



Policy Statements and Procedures

ESCALATION PROCESS POLICY

JUNE 2026

INTRODUCTION

This policy sets out the College's escalation arrangements in the event that the Head of Centre and/or the member of the Senior Leadership Team with oversight of examination administration is absent and unable to carry out their responsibilities.

The College recognises its obligation to ensure that examination and assessment activities are conducted in accordance with the requirements of awarding bodies, the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), and other relevant regulatory authorities. To maintain the integrity, security, and continuity of examinations and assessments, appropriate arrangements must be in place to ensure that key responsibilities can be delegated and undertaken by suitably authorised staff when necessary.

This escalation process identifies the duties and responsibilities that may require reassignment during periods of planned or unplanned absence and outlines the lines of accountability for decision-making. It also provides assurance to awarding bodies and external regulators that effective governance arrangements are in place to support the delivery of qualifications, the administration of examinations, and compliance with all relevant regulations.

The policy should be read in conjunction with the College's Examination Contingency Plan, Examination Policy, Malpractice Policy, and other related examination and assessment procedures.

PURPOSE

It is the responsibility of the Head of Centre to ensure that the College has in place a written escalation process should the Head of Centre, or a member of the Senior Leadership Team with oversight of examination administration, be absent. This process confirms the main duties and responsibilities to be escalated.

This process also supports the College being able to confirm to an awarding body the external governance arrangements so that the awarding body has confidence in the integrity of centre activities, such as the delivery of qualifications and the conducting of examinations and assessments.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff involved in the management, administration, delivery, assessment, and quality assurance of qualifications and examinations within the College. It outlines the escalation arrangements that will be implemented when the Head of Centre and/or a member of the Senior Leadership Team with oversight of examination administration is absent or otherwise unable to fulfil their duties.

The policy covers the delegation and escalation of responsibilities relating to:

- Examination and assessment administration.
- Compliance with awarding body and regulatory requirements.
- The delivery of qualifications and assessments.
- Communication with awarding bodies, regulators, and other external agencies.
- Decision-making processes required to maintain the integrity and continuity of examination and assessment activities.
- Oversight of examination security, malpractice reporting, and contingency arrangements.

The policy applies during planned and unplanned absences and ensures that appropriate governance, accountability, and operational continuity are maintained at all times, providing awarding bodies with assurance that Centre activities continue to be managed effectively and in accordance with regulatory requirements.

Before Examinations (Planning)

In the event of the absence of the Head of Centre or the member of senior leadership with oversight of examination and assessment administration, responsibility for implementing JCQ regulations and requirements relating to activity prior to examinations will be escalated to the Examinations Officer, supported by either the Principal's PA or Vice Principal as appropriate.

To support understanding of the regulations and requirements, sections of relevant JCQ documents will be specifically referenced, including:

- General Regulations for Approved Centres (5)
- Instructions for conducting examinations (1-15)
- Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (6-8)

Main Duties and Responsibilities Relate to:

- Centre inspections

Additional JCQ publication for reference:

- Centre Inspection Service Changes Policies available for inspection:

Specific JCQ publications for reference:

- General Regulations for Approved Centres (section 5)
- Instructions for conducting examinations (section 25)
- Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (section 5)
- Personal data, freedom of information and copyright

Before Examinations (Entries and Pre-Examinations)

In the event of the absence of the Head of Centre or the member of senior leadership with oversight of examination and assessment administration, responsibility for implementing JCQ regulations and requirements relating to entries and examination preparation will be escalated to the Examinations Officer, supported by either the Principal's PA or Vice

Principal as appropriate. To support understanding of the regulations and requirements, sections of relevant JCQ publications will be specifically referenced including:

- General Regulations for Approved Centres (section 5)
- Instructions for conducting examinations (sections 1-15)
- Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (sections 6-8)

Main Duties and Responsibilities Relate to:

- Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments
- Entries (including ensuring appropriate controls are in place which allow accurate entries to be submitted to the awarding bodies)

Additional JCQ documents for reference:

- Key Dates
- Guidance Notes for Transferred Candidates
- Alternative Site guidance notes
- Guidance notes for overnight supervision of candidates with a timetable variation
- Centre assessed work (including ensuring that candidates' work is backed-up and considering the contingency of candidates' work being backed-up in the event of IT system corruption and cyber-attacks, and appropriate controls are in place which allow accurate internally assessed marks to be submitted to the awarding bodies)

Additional JCQ document for reference:

- Guidance Notes: Centre Consortium Arrangements: Candidate information

Additional JCQ documents for reference:

- Information for candidates documents
- Examination Room Posters

During Examinations (Examination Time)

In the event of the absence of the Head of Centre or the member of senior leadership with oversight of examination and assessment administration, responsibility for implementing JCQ regulations and requirements relating to during examination time will be escalated to the Examinations Officer, supported by the Principal's PA or Vice Principal as appropriate.

The Centre also has in place has in place a member of the senior leadership team who will provide support and guidance to the examinations officer and ensure that the integrity and security of examinations and assessments is maintained throughout an examination series.

To support understanding of the regulations and requirements, sections of relevant JCQ documents will be specifically referenced including:

- General Regulations for Approved Centres (sections 3, 5)
- Instructions for conducting examinations (sections 16-30)
- Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (section 8)

- A guide to the special consideration process (sections 2-7)

Main Duties and Responsibilities Relate to:

- Conducting examinations and assessments

Additional JCQ document for reference:

- Guidance Notes: Very Late Arrival
- Malpractice
- Retention of candidates' work

After Examinations (Results and Post-16 Results)

As a contingency, the Centre has at least one senior member of staff (Principal's PA) who is available to manage emergency requests from awarding bodies that are results related during the summer holidays. The National Centre Number Register is provided with the senior designated contact details (this might include a personal mobile number and/or email address). These are the contact details of someone who can be reached in an emergency if the Centre is closed over the summer and who can mobilise resources to respond to the issue. (GR 3.18, 5.3)

In the event of the absence of the Head of Centre or the member of senior leadership with oversight of examination and assessment administration, responsibility for implementing JCQ regulations and requirements relating to after examinations will be escalated to the Examinations Officer, supported by the Principal's PA as appropriate.

To support understanding of the regulations and requirements, sections of relevant JCQ documents will be specifically referenced including:

- General Regulations for Approved Centres (section 5)

Main Duties and Responsibilities Relate to:

- Results

Additional JCQ document for reference:

- Release of Results notice
- Post-results services and appeals

Additional JCQ documents for reference:

- Post-Results Services
- JCQ Appeals Booklet (A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes)
- Certificates

The Principal, Senior Leadership Team and Examinations Officer are responsible for ensuring the College remains compliant with all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements. JCQ regulations place accountability for compliance with the Head of Centre and require appropriate resources and oversight to be maintained at all times.

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