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SHARING EXAMINATION INFORMATION WITH STAFF, CANDIDATES AND THEIR PARENTS/CARERS

A significant amount of exam-related information must be communicated to centre staff and candidates before assessments and examinations take place. Failure to provide the required information can constitute malpractice and may compromise the effective delivery of examinations.

It is also good practice to share information provided to candidates, where applicable, with their parents/carers. This helps to:

- Reinforce requirements: Encourage parents/carers to support the centre in communicating examination and assessment regulations and requirements to their child.
- Manage expectations: Reduce misunderstandings and avoid requests from parents/carers before or during an examination series that cannot be accommodated because they conflict with JCQ regulations or awarding organisation requirements.
- Communicate centre-specific arrangements: Ensure parents/carers understand the centre's own examination policies, procedures and requirements, including those not explicitly covered by JCQ regulations.

Exam-related information should be communicated through a range of channels to centre staff and candidates/parents/carers, including:

Centre staff

- Include internal deadlines in a centre timetable
- Agree with heads of department or equivalent role(s), which members of their teams will act as the main points of contact for examination-related matters
- Use email for formal communications to maintain an audit trail of information shared and instructions issued
- Request email read receipts where appropriate to help confirm that important information has been received
- Set realistic and sufficiently generous internal deadlines, issue reminders in advance and follow up missed deadlines directly with the relevant staff. Confirm any discussions or agreed actions by email, copying in the relevant head of department or line manager

Candidates and parents/carers

- Consider sharing all relevant examination information with parents/carers to help reinforce key messages and requirements

- Create a dedicated 'Exams' section on your centre website where examination-related information can be easily accessed
- Include videos produced by The Exams Office, such as *Information for Candidates – Written Examinations* and *Information for Candidates – Non-Examination Assessments*
- Produce an *Exam Handbook* containing essential information, regulations, procedures and centre-specific requirements, and make it available on the centre website
- Issue examination information at the beginning of each academic year and update it whenever requirements or procedures change
- Obtain confirmation from candidates that they have received, read and understood the information provided

The information below provides guidance on the information which should be shared with subject staff, invigilators, candidates and their parents/carers, together with suggestions on when and how it should be communicated to ensure everyone understands their responsibilities and requirements.

Note: The summary provided below is not exhaustive.

Information shared with centre staff

Information	Regulation	When	How
JCQ *Notice to Centres – The people present in the examination room*	*Instructions for conducting examinations, 17.2, Appendix 7*	At the start of an academic year A reminder prior to an exam series	Share with senior leaders Distribute information to heads of department asking them to cascade it to teaching staff within their departments Direct all staff to relevant JCQ information displayed on staff noticeboards
Exam contingency arrangements	*Instructions for conducting examinations,15.3, 15.5*	At the start of an academic year A reminder prior to an exam series	
Post-results process, including deadlines for reviews of results	*Post-Results Services, 4.1*	Prior to an exam series	As above and add (internal) deadlines to an internal calendar of key dates, for example an annual exams plan, which is shared with all subject staff

Other key information

Information	Regulation	When	How
Internal deadlines		At the start of an academic year Remind staff of deadlines prior to	Share with senior leaders Distribute information to heads of department, asking them to cascade it to

		key activity (e.g. several weeks ahead of the entry deadline and a week prior to the deadline for submission)	teaching staff within their departments Add to the internal calendar of key dates
Exam entries (and registrations) confirmation		Prior to submission of final entries/registrations and prior to the external deadline (Ideally get final sign-off from teaching teams that their final entries/registrations are correct before they are submitted to the awarding body) After submission to awarding bodies and in good time ahead of the withdrawals (with refund)/amendments (without charge) deadline(s)	Email relevant subject staff, clearly stating the information required and the deadline for completion Request a read receipt to help confirm that the email has been received and opened Follow up any emails that remain unopened after 48-72 hours, copying in the head of department Arrange a face-to-face meeting with the relevant members of staff within 24 hours of sending the original email to reinforce the requirements and address any queries.
Subject-specific information (e.g. Using calculators)		Several weeks prior to an exam series	Provide staff with relevant JCQ information which should be shared with candidates during class time
Exam room support (e.g. A member of the Maths department to be outside the exam room prior to a Maths exam to ensure that calculators comply with JCQ regulations)		Request staff attendance several weeks prior to an exam series	Email the head of department requesting confirmation of which staff will attend before the examination to check candidates' equipment outside the exam room. Clearly specify the time staff are required to be present

Results (restricted release day and results day)		Prior to an exam series with a reminder at the end of the exam series	Distribute information to heads of department asking them to cascade it to teaching staff within their departments Direct all staff to relevant JCQ information displayed on staff noticeboards

Information shared with candidates

Note:

- Consider creating an *Exam Handbook* which contains the information detailed below (see The Exams Office Hub for a template - *Candidate Exam Handbook*)
- Signpost parents/carers to information contained on the centre website via communications sent by your centre

Information	**Regulation**	**When**	**How**
Notification of candidates' examination entries	*General Regulations for Approved Centres, 5.8*	Once exam entry information has been received and confirmed by awarding bodies, candidates should be checked their (statement of) entry information (including their personal details) enabling any queries to be dealt with and any potential errors to be corrected in a timely manner	Agree with SLT how entry information will be communicated to candidates Exam entry should be communicated directly to candidates, either in hard copy or electronic copy
Notification of the dates and times of candidates' examinations	*General Regulations for Approved Centres, 5.8*	See 'Candidate exam timetable' information in the table below	
JCQ *Information for candidates* documents: • AI (Artificial Intelligence and assessments) • Coursework • Non-examination assessments	*General Regulations for Approved Centres, 5.8*	Add/update information on the centre website at the start of each academic year Update information based upon any mid-academic year updates from JCQ/awarding	These documents must be distributed before exams and/or assessments take place in electronic or hard copy format or placed on the centre's website and the respective link emailed to candidates

• On-screen examinations • Social media • Written examinations		bodies, or changes in centre-specific arrangements	The distribution of documents should be followed up with a briefing session or a special assembly led by a senior member of staff to reinforce what candidates **must** and **must not** do when taking exams and assessments Add information for candidates videos produced by The Exams Office to your centre website and send links to candidates/parents Add information to the *Candidate Exam Handbook*
Candidate declaration form *Note: Centres must issue the relevant awarding body's form* *Some awarding body's (e.g. AQA) may issue subject-specific Candidate declaration forms*	*Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments examinations, section 2* *Instructions for conducting coursework, section 1.4*	(**Notice to Candidates**) Prior to candidates beginning their work (coursework/non-examination assessments) (**Candidate Declaration**) For signing when candidates have completed their work and handed it in for final assessment	Distribute the relevant JCQ regulations to heads of department and subject staff, confirming that relevant awarding body forms must be shared with candidates prior to beginning their work and again when work is completed for final assessment Signpost subject staff to The Exams Office video, *Information for Candidates - Non-Examination Assessments*, to reinforce key requirements and responsibilities to candidates
Awarding body privacy notices (Refer to each awarding body)	*General Regulations for Approved Centres, 5.8*	Add/update information on the centre website at the start of each academic year	Add links to the privacy notices to the centre website within a dedicated 'Exams' section or include links

			to them in a *Candidate Exam Handbook* published on the website
JCQ *Unauthorised items* poster	*General Regulations for Approved Centres, 5.8*	Add the current poster to the centre website at the start of each academic year	Add to the centre website under an 'Exams section' or to a *Candidate Exam Handbook* which should be added to the centre website
JCQ *Warning to candidates* poster	General Regulations for Approved Centres, *5.8*	Add the current poster to the centre website at the start of each academic year	
Complaints policy	*General Regulations for Approved Centres, 5.8*	Current versions of relevant exam-related policies should be available at all times	This policy should be devised by SLT Ask SLT to confirm how this information will be drawn to the attention of candidates and parents/carers
Internal appeals procedure (information relating to appeals regarding internal assessment decisions, access to post-results services and appeals, and centre decisions relating to access arrangements and special consideration with reference to the JCQ document *A guide to the awarding organisations' appeals processes*)			Involve several members of staff in the development, review and updating of these policies/procedures to ensure that relevant knowledge and expertise are considered Ask SLT to agree how relevant policy information will be communicated to candidates and parents/carers once the policies have been formally approved by the appropriate SLT member or head of centre Publish policies containing information relevant to candidates and parents/carers on the centre website Reinforce key requirements through staff briefings,
Exam contingency arrangements	*Instructions for conducting examinations, 5.3, 5.5*		
Arrangements for post-results services, including:	*General Regulations for Approved Centres,*		

• How the centre will deal with candidates' requests for access to scripts, clerical re-checks, reviews of marking, reviews of moderation and appeals to the awarding bodies • The availability of senior members of centre staff immediately after the publication of results	*5.13; Post-Results Services, 4.1*		candidate briefing sessions or dedicated assemblies led by a senior member of staff
Confirmation of approved access arrangements which have been processed using *Access Arrangements Online* (AAO)	*Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments, 8.6*	Ask the SENCo (or equivalent role) to confirm when candidates will be informed	Ask the SENCo (or equivalent role) to confirm how this information will be shared with candidates. It is good practice to also share this information with parents/carers

Other key information

Information	Regulation	When	How
Exam information: • Candidate exam timetable • The exam room which will be used during an exam series and seating arrangements (This is good practice and not a JCQ requirement) • Candidate number (if not included on candidate exam timetable) • Instructions for arrival on exam days • Instructions for personal belongings • Resources for exams		• Exam timetable – once exam entries have been submitted and individual candidate exam timetables are confirmed • Candidate number – if possible, when timetables are shared, or several weeks prior to an exam series	Agree with SLT how exam-related information will be communicated to candidates Personal information (e.g. candidate numbers, individual examination timetables and access arrangements) should be communicated directly to candidates, either in hard copy or electronic copy

• Guidance on 'irregularities' – e.g. late for exam, illness • Role of the invigilator • Malpractice warnings • Contingency arrangements, including the contingency day • Arrangements for the issuing of results		The following should be shared several weeks prior to an exam series: • Exam rooms and seating arrangements (This is good practice and not a JCQ requirement) • Instructions for arrival on exam days • Instructions for personal belongings • Resources for exams • Guidance on 'irregularities' (e.g. late for exam, illness) • Role of the invigilator • Malpractice warnings • Contingency arrangements, including the contingency day Prior to the issue of results: • Arrangements for the issuing of results • Arrangements for post-results services	General information (e.g. examination room arrangements, examination day procedures and contingency arrangements) can be included in a *Candidate Exam Handbook*, published on the centre website Reinforce key information through candidate briefing sessions or dedicated assemblies led by a senior member of staff Use subject staff to communicate relevant information during lessons, where appropriate. This may include subject-specific equipment or resources candidates must bring to examinations and reminders about malpractice and examination regulations
Malpractice information The following information relating to malpractice must be shared with candidates: • All JCQ notices, e.g. Information for candidates, non-examination assessments, coursework,	*General Regulations for Approved Centres, 5.3*	Current versions of relevant exam-related policies should be available at all times	Involve several members of staff in the development, review and updating of these policies to ensure that relevant knowledge and

on-screen tests, written examinations, social media and/or plagiarism are made available to candidates prior to assessments/examinations taking place • (Verbally and in writing) The required conditions under which the assessments are conducted, including warnings about bringing prohibited materials and devices into the assessments and access to restricted resources • An awareness of the actions that constitute malpractice and the sanctions that can be imposed on those who commit malpractice • An awareness of the sanctions for passing on or receiving (even if the information was not requested) confidential assessment materials and that if a candidate receives confidential information, they must report it to a member of centre staff immediately • An awareness amongst candidates involved in an examination clash arrangement of appropriate behaviour during supervision, e.g. ensuring that candidates cannot pass on or receive information about the content of assessments, thereby committing candidate malpractice • An awareness amongst candidates completing coursework or non-examination assessments of the need for the work to			expertise are considered Ask SLT to agree how relevant policy information will be communicated to candidates and parents/carers once the policies have been formally approved by the appropriate SLT member or head of centre

be their own and are provided with clear instructions on how to avoid plagiarism (including AI misuse)			
Non-examination assessment information (including controlled assessments and coursework) which includes details on how candidates' work will be authenticated with reference to the JCQ documents *Instructions for conducting coursework* and *Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments.*	*General Regulations for Approved Centres, 5.3, 5.7* *Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments*		
The use of word processors in examinations	*General Regulations for Approved Centres, 5.3;* *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments, 5.8*		

Information shared with invigilators

Note: Consider creating an Invigilator Handbook which contains the information detailed below (see The Exams Office Hub for a template - *Invigilator Handbook*)

Information	**Regulation**	**When**	**How**
Instructions for conducting examinations	*Instructions for conducting examinations,12.9*	Ahead of invigilators undertaking online/face to face training or prior to a follow up meeting after the completion of online training Centre-specific arrangements, such as the policy	Forward information via email or signpost invigilators to *Assessments* within The Exams Office Hub Centre-specific information should be shared in person to allow invigilators to ask
JCQ *Unauthorised items* poster	*General Regulations for Approved Centres, 5.8;* Instructions for conducting examinations,12.9		
JCQ *Warning to candidates* poster	*General Regulations for Approved Centres, 5.8; Instructions for*		

	conducting examinations,12.9	of dealing with an emergency evacuation of the exam room, contingency arrangements, and access arrangements which will be facilitated during the exam series should be shared at a face-to-face or online meeting	questions/confirm understanding
Information for candidates for written examinations, and if applicable, *on-screen examinations*	*Instructions for conducting examinations,12.9*		
Exam contingency arrangements (in particular the arrangements if examinations cannot be conducted at the centre)	*Instructions for conducting examinations, 5.3, 5.5*		
Policy for dealing with an emergency evacuation of the exam room	*Instructions for conducting examinations, section 25*		
Information relating to access arrangements which will be facilitated during the exam series			

The contents of this article were correct at the time of publication (Mid-November 2026)