

## Exams series 2019 – A final checklist

With the summer examination series almost upon us, this is the time for all exams officer staff to conduct a final check to ensure that they and their centre are fully prepared for every examination day. Below are ten areas which must be in place, or have been addressed, to ensure a successful examination series in your centre.

Remember that there are a range of resources on [The Exams Office website](#) to help you administer and manage examinations in your centre during an examination series:

1. **Regulation changes** – are you, your invigilators and any other relevant members of staff aware of the JCQ regulation changes for the 2018/19 academic year? Do they understand these and the implications for not adhering to these guidelines? A summary of the changes in the General Regulations, Instructions for conducting examinations, and Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments booklets can be found in our ‘Exams Officer Handbook’ which was sent to all members at the start of the academic year.
2. **Secure storage** – ensure that your secure storage facility is appropriately organised. Sort sealed question paper packets in date/session order as this will save time in locating the correct packets on examination days and minimise the risk of opening incorrect question paper packets. You can also identify if any papers have not been received and contact the relevant awarding body in good time.
3. **Rooming** - conduct a final check on the exam rooms you will be using. Are teaching staff aware that their room may be being used during the examination series? Are site staff aware of which rooms will need to be set up and on which days this needs to take place? Is there adequate rooming for candidates with access arrangements? Will you be able to accommodate the appropriate number of candidates during each examination session?
4. **Candidate/staff briefings** – [have candidates been briefed](#) over the definition of ‘examination conditions’? Have they been made aware of the relevant JCQ posters, notices and documents and their contents? Do they know what to do if they are late or ill for an examination? Has malpractice been explained to the candidates - and the penalties for engaging in malpractice? Are candidates aware of materials which are defined as ‘unauthorised’ and the penalties for bringing these into the examination room? Has the role of your invigilators been explained? Are staff aware of who can/cannot be present and who can/cannot enter the examination room?

5. **Examination question paper packets** – do you have a procedure in place to check that the correct question paper packet is opened ahead of each examination/session? Who will be your ‘second pair of eyes’ as the question paper packet is taken out of your secure storage facility? Have invigilators been informed of their responsibility in ensuring that each candidate is sitting the correct examination in that they must always ask candidates to check that they have been given the correct question paper for the day, date, time, subject, unit/component and tier of entry, if appropriate?
6. **JCQ centre inspection** – you must be [fully prepared for your JCO centre inspection](#)...and there may be more than one inspection. Ensure that all documentation such as exams-related policies are in place, and that your SENCo and SLT are made aware of their role. The JCQ inspector may want to see information relating to access arrangement candidates or discuss wider exams-related issues in your centre...these will need to be addressed by the SENCo and SLT member responsible for examinations in your centre...not the Exams Officer.
7. **Access arrangements** - is there adequate rooming for [access arrangements](#) candidates? Are facilitators aware of the JCQ regulations relating to the support which can be offered as a reader, scribe etc.? Is your roving invigilator aware of their role and what is expected of them? Are invigilators aware of which candidates have access arrangements and the role of facilitators – for example, what they can/cannot do and say? Are you aware that access arrangement candidates must be detailed on the seating plan? Are you prepared to deal with emergency access arrangements?
8. **Exams Officer absence** – is your centre prepared to manage examinations in the event of your absence? Roles and responsibilities must be confirmed from the point of extracting question paper packets from the secure storage facility, checking that these are correct, the possible splitting of these packets (in the secure room), preparing each exam room, briefing invigilators, managing (including emergency) access arrangements, managing irregularities, dispatching examination scripts etc. The individual(s) who will be fulfilling the Exams Officer role as a contingency measure must be fully briefed on all tasks which they will need to undertake on an examination day and preparing for the next examination day.
9. **Invigilators** – [are they fully trained](#)? If not, at this stage of the year, ask invigilators to complete our online assessment and training module. Have invigilators been made aware of the [JCQ's Checklist for invigilators \(for written examinations\)](#)? Are your invigilators aware of the changes to examination regulations for the 2018/19 academic year? Are they aware of how to deal with unauthorised people entering the examination room,

candidates arriving late/very late for examinations, emergency evacuation procedures, irregularities, etc?

10. **Malpractice** – are SLT/Head of Centre aware of what constitutes malpractice, how to deal with cases of suspected or actual malpractice in connection with an examination and that this must be reported to the relevant awarding body immediately? Have candidates been informed of the consequences of engaging in malpractice? Have you devised a system of recording cases of malpractice, informing candidates and parents people in your centre (SLT, Head of Centre etc.)?

The areas detailed above are an excellent checklist but it is not a comprehensive list of the tasks which are faced by Exams Officers during an exam series. There may also be a variety of unexpected circumstances which arise during the coming weeks which will need to be resolved, as well as ‘established tasks’ which will need to be undertaken. These include the dispatch of examination scripts and ensuring that the confirmation of script collection has been received from couriers such as Parcelforce, recording very late arrivals, dealing with special consideration applications, reporting malpractice, planning for examination results day(s) - the list may not be endless, but it certainly isn’t a short one.

So, good luck everyone, and remember that if you have any issues, contact the relevant awarding body – they are ready and fully prepared to help you.