

What are the training options for exams officers in 2021/2022?

This month's blog is written by Jugjit Chima, head of training at The Exams Office, who considers the training options for new and experienced exams officers, and those who have been in role for several months/over a year yet have never experienced a 'traditional' summer exam series.

After two summers without a traditional exam series, it is the view of many across the education sector that, hopefully, in summer 2022 we will see a return to the 'business as usual' format of written timetabled examinations.

However, after such an unprecedented period of absence, there are many exams officers who, despite having been in role for over a year, have yet to experience a full exam series. Although many may have been involved in last autumn's A level and GCSE exam series, this does not replicate the preparation required and scale of delivery of a summer exam series at the end of an academic year.

The extraordinary circumstances relating to examinations has also caused confusion for some exams officers over the type of training which is most suitable for their needs – should they engage in new exams officer training if they have been in role for more than year, or should they focus upon exam regulation changes as an 'experienced' exams officer?

In this blog, we consider the training options for those new to the exams officer role, those who have been in the role for several years, and those who have been in post for over a year yet never completed a summer exam series.

New exams officer training – Actions for Autumn

This training is exactly as detailed in the title.... [training for new exams officers](#) where the main tasks and deadlines for autumn term (and to the normal exam entry deadline of 21st February) are covered. If you have been in post for less than a year or require a refresher course then this training event will, without doubt, serve your needs.

The content is designed to ensure that the foundations are laid for successfully managing, administering, and conducting examinations throughout the academic year.

For those exams officers who have been in role for more than a year, and therefore planned for the summer 2020 and/or 2021 exam series before they were cancelled, then it is likely that you will be aware of the areas covered in this training.

This training event informs delegates of upcoming tasks and key deadlines, and also provides an opportunity to network with fellow exams officers and ask questions of our presenters.

Delegates are also introduced to the 'exam cycle' which is a planning tool adopted by exams officers to ensure that key tasks are completed successfully and within the deadlines set by the

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JCQ and their awarding organisations. The *exam cycle* introduces new exams officers to the five key elements of the role:

- Planning
- Entries
- Pre-exams
- Exam Time
- Results and post-results

During the training event the main tasks and deadlines up to and including the normal summer series entry deadline (21st February) are covered, including:

- Building an annual exams plan – meeting key deadlines
- Exam-related policies
- Storing confidential exam materials
- The JCQ centre inspections
- Contingency planning
- Briefing candidates and staff
- The role of the Senior Leadership Team/Head of centre
- Access arrangements – the role of an exams officer
- Managing the exam entries process
- Managing your invigilation team
- Preparing candidates for exam days (November & January series)

As there is an autumn exam series planned for October (A level) and November and December (GCSE), this training includes brief reference to preparing candidates for exam days, and signposts to a series of videos which have been devised to support new exams officers engaged in an exam series in the initial months after their appointment. These are available to delegates to view in their centre.

The dates and locations for the *Actions for Autumn* training are:

Date	Location
30 September	Ashton Gate, Bristol
4 October	Ricoh Arena, Coventry
5 October	Kia Oval Cricket Ground, London
11 October	Hilton City, Leeds
14 October	Old Trafford Football Ground, Manchester

Experienced exams officer training – *Exam changes 2021/2022*

For those exams officers who are familiar with planning for and delivering an exam series, the main focus at the start of an academic year is to identify the changes made by the DfE, Ofqual, JCQ and their awarding bodies. Consequently, the [Exam changes 2021/2022 training](#), not only highlights and explains the changes within the ‘main’ JCQ publications, such as *Instructions for*

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conducting examinations and *General Regulations for Approved Centres*, but also changes within a range of other publications for the 2021/2022 academic year, including:

- Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (areas relevant to exams officers)
- Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures
- A guide to the special consideration process
- Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments
- Information for candidates – written exams, non-examination assessments, coursework, on-screen tests, Privacy Notice and Social Media
- ...and any other publications in which regulations have been added to, amended, updated or clarified

The content will include updates from the DfE and Ofqual requirements and a focus upon how examinations and assessments will be conducted in summer 2022 to accommodate students who have experienced disadvantage in the context of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

However, this training not only focuses upon exam regulation changes. There will be advice and guidance on how to undertake key tasks more effectively and efficiently, including how to update and train your invigilators, devise/update exams-related policies, and how to create a *Centre Exams Handbook* as a contingency measure in the event of the absence of the exams officer at key times during the academic year.

Content will also include an overview of professional development opportunities for exams officers, and how to ensure an effective programme of performance management and utilise the benefits of the newly launched *National Association of Examinations Officers*.

The dates and locations for the *Exam changes 2021/2022* training are:

Date	Location
28 September	Ricoh Arena, Coventry
29 September	Ashton Gate, Bristol
6 October	Kia Oval Cricket Ground, London
12 October	Hilton City, Leeds
13 October	Old Trafford Football Ground, Manchester
1 December	Kia Oval Cricket Ground, London

If you are still uncertain over which training event to book onto, please consider that all delegates who book onto our training events will also receive access to all of our training videos, including both the new and experienced exams officer training, to view in their centre.