.2 SENDCo extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Key tasks required in the management and administration of the access arrangements process within the exam cycle not undertaken including:

**Planning**

- candidates not tested/assessed to identify potential access arrangement requirements
- centre fails to recognise its duties towards disabled candidates as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010
- evidence of need and evidence to support normal way of working not collated

**Pre-exams**

- approval for access arrangements not applied for to the awarding body
- centre-delegated arrangements not put in place
- modified paper requirements not identified in a timely manner to enable ordering to meet external deadlines

**Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption**

- Exam staff to work with Additional Learning Support Team (ALS) and SLT to identify learners where applications for access arrangements may be required. The employment of outside professionals may be required. Training provided to ALS Team on CAP and other awarding body processes.

17.3.3. Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

Criteria for implementation of the plan

**Key tasks not undertaken including:**

- Early/estimated entry information not provided to the exams officer on time; resulting in pre-release
- information not being received
- Final entry information not provided to the exams officer on time; resulting in candidates not being entered
- for exams/assessments or being entered late/late or other penalty fees being charged by awarding bodies
- Non-examination assessment tasks not set/issued/taken by candidates as scheduled
- Candidates not being informed of centre assessed marks before marks are submitted to the awarding body and therefore not being able to consider appealing internal assessment decisions and requesting a review of the centre's marking
- Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet awarding body submission deadlines

**Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption**

- Exams manager to liaise with Head of department and/or SLT to ensure all necessary deadlines are adhered to. If this is not possible, the Exams Manager will liaise with the awarding bodies and act upon advice received.

17.3.4. Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Failure to recruit and train sufficient invigilators to conduct exams
- Invigilator shortage on peak exam days
- Invigilator absence on the day of an exam

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Exams manager will review invigilation staffing at the start of each academic year to ensure sufficient staff are recruited and trained in a timely fashion.

- Invigilation training delivered to all staff as mandatory training at the beginning of each academic year
- School staff will be trained and ready for invigilation duties at short notice and at peak times if required.

#### 17.3.5. Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Exams officer unable to identify sufficient/appropriate rooms during exams timetable planning

- Insufficient rooms available on peak exam days
- Main exam venues unavailable due to an unexpected incident at exam time

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Exam rooming planning to be completed by end of November and Easter for January and Summer series exams.
- Liaison with MIS timetabling team to identify suitable alternatives
- In the event of a room not being available at very short notice, SLT and EM will work together to ensure that sufficient staff are available to ensure the security of the examination is not compromised, whilst alternative rooming is sourced.
- Liaison with the awarding body to take advice
- Communicate any major room and/or venue changes to students
- Alternative venue details:

Hammersmith – Matthew’s Community Hall W6 8HJ

St. Augustine’s Spiritual Centre W6 8AU

Hammersmith Club Society Ltd W6 9DH

<https://www.lbhf.gov.uk/business/business-connects/looking-space/meeting-venues-hire>

Southall

The Centre, UB2 4AU

Bukhara, UB2 4AU

SSPC Southall UB2 5AQ

[https://www.ealing.gov.uk/info/201128/community\\_venues](https://www.ealing.gov.uk/info/201128/community_venues)

Ealing

University of West London W5 5RF

All Saints Church Hall W5 3JH

Northfields Community Hall W13 9SS

Ealing Council Venue Hire

[https://www.ealing.gov.uk/info/201128/community\\_venues](https://www.ealing.gov.uk/info/201128/community_venues)

#### 17.3.6. Cyber-attack

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Where a cyber-attack may compromise any aspect of delivery

The Exams Manager will work with the SLT and the Network manager, to make immediate contact with the Awarding

Bodies to seek further guidance and support. The SLT will work with the Exams Manager to take as action as determined by the relevant awarding bodies.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Back ups are taken daily of the MIS and the data is stored offline
- The systems for restoring the data are reliable and robust
- The College will make contact with the police and Action Fraud
- The College will make contact with the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC)

- The College will inform the Department for Education

#### 17.3.7. Failure of IT systems

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- The Exams Manager to mitigate the impact of the disruption

The Exams Manager, in consultation with SLT, will make entries from another venue direct to the awarding bodies. Results may also be accessed directly from the awarding body. At all times during the system failure the

Exams Manager will liaise with the awarding body to minimise disruption and costs incurred.

#### 17.3.8. Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lock down)

Criteria for implementation of the plan:

Whole centre evacuation (or lock down) during exam time due to serious incident resulting in exam candidates being unable to start, proceed with or complete their exams

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Exams manager will liaise with Awarding bodies to discuss correct procedures and alternative arrangements and liaise with SLT to take appropriate action.

#### 17.3.9. Disruption of teaching time in the weeks before an exam – centre closed for an extended period

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Centre closed or candidates are unable to attend for an extended period during normal teaching or study supported time, interrupting the provision of normal teaching and learning.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- SLT to manage all such incidents. Candidates will be taught remotely.

#### 17.3.10. Candidates at risk of being unable to take examinations - centre remains open

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Candidates at risk of being unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The Exams Manager will contact the relevant awarding body to discuss alternative arrangements and liaise with SLT to take appropriate action.
- The Exams Manager will communicate alternative arrangements to the affected students

#### 17.3.11. Centre at risk of being unable to open as normal during the examination period (Including in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Centre at risk of being unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The EM will contact the relevant AB to discuss alternative arrangements and liaise with SLT to take appropriate action. Alternative venue details: see 17.3.5. Exam Rooms

#### 17.3.12. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Disruption to the distribution of examination papers to the centre in advance of examinations

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Exams Manager to liaise with awarding organisations to get electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network.
- EM to ensure that copies are received, made and stored under secure conditions.
- Awarding organisations would provide guidance on the conduct of examinations in such circumstances. As a last resort, and in close collaboration with centres and regulators, awarding
- organisations would consider scheduling of the examination on an alternative date.

#### 17.3.13. Disruption to transporting completed examination scripts

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts/assessment evidence

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Where examinations are part of the national 'yellow label' service or where awarding bodies arrange
- collections, the Exams Manager will contact the relevant awarding bodies for advice and instructions
- and will not make their own arrangements for transportation unless told to do so by the awarding body.
- for any examinations where we make our own collection arrangements, Exams Manager will investigate alternative
- options that comply with the requirements detailed in the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations.
- Exams Manager to ensure secure storage of completed examination scripts until collection.

#### 17.3.14. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked.

Completed examination scripts/assessment evidence does not reach awarding organisations.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Exams manager will contact the awarding body to notify them of any such incidents and act upon advice given.

#### 17.3.15. Centre unable to distribute results as normal or facilitate post results services

(Including in the event of the centre being unavailable on results day owing to an unforeseen emergency)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post-results services

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Exams manager will liaise with SLT to make arrangements to access the results/post-results services at an alternative site, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation, or to

send them electronically if appropriate. The Exams Manager will contact the awarding body to notify them where appropriate.

- The Exams Manager will communicate any changes to the issuing of results and managing post results services applications to affected students.

#### 17.4. Related Documents

##### Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning

Ofqual

What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted

General contingency guidance

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/emergency-planning-and-response-for-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care-settings> from the Department for Education in England
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools> from the Department for Education in England
- <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/exceptional-closure-days> from the Department of Education in Northern Ireland
- <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/checklist-exceptional-closure-schools> from the Department of Education in Northern Ireland
- <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/school-terms-and-school-closures> from NI Direct
- <https://www.gov.wales/emergency-planning-and-response-guidance-education-and-childcare-settings> - guidance for schools from the Welsh Government
- <https://www.protectuk.police.uk/> police guidance from National Counter Terrorism Security Office and partners on preparing for threats

Disruption to assessments or exams

- <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/preparing-for-disruption-to-exams/> JCQ's notice on preparing for disruption to examinations in England, Wales and Northern Ireland
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland> - UK government guidance on exam contingency planning
- Promptly notify the relevant regulators about any event which could have an adverse effect on learners, standards or public confidence.
- Coordinate its communications with the relevant regulators where the disruption has an impact on multiple centres or a wide range of learners.

##### Wider communications

The regulators, [Ofqual](#) in England, [Qualifications](#) Wales in Wales and [CCEA Regulation](#) in Northern Ireland, will share timely and accurate information, as required, with awarding organisations, government departments and other stakeholders.

[The Department for Education in England](#), the [Department of Education](#) in Northern Ireland and the [Welsh Government](#) will inform the relevant government ministers as soon as it becomes apparent that there will be significant local or national disruption; and ensure that they are kept updated until the matter is resolved.

Awarding organisations will alert the [Universities and Colleges Admissions Service \(UCAS\)](#) and the [Central Applications Office \(CAO\)](#) about any impact of the disruption on their deadlines and liaise regarding learner progression to further and higher education.

Awarding organisations will alert relevant professional bodies or employer groups if the impact of disruption particularly affects them.

## JCQ

- JCQ Preparing for Disruption to Examinations - <https://www.icq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/notice-to-centres--exam-contingency-plan/>
- General Regulations for Approved Centres <https://www.icq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>
- Guidance notes on alternative site arrangements <https://www.icq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms>
- Guidance notes for transferred candidates <https://www.icq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms>
- Instructions for conducting examinations <https://www.icq.org.uk/exams-office/instructions-for-conducting-examinations-ice/>
- A guide to the special consideration process <https://www.icq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance>

## GOV.UK

Emergency planning and response: Exam and assessment disruption;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/emergency-planning-and-response-for-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care-settings>

Dispatch of exam scripts guide: Ensuring the service runs smoothly; Contingency planning

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-yellow-label-service>

## National Cyber Security Centre

The NCSC's free [Web Check](#) and [Mail Check](#) services can help protect schools from cyber-attacks. Two NCSC cyber security services, which are already helping thousands of organisations to protect their websites and email servers from cyber-attacks, are now available to all UK schools. Both tools are available free of charge, are quick to set up, and thereafter run automatically. More information is available from the [NCSC website](#).

The Department for Education has been asking centres to review National Cyber Security Centre advice following increasing number of cyber-attacks involving ransomware infections. The NCSC information supports centres in cyber security preparedness and mitigation work.

Ransomware attacks continue and the Department is reminding centres to review the NCSC advice and to take precautions. This includes ensuring that you have backups in place for your key services and data.

## 17.5. Accountability

17.5.1. The Examinations Manager is responsible for the drafting and implementation of this policy.

They are also responsible for ensuring that this document is regularly reviewed and updated – and is the first contact point for managers seeking advice and guidance about the Examinations Contingency Plan or making enquiries about its interpretation.

17.5.2. All managers are responsible for ensuring that they and their team members follow the requirements set out in this document.

17.5.3. All employees are responsible for adhering to the requirements set out in this document.

## 18 Conflict of Interest

### 18.1. Purpose

JCQ General Regulations 5.3j requires the College to identify and manage conflicts of interest in the managing of internal and external assessments. This policy covers all centre staff.

## 18.2. **Scope**

This policy applies to staff and other individuals who interact or potentially interact with the internal and external assessment activity of the College. This can include staff involved with setting, marking, administering, invigilating, IVing and any other activity connected with the assessment of candidates

## 18.3. **Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the Head of Centre to ensure that a process is in place to identify and manage conflicts of interest. The Head of Examinations is responsible for ensuring that the conflict of interest process is managed each year and that appropriate conflicts of interest are reported to the relevant awarding bodies. Curriculum and Department Managers are responsible for managing conflicts of interest within their area and for mitigating any risks identified. All Staff are responsible for completing the conflict of interest declaration on an annual basis and responsible for declaring any changes in relevant circumstances in a timely manner.

## 18.3 **Definition of a Conflict of Interest**

A conflict of interest arises where an individual has competing interests or loyalties that could undermine the integrity of the College's assessments and examinations. For the purpose of this policy a conflict of interest occurs when:

- a member of staff is taking a qualification at the centre that includes internally assessed elements
- a candidate is taking a qualification at the centre where elements are assessed by a member of staff with whom they have a personal connection
- a member of the Examinations Department (including invigilators) has a personal connection with a candidate being entered for examinations and assessments at the centre, or at another centre
- a member of staff is taking a qualification at the centre which does not include internally assessed elements (i.e. has external examinations)
- a member of staff is taking a qualification at another centre

(Definition of a close relationship / personal connection – includes people who are immediate family members (e.g. mother, father, daughter, son including step family members, foster family members and similar close relationships or partnerships), close friends or close family (e.g. niece, nephew)

## 18.4 **Conflicts of Interest Policy and Procedures**

### **College process for identifying conflicts of interest**

All staff must complete a mandatory declaration of conflict of interest. The online form will be made available as part of the College's annual mandatory training programme and the responses recorded centrally for review. Staff will also be advised to report to the Head of Centre / their line manager any changes in circumstances that occur after the completion of the mandatory declaration.

Department Heads are responsible for putting in place mitigations and risk managing conflicts of interest identified in their area.

### **College process for declaring conflicts of interest**

Once the responses from the mandatory declaration have been completed the Head of Examinations will report any conflicts of interest to the relevant awarding body as appropriate

### **College process for recording conflicts of interest**

A central log of all identified conflicts of interest will be retained by the College. The Head of Examinations will be responsible for ensuring that all mitigations and risk management put in place by line managers are recorded centrally and the central log is available for JCQ inspection.

### **Mitigation**

Where a conflict of interest has been identified the following are possible mitigations to ensure the risk posed by the conflict of interest is minimised or completely removed:

Examples of mitigations

Conflict of Interest – member of examinations team has a close relative taking GCSE examinations at the College, or at another centre

Mitigation – another member of the team works on the relevant examination materials. The staff member could be assigned to other duties for the duration of the examination series.

Conflict of Interest – a member of the teaching staff has a close relative studying within their subject area

Mitigation – that member of staff does not mark / IV any of their relative's assessments. The Curriculum Management of the area ensures the member of staff does not have access to their relative's assessment work or to the IVing process.

Conflict of Interest – an invigilator has a close relative sitting examinations at the centre

Mitigation – the manager of the area ensures that the invigilator is not assigned to work on the days of the relative's examinations or is assigned to other duties

Conflict of Interest – a member of teaching staff is taking a qualification at the College which involves both internal and external assessments

Mitigation – where possible the member of staff should take the qualifications at a different centre. If this is not possible then the manager should ensure that the member of staff does not have access to assessment and examinations materials. The marking and IVing of assessments should be overseen by the department manager to ensure the process is fair and transparent.

In all the above instances the Head of Examinations must ensure a central record of the risk and mitigations is maintained and, where appropriate, the conflict of interest is reported to the awarding body.

18.5 The following legislation and regulations apply to this policy / procedure:

- <https://support.pearson.com/uk/s/article/Conflict-of-Interest>
- <https://www.aqa.org.uk/exams-administration/exams/conflict-of-interest-declarations>
- <https://www.jcq.org.uk/knowledge-hub/general-regulations-for-approved-centres/>
- <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/>

#### **18.5.1. Related Documents**

##### **DECLARATION OF INTEREST FORM**

To comply with the regulations, the centre is required to manage conflicts of interest and inform the relevant awarding body/bodies (before the published deadline for entries for each examination series) of:

- any members of centre staff who are taking qualifications at their own centre which include internally assessed components/units
- any members of centre staff who are teaching and preparing members of their family (which includes step-family, foster family and similar close relationships) or close friends and their

immediate family (e.g. son/daughter) for qualifications which include internally assessed components/units, **and** maintains clear records of **all instances** where:

- exams office staff have members of their family (which includes step-family, foster family and similar close relationships) or close friends and their immediate family (e.g. son/daughter) being entered for examinations and assessments either at the centre itself or other centres
- centre staff are taking qualifications at their own centre which **do not** include internally assessed components/units
- centre staff are taking qualifications at other centres
- To ensure compliance, you must declare (by ticking) any of the statements that apply to you and complete the required information in the white boxes.

Your name		Your job title(s)/role(s)	
Subject(s) you teach (if applicable to your role)			

Please tick any statement/statements that applies/apply to you and complete the required information (or will apply to you during the academic year)

- I am taking a qualification(s) at this centre which includes an internally assessed component/unit

Qualification(s) I am taking	Awarding body	Qualification type	Specification (Subject)
Steps I have taken to seek an alternative centre at which to take the qualification(s)			

- I am teaching and preparing a member of my family (which includes step-family, foster family and similar close relationships) or close friends and their immediate family (e.g. son/daughter) for a qualification(s) which includes an internally assessed component/unit

(Where more than one related person, please complete a separate form)

Name of related person (the candidate)			
Candidate number		Relationship to me	
Qualification(s) being taught and prepared for	Awarding body	Qualification type	Specification (Subject)

- I am a member of exams office staff and have a member of my family (which includes step-family, foster family and similar close relationships) or close friends and their immediate family (e.g. son/daughter) being entered for examinations and assessments at this centre or another centre

(Where more than one related person, please complete a separate form)

Name of related person (the candidate)			
Where the candidate is being entered	<input type="checkbox"/> This centre <input type="checkbox"/> Another entering centre (tick box as applies)		
Candidate number (if this centre)		Relationship to me	
Entering centre name (if not this centre)		Entering centre number (if known)	

- I am taking a qualification at this centre which does not include internally assessed components/units
- I am taking a qualification at another centre

Qualification(s) I am taking	Awarding body	Qualification type	Specification (Subject)	Exam series
Entering centre name			Entering centre number (if known)	

- I have none of the above statements to declare

Date declaration(s) made:

Signature to confirm declaration(s):

This completed form (including date and signature) must be returned to [insert] by [insert]

The declaration(s) you have provided will be used to inform the relevant awarding body/bodies (where required) and to record details of the measures taken to mitigate any potential risk to the integrity of the qualifications affected. You will be informed if/where any measures or protocols put in place directly affect you.

FOR HEAD OF CENTRE/EXAMS OFFICER USE ONLY

Date	Action
	Completed Declaration form received
	Declaration(s) recorded on Conflicts of Interest (COI) log
	Awarding body/bodies informed of specific COI (where applicable)
	Staff member informed of measures/protocols in place to manage the risk represented by the COI

## Relevant JCQ Regulation

JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres

5.3.j

Conflicts of interest

- j) manages conflicts of interest by informing the awarding bodies, before the published deadline for entries for each examination series, of:
- any members of centre staff who are taking qualifications at their own centre which include internally assessed components/units;
- any members of centre staff who are teaching and preparing members of their family (which includes step-family, foster family and similar close relationships) or close friends and their immediate family (e.g. son/daughter) for qualifications which include internally assessed components/units; and maintains clear records of all instances where:
- exams office staff have members of their family (which includes step-family, foster family and similar close relationships) or close friends and their immediate family (e.g. son/daughter) being entered for examinations and assessments either at the centre itself or other centres;
- centre staff are taking qualifications at their own centre which do not include internally assessed components/units;
- centre staff are taking qualifications at other centres.

The head of centre must ensure that the records include details of the measures taken to mitigate any potential risk to the integrity of the qualifications affected. The records may be inspected by a JCQ Centre Inspector and/or awarding body staff. They might be requested in the event of concerns being reported to an awarding body. The records must be retained until the deadline for reviews of marking has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later. Heads of centre should note that entering members of centre staff for qualifications at their own centre must be as a last resort in cases where the member of centre staff is unable to find another centre. The head of centre is responsible for ensuring that proper protocols are in place to prevent the member of centre staff having access to examination materials prior to the examination and that other centre staff are briefed on maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of the examination materials.

The head of centre must ensure that during the examination series the member of centre staff is treated in the same way as any other candidate entered for that examination, does not have access to examination materials and does not receive any preferential treatment.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST LOG**

Definition of conflict of interest

A conflict of interest is a situation in which an individual, or organisation, has competing interests or loyalties. In the case of an individual, the conflict of interest could compromise or appear to compromise their decisions if it is not properly managed. *E.g.* when an individual has a position of authority in one organisation that conflicts with his or her interests in another organisation.

Staff member disclosing initial concern	Curriculum Manager/Head of Curriculum/ Assistant Principal receiving notification	Date	Details of actual / potential conflict of interest	Yes / No		Date
				Conflict of Interest resolved by Head of Curriculum/ Assistant Principal	If No then Conflict of Interest Reported to Awarding Organisation	

An individual may wish to raise concerns relating to conflict of interest directly with the Awarding Organisation Quality Department. This may be done in confidence and they are entitled to receive a response to their concerns. It should be noted that individuals are protected under the college's Whistle Blowing Policy.

**19. Relevant Legislation / Regulation**

19.1. The following legislation and regulations apply to this policy / procedure:

- <https://www.icq.org.uk/knowledge-hub/instructions-for-conducting-examinations/>
- <https://www.icq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-reasonable-adjustments/>
- Relevant regulations listed in policy where relevant

**20. Related Documents**

The following related documents are relevant to this policy / procedure:

- Assessment & Verification Policy
- JQC Guidelines
- Awarding body guidelines

**21. Accountability**

The Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality and Examinations Manager are responsible for the drafting and implementation of this policy.

- He or she is also responsible for ensuring that this document is regularly reviewed and updated – and is the first contact point for managers seeking advice and guidance about the Examination & Certification or making enquiries about its interpretation.
- All managers are responsible for ensuring that they and their team members follow the requirements set out in this document.
- All employees are responsible for adhering to the requirements set out in this document.

**22. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion**

22.4. The College has paid due regard to equality considerations during the preparation and implementation of this Policy.

- 22.5. These considerations included the potential for any differential negative effect on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race (including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality), religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership.
- 22.6. The College's judgement is that there is no such negative effect on those grounds and, consequently, no potential breach of the Equality Act 2010.
- 22.7. The operation of this Policy and Procedure will be monitored by the Executive Director of People and Organisational Development in order to establish that no unlawful discrimination is taking place and to identify opportunities for the College to enhance equality of opportunity and fair treatment.

23. **Review**

- 23.4. These policies will be fully reviewed by July each academic year with a further review in October each academic year with reference to JCQ updates.
- 23.5. The Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality and Examinations Manager will undertake this review, taking into account the outcomes of the monitoring process, legislative changes and developments in good practice.
- 23.6. As part of the review, the Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality and Examinations Manager will seek and consider the views of the College's employees and, where appropriate, of the recognised trade unions.
- 23.7. The outcome of the review will be reported to the Senior Leadership Team.

24. **Policy Category**

<b>Category</b> [select ONE only]	<input type="checkbox"/> Business Development, Marketing and Subcontracting <input type="checkbox"/> Corporation <input type="checkbox"/> Data Protection <input type="checkbox"/> Equality & Diversity <input type="checkbox"/> Estates / Facilities <input type="checkbox"/> Executive Support, Administration and Reception <input type="checkbox"/> Finance <input type="checkbox"/> Health and Safety <input type="checkbox"/> International <input type="checkbox"/> IT Services <input type="checkbox"/> Management Information Systems <input type="checkbox"/> People and Organisational Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Quality <input type="checkbox"/> Student Services & Safeguarding
<b>Audience</b> [select ALL that apply]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employees <input type="checkbox"/> Governors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learners <input type="checkbox"/> Partners <input type="checkbox"/> Suppliers