

# Reconsidering the job title: Exams officer or Exams manager?

Should Exams officers be renamed as Exams managers?

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**National  
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# Discussion

**Do these statements describe your role within your centre?**

Do you...	Yes/No
... manage a team or department?	
... have responsibility for setting goals, organising work and ensuring productivity/outcomes within your area?	
... focus on day-to-day operations which maintain the smooth running of the examination system within your centre, including a range of administrative tasks, customer service and employee management?	
... implement strategies/decisions set by senior management or a higher, external authority?	
... delegate tasks, manage team performance and make operational decisions (routine, short-term choices to manage daily activities effectively) within your department?	
... possess skills related to leadership, communication and project management?	



# Ten factors supporting the case for recognising Exams officers as Exams managers

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# 1. Responsibility for the conducting of examinations/assessments

- Oversight for the administration and delivery of all examinations and assessments across every qualification and subject offered by the centre
- Serving as the sole point of accountability for the secure and compliant conduct of all examinations
- Preventing errors or non-compliance



## 2. Managing operational and regulatory risk

- Candidates
- Financial
- Centre reputation



### 3. Technical/regulation knowledge and expertise

- Possessing a thorough understanding of JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements, including:
  - JCQ exam-related policies
  - Online systems
  - Conducting examinations



## 4. Leading and co-ordinating teams/staff members

- Invigilators
- Reception staff
- Site staff



# 5. Supporting contingency and succession planning

**Temporary Cover Guidance:** Provide clear instructions for any staff member temporarily taking over the exams officer role. This should include:

- A list of essential tasks
- Step-by-step guidance on how to complete each task
- Relevant deadlines and timeframes

**Succession Planning:** Outline procedures to support the smooth transition to a new exams officer in the event of a permanent departure. This includes:

- Handover documentation
- Training recommendations
- Key contacts and system access details



## 6. Advising and guiding the head of centre and senior leadership team

Playing a vital role in helping the head of centre fulfil their responsibilities, including:

- Meeting the obligations outlined in the annual *Head of centre declaration*
- Ensuring full compliance with JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements
- Protecting the centre from incidents of malpractice and maladministration

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## 7. Managing the results and post-results process

Once results are issued, exams officers must be prepared to manage a range of enquiries about results, including requests for:

- Access to scripts
- Clerical re-checks
- Reviews of marking
- Reviews of moderation
- Appeals to awarding bodies

# 8. Stakeholder liaison

## Internal stakeholders

Exams officers are required to collaborate with:

- Head of Centre
- Senior Leadership Team / Line Manager
- Heads of Year
- Heads of Department
- Teaching and Subject Staff
- SENCo and Teaching/Learning Support Assistants
- Finance Team
- Reception Staff
- Site Staff
- Invigilators
- Students
- Parents and Carers

## External stakeholders

Exams officers must liaise with, or acquire information from, key external organisations, including:

- Department for Education – regarding exam-related policy
- Ofqual – for regulatory compliance
- JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) – for adherence to examination regulations
- Awarding Bodies – for exam administration
- Support and Representative Organisations – such as the National Association of Examinations Officers (NAEO) and The Exams Office



## 9. Skills

Skill	Description
Time management	Organising tasks efficiently to meet tight deadlines
People management	Leading and supporting staff such as invigilators and liaising with colleagues
Contingency planning and risk management	Preparing for unexpected events and minimising disruption
Task prioritisation and multitasking	Managing a busy workload and handling multiple responsibilities simultaneously
Problem solving	Responding calmly and effectively to challenges as they arise
Communication skills	Conveying information clearly to and from a wide range of stakeholders
Handling difficult conversations	Managing sensitive discussions with professionalism and empathy
Presentation skills	Delivering training or briefings confidently and clearly
Decision making	Making informed choices under pressure
Deadline management	Ensuring all exam-related tasks are completed on time
Collaborative working	Building strong working relationships across the centre

# 10. Mandatory training to uphold standards and security

Exams officers are required to complete a range of mandatory training activities in line with JCQ regulations. These include:

- Continuing Professional Development (CPD) such as attending an annual update course to stay informed of regulatory changes and best practices
- Role-specific training and support to facilitate the effective delivery of examinations and assessments within the centre and ensure full compliance with JCQ and awarding body requirements
- Annual cyber security training covering key areas outlined in JCQ regulations to safeguard sensitive exam-related data and systems

