MEMBER MESSAGE

Welcome back!

We hope that you have been able to enjoy some 'downtime' over the summer, and that you are fully refreshed ahead of a new academic year.

Staff at The Exams Office have been very busy since the end of the previous academic year in adding to support which is offered to exams officers within member centres. In the coming weeks, we will be sending you updates on the following areas/initiatives (all of which will be available as part of your membership to The Exams Office):

- Online cyber security training
- Updated online invigilator training (update to be sent during w/c 8 September)
- New and updated online tools, including the Invigilator Rota Planning Tool (update to be sent during w/c 22 September)
- (On demand) Planning Dispatch (update to be sent during w/c 22 September)
  This includes the Exams Manual, tabs to retain key information and a 50-leaf To-do pad
- Free invigilator badges (update to be sent during w/c 15 September)

You can find more information on these below.

If you are a new exams officer, welcome to your new role. Please visit the new exams officer section of our website to view the support which is available to you. We encourage you to complete the online New exams officer induction and assessment module and register for the new exams officer training which takes place across the country and is delivered in partnership with Cambridge OCR.

Training

Exams officers will be aware that existing JCQ regulations state that an exams officer must '...*receive appropriate training and support to facilitate the effective delivery of examinations and assessments within the centre and ensure compliance with the published JCQ and awarding body regulations*' (see General Regulations for Approved Centres, section 5.3c).

However, this section has been updated for 2025/26 to include the following stipulation:

> '...*must all undertake regular CPD, such as attending an annual update course*'

Therefore, please consider booking your place at one of our exams training events – which is delivered in partnership with Cambridge OCR - as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

- Exam Changes training on JCQ regulation changes for existing exams officers
- Actions for Autumn training for new exams officers as an introduction to their role and key tasks and deadlines from September to February
- Senior leader exam changes training to inform senior leaders/line managers of the impact of JCQ regulations upon their role

Cyber security training

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JCQ regulations have been updated for the 2025/26 academic to require '…*all members of centre staff who access awarding bodies' online systems (to) undertake annual cyber security training*'.

To help you meet this requirement, we have added online cyber security training (and a certificated assessment) to the Hub as part of your centre membership to The Exams Office.

(Also our latest *Question Time* podcast details the JCQ requirements for centres and centre staff in relation to cyber security)

Our cyber security training is specifically designed to meet the requirements as stated in section 3.21a of JCQ's General Regulations for Approved Centres document.

If you are the Centre Admin for your centre's Hub account, you can create user accounts for as many members of centre staff as required to access and complete this training – this includes teaching, non-teaching staff and invigilators.

(Note that any member of centre staff who already has an active user account in the Hub will automatically have access)

The appearance and functionality of the cyber security training is very similar to the invigilator training, incorporating three elements:

- Training content - information on key aspects of cyber security (including videos)
- Self-assessment - confirmation from users that they have understood the content
- Assessment - an online test which acquires certification upon successful completion

The training is divided into two sections and should take approximately 30-45 minutes.

Staff attempting the training can complete this during one or several sessions/sittings by saving their progress.

Although the assessment (which contains ten questions in each of the two sections) needs to be completed with a 100% pass rate, staff will only need to repeat questions which have been answered incorrectly.

Our cyber security training will be updated on an annual basis.

Invigilator Badges

To reward invigilators for completing online training and assessment (and as a gift from their exams officer), we will be offering an enamel badge to every invigilator who has completed at least one of the four units within our online training and assessment module.

Further details will be sent later this month, however, as we want to reward training completed during the last academic year, from early October you will be able to confirm the colour of badge you require for your invigilators for successful completion on the online training during the 2024/25 academic year. These badges will be posted in the new year.

However, for the 2025/2026 academic year, we will send badges for all invigilators who have completed the training by the end of April 2026 to arrive at your centre by the end of June 2026.

Please note that the badges will show a year ('2025') and not an academic year (2024/25), and although a badge will be available for each invigilator who has successfully completed at least one unit within the training and assessment module, this is limited to 50 badges per centre. Additional badges will be available for purchase for £1.50 per badge from The Exams Office Store.

This initiative will remain as part of your membership until further notice.

Invigilator Rota Planning Tool

In addition to the online cyber security training module, we are also launching an Invigilator Rota Planning Tool within the Hub.

An update will be sent to exams officers in member centres during week beginning 22 September to outline the benefits of this tool and how it can be used.

The Invigilator Rota Planning Tool will allow invigilators to:

- Confirm their availability
- Accept/decline allocated shifts

…and exams officers to:

- View invigilator availability
- Allocate shifts
- Add confirmed invigilator availability/shifts to an online calendar

The Invigilator Rota Planning Tool will be available as part of your membership to The Exams Office.

Invigilator Training and Assessment Module

Our online invigilator training and assessment units for 2025/26 will shortly be launched.

Exams officers in member centres will be sent an email to confirm the units are available together with information relating to the additional functionality which has been added in response to your feedback. This includes:

- A new layout - An easier to read and access format
- Additional and updated content - All content has been updated in line with JCQ's 2025/26 regulations and additional content has been added
- Self-assessment - Each section contains a self-assessment for invigilators to complete to confirm their awareness and understanding
- Repeating incorrectly answered questions only - Although we must impose a 100% pass-rate for each assessment to ensure the necessary rigour, in response to feedback, invigilators will only be required to reattempt questions which have been answered incorrectly
- Videos - Many sections will include newly created videos to aid invigilator's understanding of the regulations. These videos are currently in production and will be added in the coming weeks

Policy Generator Tool

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The content within the Policy Generator Tool is being reviewed and will be updated as JCQ documents are published. Therefore, the 2025/26 version of the interactive templates within this tool will be available over the course of the coming weeks.

NAEO SENCo conferences

To offer a level of support which is currently available to exams officers, the NAEO is proposing to host the following SENCo conferences:

- 27 January – London (Wembley Stadium)
- 2 February – Manchester (Old Trafford cricket ground)

Representatives from JCQ, the major awarding bodies and Ofqual will deliver presentations and keynote speeches to offer advice and guidance relating to access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and wider SEN matters.

The NAEO is facilitating these conferences in response to requests for SENCos to be supported in developing their knowledge and understanding of JCQ regulations, to have the opportunity to ask questions, and to network with colleagues in other centres.

Further information relating to the opening of the booking window and presentation content will be available in early October, however, please inform your SENCo of these conferences which will support their CPD and act as an annual update course (as required in JCQ's General Regulations for Approved Centres document, section 5.3c)

September ARTICLE

NEW EXAMS OFFICERS: A GUIDE TO STARTING YOUR NEW ROLE provides advice and guidance relating to five core areas for new exams officers to tackle during their first weeks in post.

The Exams Office NEWS and UPDATES

The Exams Office Store

As a reminder, we have relaunched The Exams Office Store.

All products we offer are fit for purpose, of the highest quality and, where relevant, compliant with the associated regulations regarding maintaining the integrity of the exams system, such as secure exams storage.

*Now offering a range of exclusives…*members are now able to purchase extra copies of the branded 2025/26 exams diary, wall planner and additional measuring sticks.

Please contact us at store@theexamsoffice.com if you have questions

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National Senior Leader/Line Manager Exams Conference 2026

A reminder that the booking window for the conference which takes place at Wembley Stadium on 28 January will open later in September.

Exams Training 2025/26

As a reminder, details of our training events taking place during autumn 2025 and spring 2026 are provided through the links below:

- EXAM CHANGES
- NEW EXAMS OFFICER
- SENIOR LEADER/LINE MANAGER

The Exams Office Hub

Exams Timetable Tool

The tool contains timetable data for exams taking place during the 2025/26 academic year.

Recent updates include the addition of OxfordAQA (Summer-26) data and a change to reflect AQA amends to the duration of GCSE MFL Writing Foundation exams in the Summer-26 series.

Key Dates Calendar Tool

The tool contains key dates for exam series during the 2025/26 academic year.

Recent updates include the addition of Cambridge OCR 2025/26 key dates.

Access to The Exams Office Hub

Reminder if you have yet used the Hub since last term:

Action required by Centre Administrators (those designated the user role **Centre Admin**)

On first time login any time after the system update which took place in early August, the Centre Admin is required to verify all centre users again before access is restored for all centre users.

To verify centre users, once logged in (current login credentials remain valid), the Centre Admin will be presented with a list of centre users from the 2024/25 academic year. Centre Admin is then required to select the centre users they want to carry forward into the 2025/26 academic year. Any user not selected/verified will be removed from the system.

Once the list of centre users has been verified, the validation process is complete. All retained centre users will then be able to proceed to login and use the system as normal as and when they need to.

If any centre user attempts to login in before the Centre Admin has approved/verified the centre user accounts, the user will be prompted to contact their Centre Admin. Centre Admin must perform the centre verification process before centre user accounts are restored and active once again.

Centre Admin users - do we hold the correct information for your centre?

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We ask that you regularly review the information we have listed for your centre in the Hub. To avoid any potential issues (such as user access, inability to book a conference place, etc. please check the following:

- **We have the correct Centre Admin listed for your centre** (this can be reviewed within the User Management area of the Hub)

  For example:

  The name of your Centre Admin will need updating if your Centre Admin leaves the role during the new academic year

  If the Centre Admin role has been taken over by a different member of the team and, although they are listed in the Hub, their role needs to be changed to Centre Admin

- **Your centre number, centre name and postal address are correct** (this can be reviewed within the Centre Management area)

- **Your centre's Finance email address is correct** (this can be reviewed within the Centre Management area)

If any of the above information requires updating/amending, please email
contact@theexamsoffice.com

National Association of Examinations Officers NEWS and UPDATES

September message and articles

CEO Message: Welcome to a new academic year…and greater clarity on the role and responsibilities of exams officers

(Exams article) JCQ regulations and shaping the exams officer role

(Mindfulness and Wellbeing article) Start as you mean to go on: A mindful approach to the new exam year

Member rewards

The randomly selected winners of the September member rewards draw are:

Joanne Jacques
Julie Lane
Paula Merrell
Cassandra Pulley
Rishan Singh

Well done to the individuals above. A £20 gift voucher will be on its way to you.

Membership reminder

Please remember that you need to renew your NAEO membership from 1 September every year.

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Membership renewal simply requires clicking on the re-registration details link at the bottom of the Join screen.

KEY TASKS and KEY DOCUMENTS

SEPTEMBER key tasks

A brief summary of main key tasks is provided here. In addition, the AUTUMN TERM CHECKLIST provides a general overview of key tasks and good practice during the period September to December.

Note you should always refer to awarding body key dates and timetables information to ensure you are aware of tasks you need to be carrying out in line with specific dates and deadlines.

PLANNING

The focus is on managing exam planning for 2025/26 by gathering information about qualifications being delivered in your centre this academic year. Start/continue to build your annual exams plan.

Familiarise yourself with any changes highlighted in relevant updated JCQ documents, particularly *General Regulations for Approved Centres* and *Instructions for conducting examinations*.

ENTRIES

Where applicable to your centre, prepare to make/submit entries for the November 2025 series. Refer to awarding body final exam timetable information and key dates information and/or the Exams Timetable Tool to confirm exam dates and the Key Dates Calendar Tool to confirm key dates and deadlines.

As may be applicable, be prepared to submit centre consortium arrangements (for the GCSE English Language, Spoken Language Endorsement) for the **November 2025** series.

Gather information regarding any qualifications that may require an upfront registration or qualification entry to be made, or entries to be made in early exam series (for example, the **January 2026** series).

Prepare to make estimated entries (where/if required by the awarding body) for the **Summer 2026** series.

PRE-EXAMS

Where applicable to your centre/any candidate(s), order modified papers for the November 2025 series

RESULTS AND POST-RESULTS

Continue to administer any post-results services requests for the **Summer 2025** series by the September deadline(s).

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For more detailed information on key tasks and JCQ key dates, refer to the monthly support guide added to The Exams Office Hub by the beginning of the month it relates to.

SEPTEMBER key documents

Key documents and resources are provided to support member centres in the management and administration of the exams process.

Templates can be customised for use in centres/content of templates can be used to inform electronic processes in centres.

Updated documents/resources to be published in the Hub during September include:

NEW EXAMS OFFICER: OCTOBER SUPPORT GUIDE
PLANNING: any remaining guides and templates
ENTRIES: DEADLINES FOR ENTRIES, FEES AND CHARGES TEMPLATE (November series)
PRE-EXAMS: A GUIDE TO MANAGING EXAM PREPARATION
EXAM TIME: A GUIDE TO MANAGING EXAM TIME
EXAM POLICY TEMPLATES: all templates
INVIGILATION SUPPORT: A GUIDE TO MANAGING INVIGILATOR RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING and the associated guides and templates

A reminder of updated documents/resources published in the Hub during August:

NEW EXAMS OFFICER:
  - INDUCTION SUPPORT GUIDE
  - INDUCTION: TASK COMPLETION CHECKLIST
  - EXAMS KEY TERMS GLOSSARY
  - SEPTEMBER SUPPORT GUIDE
TERMLY CHECKLISTS: AUTUMN TERM 2025/26
PLANNING:
  - ANNUAL EXAMS PLAN TEMPLATE (updated to v2)
  - A GUIDE TO MANAGING CONFIDENTIALITY AND SECURITY IN THE EXAM CYCLE
  - DECLARATION OF INTEREST FORM TEMPLATE
  - CONFLICTS OF INTEREST LOG TEMPLATE
  - CONFIDENTIAL MATERIALS LOG TEMPLATES
  - HANDLING SECURE ELECTRONIC MATERIALS LOG TEMPLATE
ENTRIES:
  - A GUIDE TO MANAGING ENTRIES
  - A GUIDE TO AVOIDING LATE ENTRIES
  - MANAGING ENTRIES: CANDIDATE NAMES AND GENDER IDENTITY
  - EXTERNAL ENTRIES COLLECTION FORM TEMPLATE
  - CHANGES TO ENTRY INFORMATION FORM TEMPLATE
  - LATE ENTRY FORM TEMPLATE
  - INTERNAL ENTRIES COLLECTION FORM TEMPLATE
EXAM POLICY TEMPLATES: POLICY CHECKLIST

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