

WORKING WITH YOUR SLT TO EFFECTIVELY DELIVER EXAMS IN YOUR CENTRE

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July 2019

- Addressing issues faced by Exams Officers
- Acquiring the support of your SLT
- The significance of planning and preparation
- Areas to cover in meetings with SLT
- Dealing with Heads of Departments
- Communicating effectively with SLT

Some History...

The National Agreement on Raising Standards and Tackling Workload recognises that the use of teachers to invigilate examinations does not represent an effective use of their time and expertise. The Agreement includes the provision that teachers should not routinely be required to undertake the invigilation of external examinations, including National Curriculum tests. This change to conditions of service for all teachers in maintained schools takes effect on 1 September 2005.

Raising standards and tackling workload: a national agreement
January 2003

Instruction 23: Members should refuse to invigilate any public examination, including GCSEs and SATs.

Instruction 24: Members should refuse to undertake the invigilation of any 'mock' examinations where the school reorganises the timetable to replicate the external examination process.

NASUWT
May 2015



Key messages:

- ✓ Set a deadline
- ✓ Remind staff at regular intervals
- ✓ Utilise SLT/Line Manager to support you

‘HoDs/teaching staff are always busy with marking, reports, etc. but when I send a request for information for their subjects with a deadline, it would be great if they all responded within a timeframe that I have set.

Fortunately, this has vastly improved here and I now know who the worst culprits are when it comes to missing deadlines. I will continue to remind them so that they do comply, but it is also vital that SLT remind teaching staff that the Exams Officer has to work to deadlines and that they need to treat our requests as a priority.’

‘The head of centre is the individual who is accountable to the awarding bodies for ensuring that the centre is compliant with the published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements in order to ensure the security and integrity of the examinations/assessments at all times.’
(Section 2.3)

‘It is the responsibility of the Head of Centre to enable the Exams Officer to receive **appropriate training and support** in order to facilitate the effective delivery of examinations and assessments within the Centre’ (Section 5.3c)

General Regulations for Approved Centres

These quotes clearly identify your role as the key facilitator and manager of people, systems and administration relating to examinations and assessments from the awarding bodies in your centre.

You cannot do this on your own so building relationships, displaying mutual respect, and a clear understanding amongst staff of their roles (and specific tasks required of them) is essential.

This is not easy and sometimes it would be easier to do it yourself but this is a false economy. You have to be seen as a manager not simply a hard worker.

Dealing with staff members

Key individuals

Which members of staff do you liaise with and specifically want as allies?

Group 1

- Head of Centre (HoC)
- SLT responsible for examinations/Line Manager (SLT)
- SLT responsible for the centre timetable (T)
- Business Manager (BM)
- Heads of Department (HoD)
- Heads of Year (HoY)
- SENCo (SEN)

Group 2

- Invigilators
- Facilitators

Group 3

- Subject teachers (ST)
- Reception staff (RS)
- Site staff (SS)

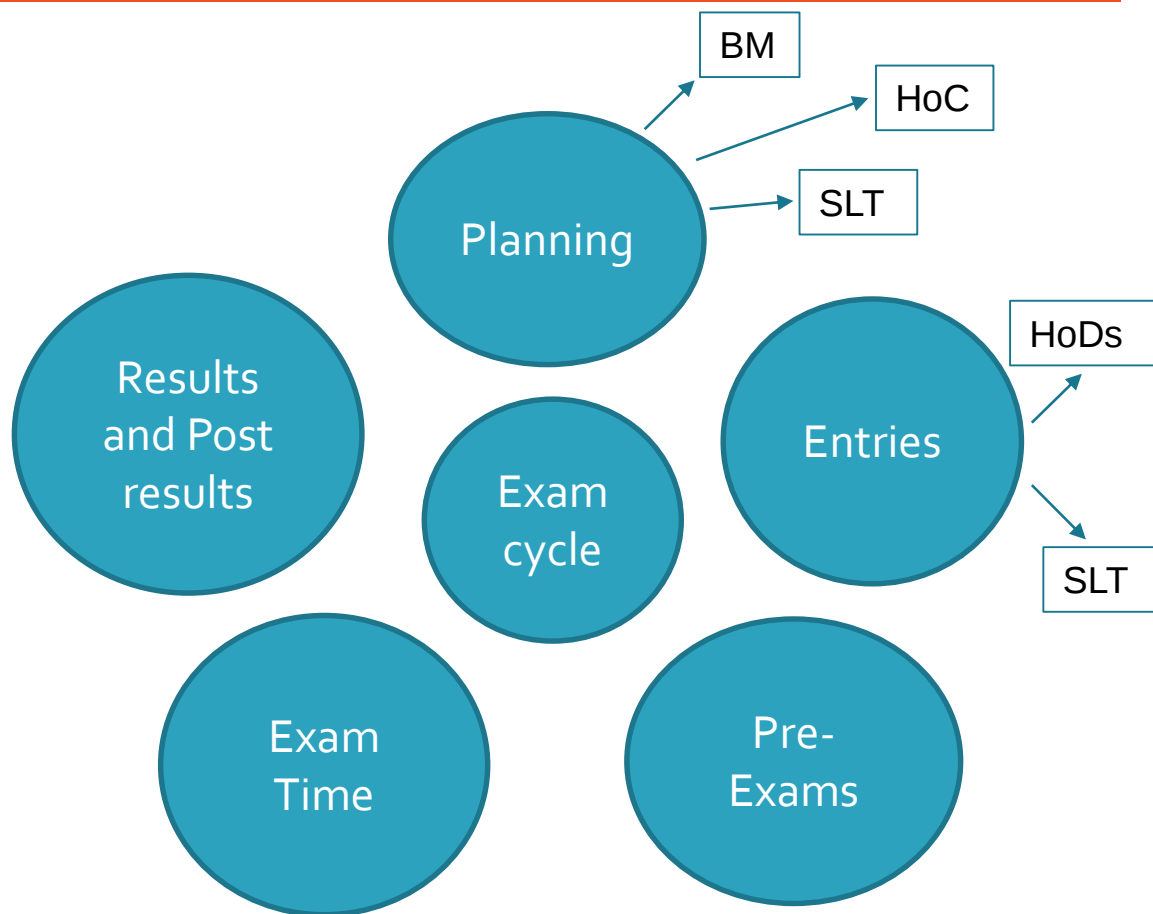
Group 4

- Candidates
- Parents

The exam cycle - who and when

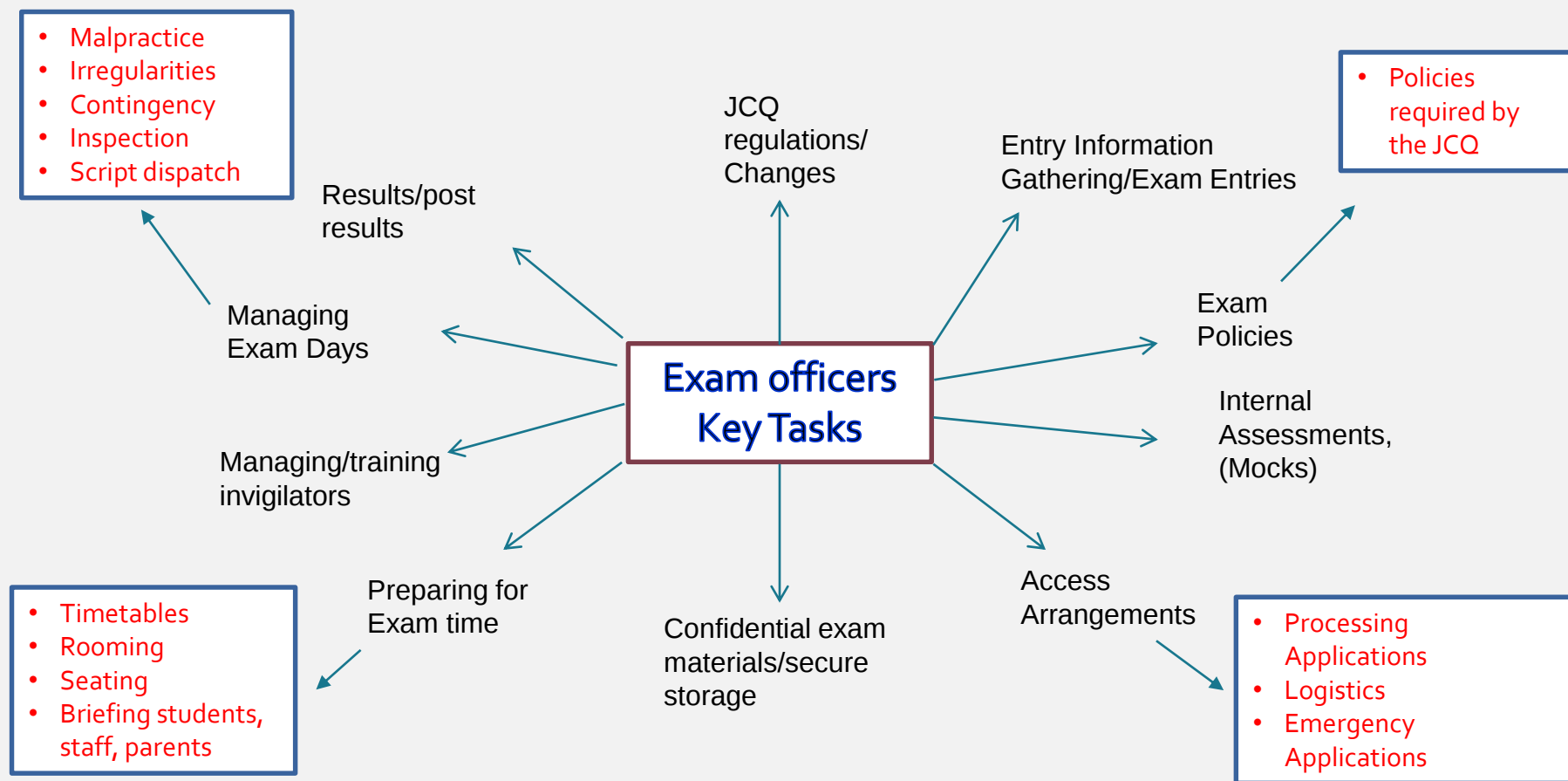
Activity

- Consider the staff in Group 1 (see previous slide) whose support you need to successfully complete the exam cycle?



- It may be necessary to have more than 1 meeting with a different focus
- Whilst everyone might need the same information/task. It does not have to be presented in the same way

The exam cycle – key tasks



- Try to build experience in a range of people over time this will help to establish trust and confidence.
- Don't over rely on one or two people

Planning your year with senior staff

Preparation, Preparation, Preparation...

Group 1 Staff

Exam Cycle	Role	Person	Meeting Date/s	Preparation needed	Documents before meeting	e-mail	internal mail	face to face	Other
Planning	Head of Centre	DJM	10th April 2019	Budget Costing 2019-20	Yes	√			
	Business Manager	REW						√	
Planning	SLT Timetable	PWW	14 th April 2019	Rooming Access & Invigilation	Yes			√	



Remember: It may be necessary to have more than 1 meeting with a different focus
Try to get these set on the school calendar to give greater focus



Key messages:

- ✓ Plan as early as possible
- ✓ Refer to JCQ documentation
- ✓ Utilise SLT/Line Manager to support you

Accommodation

‘I always feel under pressure regarding taking rooms, such as the Sports Hall and the room I use for access arrangements off timetable at any time of the year but particularly in the summer for the long exam season.

I am struggling more this year than last, as we have just increased our Year 7 intake which means rooming is tighter than ever, and although we are having an additional block built, I will, in the future, have to squeeze even more bodies into the Sports Hall.

It is also difficult to find enough small rooms to accommodate all the different access arrangements/language exams, etc.’

Planning each meeting

Preparation, Preparation, Preparation...

Example Meeting Preparation													
Exam Date	Exam	Length	Numbers	Room	Confirm to	Equipment	Special Needs	Access arrangements	Extra Rooms	Room	Confirm to	Number of invigilators (+1)	Supply
	Maths	1hr 30mins	200	Sports Hall	DIN	5 Maths boxes	3	Reader	1	SC 1	STN	9 (7 main+1) Reader is invigilator but require rover	1 TBC

 confirm these and who will inform staff and by when



- Be on the 'front foot', control what you want, be reasonable, realistic and be able to justify

Identify what you require from senior staff

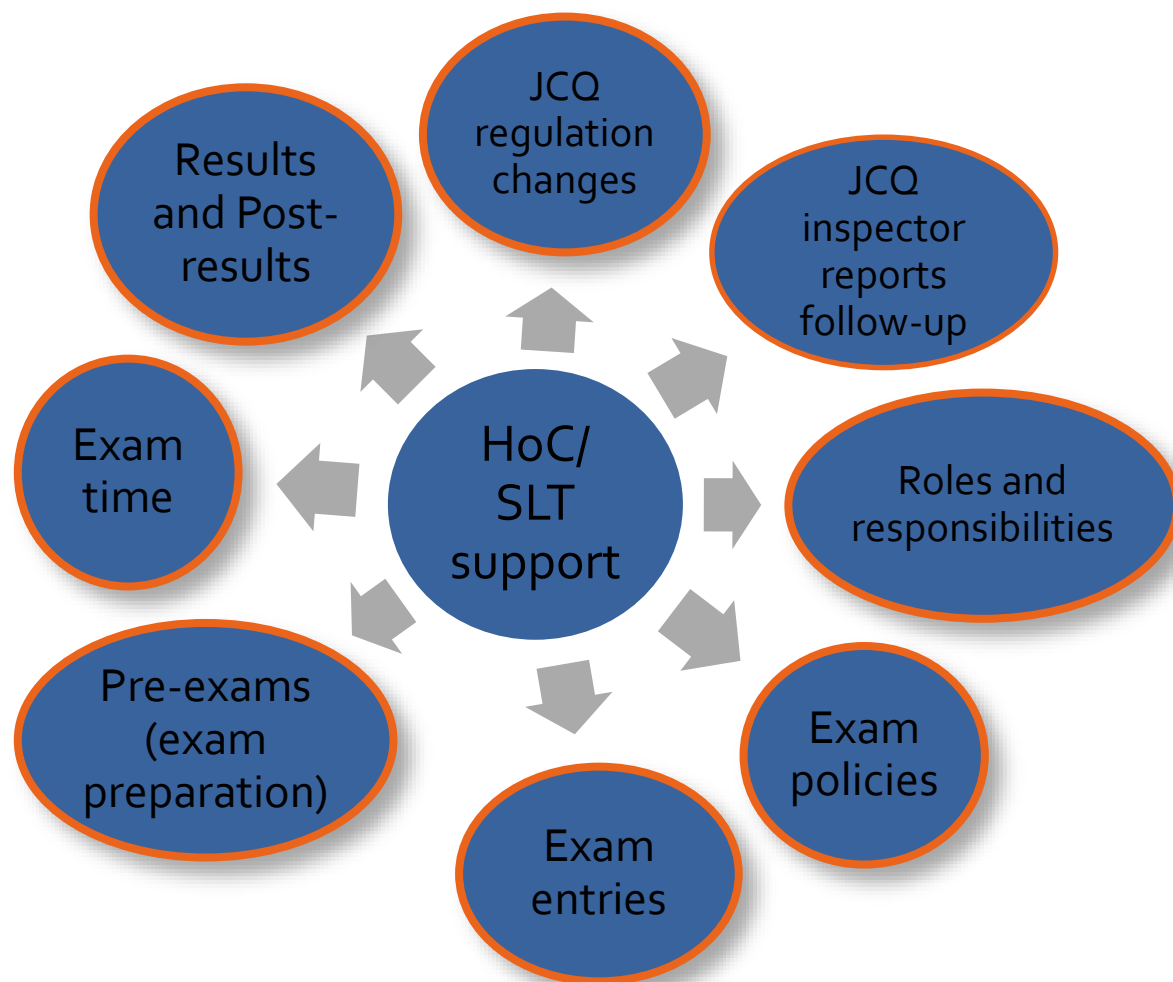
- Head of Centre/SLT - What do you need from your Head of Centre/SLT? Here are some suggested tasks (this is not an exhaustive list):
 - **Read/be aware of JCQ documentation** – *General Regulations for Approved Centres, Instructions for Conducting Examinations, Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments* etc.
 - **Sign/approve/manage documentation** – NCNR, exam policies etc.
 - **Make decisions** – People present in the exam room, Restricted release day, roles and responsibilities, centre decisions (for example, wrist watches etc.), actions on exam day(s), contingency planning etc.
 - **Resolve issues** – from JCQ inspector's reports, secure storage, rooming access arrangements, etc.

Support from SLT



Ensure there is at least 1 item on an SLT agenda per half term on the areas opposite.

Ensure that you attend and lead for that item



HoC/SLT Autumn Term

Forward/share JCQ information (link to documents) via email

Use *The Exams Office's* 'Exams Officer Handbook' to provide a summary of exam changes

Resolve any issues from the JCQ centre inspection report

Highlight and confirm exams policies which need to be produced or annually reviewed/updated

Confirm roles and responsibilities – access arrangements, policies, mock exams, missed internal deadlines from HoDs etc.

Meeting agenda

HoC/SLT Spring Term

Exam entries – acquire support to ensure that deadlines will be met and actions to be taken if they are not met

Highlight late entries (per department) and subsequent late fees information

Preparation for the summer exam series – rooming, invigilation, contingency plans, information for teachers, candidates and staff, confirming processes for bad behaviour, late arrivals and parental enquiries etc.

Confirm arrangements for restricted release day(s) and results day(s)

Ensure readiness for the JCQ centre inspection



Key messages:

- ✓ Make your requirements (and deadlines) clear
- ✓ Forward links to JCQ documentation
- ✓ Maintain a 'paper trail'
- ✓ Utilise SLT/Line Manager to support you

Other issues...

- Being treated as “just admin staff” and getting lack of respect from teachers;
- Difficulty acquiring rooms for small exams/MFL orals;
- A lack of understanding of the JCQ/awarding body regulations amongst teaching staff;
- Staff/Departments failing to meet deadlines;
- A lack of process for appeals

Heads of Department (HoDs)

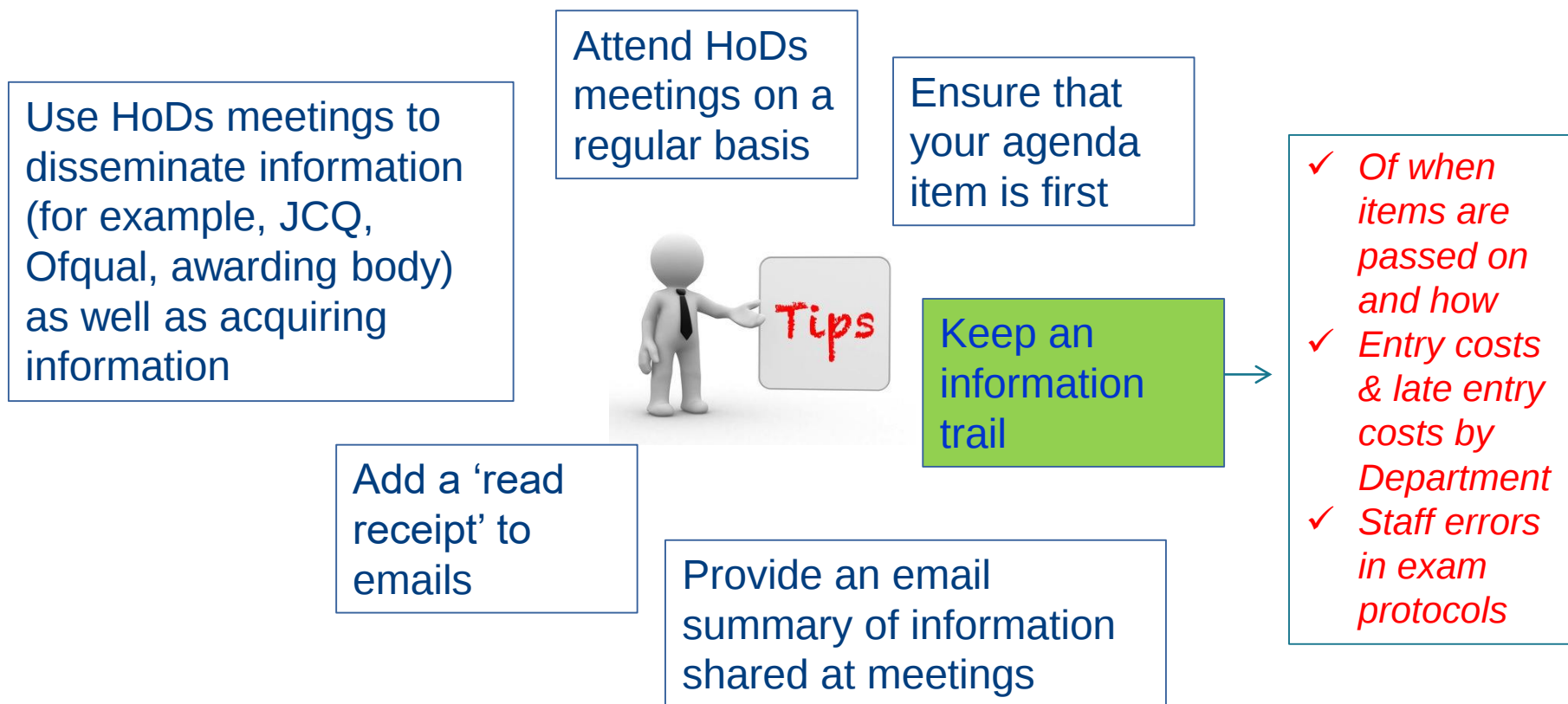
- Try to ensure attendance at HoDs meeting. Retain a paper trail of information required which may include:
 - Qualification information, Candidate information, How often this information will be required/updates, Deadlines, Arrangements for internal assessments (NEAs), Consequences of failure to adhere to requests etc.
- Following this meeting, forward an email confirming the information disseminated at the meeting
- Provide reminders prior to a deadline via email, staff noticeboard, internal newsletter, staff briefings, HoDs meetings etc.
- If possible, use mock examinations to establish and train middle managers, staff, students and parents in proper routines for examinations



Many middle managers have little time for the details of exam administration. Therefore, focus on what is essential when asking for information or their support

Dealing with staff members

Heads of Department (HoDs)



Liaising with other staff Groups 2, 3 & 4

- **Forward/share information**
- **Provide guidance**
- **Complete tasks**
- **Provide instructions**
- **Request support**
- **Confirm compliance**
- **Request/gather information**



- Decide what you require from each member of staff
- Go through and support at least once completing any proformas required

Eight steps to getting your message across effectively

- **Planning and Preparation** – When do you want to relay your messages? What will you communicate? What do you want from each member of staff?
- **Clarity of Communication**– Should you provide written information?
- **Timing** – Create time and the correct circumstances to deliver your message
- **Precision** – Know the regulations and be precise and concise when telling staff what you expect of them

Eight steps to getting your message across effectively

- **Assuming** – Don't assume members of staff are aware of the rules or what is expected of them
- **Check understanding** – Ensure that staff are clear of what you expect of them
- **Deadlines** – Set clear internal deadlines for the completion of tasks/return of information
- **Follow up** – Be prepared to provide follow up instructions and to remind staff of their responsibilities

Useful documents

Key documents from *The Exams Office* that support the sharing and gathering of information:

- [JCQ publications checklist template \(free access to all\)](#)
- [Information gathering form template](#)
- [Exams Officer/line manager meeting report form template](#)
- [Summer exams weekly report form template](#)
- [Deadlines for entries, fees and charges template](#)
- [External entries collection form template](#)
- [Internal entries collection form template](#)
- [Changes to entry information form template](#)
- [Exam entry/re-sit form template](#)
- [Late entry form template](#)

Questions



Activity (5 minutes)

- With the person next to you consider a task (this may previously have been an issue for you) which will require SLT involvement.

Discuss:

- The task
- What you want from the meeting
- Material which may need to be prepared
- How you will record the outcomes and agreed actions
- Problems which you might encounter