

SHERBORNE AREA SCHOOLS' TRUST



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Exams Handbook

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Author (Name & Job Title)		Samantha Hole	
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Exams Policy

SAST Schools are committed to ensuring that the examinations and assessments management and administration process is run effectively and efficiently and in compliance with the published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements. This exam policy will ensure that:

- all aspects of the centre exam process are documented, supporting the contingency plan, and other relevant exams-related policies and procedures are signposted to
- the workforce is well informed and supported
- all centre staff involved in the process clearly understand their roles and responsibilities
- all exams and assessments are conducted according to JCQ and awarding body regulations, guidance and instructions, thus always maintaining the integrity and security of the examination/assessment system
- exam candidates understand the process and what is expected of them.

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure ways of working in the centre are accurately reflected and that exams and assessments are conducted to current JCQ (and awarding body) regulations, instructions and guidance.

This policy will be communicated to all relevant centre staff. It is the responsibility of all staff involved in the exam processes to read, understand and implement this policy

Statutory tests and qualifications offered

- The statutory tests and qualifications offered by SAST Schools are decided by the Head of Centre and Heads of Department (HOD)
- The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the schools published prospectus for that year.
- If there has been a change of syllabus or examination board from the previous year the Exams Manager (EM) must be informed by the 30th September.
- All candidates will be entitled and enabled to achieve an entry of qualifications from an external Awarding Body.
- Any decision not to enter a candidate for any individual qualification subject for which they have studied will be taken in consultation with the candidates, parents/carers, SENCO and appropriate school staff.

Internal Exams

Internal exams (Mocks) are scheduled throughout the academic year. They are held for year 9 to year 13. These exams are held under external exam conditions as set out by the JCQ.

External exams

The schedules for external exams are set by JCQ and the awarding bodies.

- November – GCSE resit for Maths and English

- January – BTEC, Cambridge Nationals and NCFE
- May and June – The main Summer exam series for GCE and GCSE

This policy identifies roles and responsibilities of centre staff within this cycle.

Entries

- Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the HOD and Subject Teachers.
- Candidates or parents/carers can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal. This must be agreed with the HOD
- The Exams Manager will liaise with HOD regarding entries and tiers of entry for individual candidates and will make the exam entries to the appropriate Awarding Body to meet the entry deadlines set by the Awarding Bodies.
- If a candidate requests a change of entry tier, or to withdraw from an examination he/she must first discuss the matter with the relevant subject teacher and HOD. If the deadline for entries set by the Awarding Body has passed then the relevant form, signed by the student, the parent/guardian and the HOD must be passed to the EM, together with the appropriate amendment fee charged by the awarding body, before any amendment takes place.
- Decisions on re-sits for BTEC exams will be taken by the HOD in conjunction with the candidate.

Exam fees

- Exam fees and BTEC registration fees are paid by the Centre.
- Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the department.
- The Centre will pay all normal exam fees on behalf of candidates and re-sits for candidates whose absence was due to illness, providing a medical certificate or doctor's letter has been provided.
- Fees/ reimbursements are sought from candidates who decide to sit an exam after the late entry/withdrawal deadline/fail to sit an exam/do not meet the necessary coursework requirements without medical evidence or evidence or other mitigating circumstances.
- If a candidate or parent/carer requests a late or amended entry, then the fee is charged to the candidate.
- Candidates will not be charged for changes of tier, withdrawals made by the proper procedures or alterations arising from administrative processes originated by the Centre and within the time allowed by the Awarding Bodies.
- Re-sit fees will be charged to the candidate
- Post result services will be charged to the candidate unless it is requested by the HOD from their budget.
- Candidates will be charged for exams not part of the school curriculum i.e. languages

Roles and responsibilities overview

The head of centre is the individual who is accountable to the awarding bodies for ensuring that the centre is always compliant with the published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements to ensure the integrity of the examinations/assessments. This individual must have the authority to

deploy the necessary resources to ensure that the centre is always compliant in meeting those published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements.

The Exams Officer is the person appointed by the head of centre to act on behalf of, and be the main point of contact for, the centre in matters relating to the general administration of awarding body examinations and assessments. The head of centre may not appoint themselves as the exams officer, they are two distinct and separate roles.

The Head of centre cannot also be the examinations officer. A head of centre and an examinations officer are two distinct and separate roles

The head of centre and /or exams officer may operate across more than one centre. In such cases the head of centre must ensure there is suitable senior leadership team and examinations officer support in place, so they can meet their obligations across all centres for which they are responsible. The head of centre must ensure that these arrangements are covered by their examination contingency plan.

Head of centre responsibilities

Heads of centre must ensure that senior leadership teams and exam office personnel familiarise themselves with the entire contents of JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres booklet. In particular, heads of centre must familiarise themselves with sections 5.1, 5.3 and 5.4.

Heads of centre must ensure that relevant members of staff respond promptly to requests and/or actions raised by the JCQ inspection service. Failure to do so could result in the centre not receiving or being able to access question papers and other confidential assessment materials. Ultimately, awarding bodies could withdraw approval of the centre.

Heads of centre must ensure that relevant members of staff respond promptly to requests for information from awarding bodies relating to the administration and conducting of examinations/assessments.

It is the responsibility of the head of centre to ensure that all staff comply with the instructions in the ICE document. Failure to do so may constitute malpractice as defined in the JCQ document Suspected malpractice: Policies and Procedures.

The Head of centre must ensure

- The compliance with the published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements to deliver the qualification(s)
- appropriate controls are in place which ensure accurate data is submitted to the awarding bodies by the required deadlines, e.g. registrations, entries, learner claims, centre-assessed marks or modified papers
- all reasonable steps are taken to respond promptly to requests for information or documentation made by an awarding body or regulatory authority

Head of centre

- Understands the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to current updated JCQ documents including:
 - A guide to the special consideration process (SC)
 - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (AARA)
 - AI Use in Assessments: Your role in protecting the integrity of qualifications
 - Guidance for centres on cyber security
 - Instructions for conducting coursework (ICC)
 - Instructions for conducting examinations (ICE)
 - Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (GCE and GCSE specifications) (NEA)
 - Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (Vocational and Technical Qualifications) (NEA VTQs)
 - Notice to Centres – Informing candidates of their centre-assessed marks
 - Plagiarism in Assessments – Guidance for Teachers/Assessors
 - Suspected Malpractice – Policies and Procedures (SMPP)
- Ensures the centre has appropriate accommodation at the registered address to support the size of the cohorts being taught, including appropriate accommodation for candidate requiring access arrangements and/or practical assessments
- Where using a third party to deliver any part of a qualification (including the assessments or the administration) at the centre:
 - Maintains oversight of, and responsibility for, the delivery and administration of the qualification in accordance with JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements
 - Has in place a robust written agreement with the third party (unless exclusions apply), that includes provisions which ensure that qualifications are delivered in a way that complies with their agreement with the awarding body to ensure there is a shared understanding of the arrangement and will manage the risk of failure by the third party to deliver the expected service.
 - Ensures that a copy of the written agreement is available for inspection if requested by the awarding body.
 - Monitors delivery by the third party to maintain compliance with the published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements, ensuring the security and integrity of examinations and assessments
 - Ensures sufficient managerial and other resources are in place to resolve any issues
- Ensures that relevant members of staff respond promptly to requests and/or actions raised by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service
- Ensures that relevant members of staff respond promptly to requests for information from awarding bodies relating to the administration and conducting of examinations and assessments
- Ensures that the centre promptly reports any incidents to the relevant awarding bodies which might compromise any aspect of assessment delivery, such as a cyber-attack
- Ensures other relevant centre staff where they may be involved in the receipt and dispatch of confidential exam materials are briefed on the requirements for maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of the exam materials
- Ensures members of centre staff do not forward emails and letters from awarding body or JCQ personnel without prior consent to third parties or upload such correspondence onto social media sites and applications (including third party applications)

- Ensures member of centre staff do not advise parents/candidates to contact awarding bodies/JCQ directly nor provide them with the names, addresses and contact details (including email addresses) of examiners, moderators, external verifiers and any other awarding body examining/assessment personnel/JCQ personnel

Resilience and contingency arrangements

The centre must ensure they are familiar with the regulators' guidance and/or awarding body guidance on ensuring resilience in the qualifications system. Centres should consider putting in place a process for gathering and securely retaining evidence of candidate performance in line with the published guidance.

In the unlikely event that the government determines that examinations cannot go ahead, the centre will need evidence of candidates assessment performance, such as mock examinations, to enable alternative methods of awarding grades

- Centres will keep 1 set of mock exams (completed under JCQ regulations) per subject as evidence of grades achieved

The centre must have an up to date written contingency plan.

The contingency plan must cover all aspects of examination/assessment administration and delivery. Senior leaders must have robust contingency arrangements in place that will minimise the risk to examination/assessment administration and delivery and any adverse impact on candidates.

The plan must cover the following scenarios:

- the head of centre, relevant senior leader(s) with oversight of examination and assessment administration, SENCo, examinations officer or any other key staff essential to the examination process being absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle
- the potential impact of other events such as flooding, which could lead to all or parts of the centre becoming unavailable
- potential issues with the centre's IT systems.

As part of its contingency plan the centre must identify an alternative site or alternative sites which can be used if examinations cannot be conducted at the registered address. Larger centres may require more than one potential alternative site or different sites for different year groups.

The centre must have at least one senior member of staff (senior designated contact) who is available to manage emergency requests from awarding bodies that are results related during the summer holidays. However, a number of contacts can be provided to reduce the risk of this falling on one individual throughout the summer holidays.

The centre must ensure where candidates' work is produced electronically it is backed-up and should consider the contingency of candidates' work being backed-up on two separate devices, including one off-site back-up via the cloud. The centre must implement appropriate security arrangements which protect candidates' work in the event of IT system corruption and cyber-attacks.

Cyber security

The head of centre must ensure there are procedures in place to maintain the security of user accounts by:

- providing training for authorised staff on the importance of creating strong unique passwords and keeping all account details secret
- providing training for staff on awareness of all types of social engineering/ phishing attempts
- enabling additional security settings wherever possible
- ensuring that all members of centre staff who access awarding bodies' online systems undertake annual cyber security training

The training must include:

- the importance of creating strong, unique passwords for all accounts
- keeping all account details strictly confidential
- the critical role of Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) in protecting against unauthorised access
- how to properly set up and use MFA for both centre and awarding bodies' systems
- an awareness of all types of social engineering/phishing attempts
- the importance of staff quickly reporting any suspicious activity, events, incidents and encouraging a safe and supportive reporting culture.

Certificates of completed staff cyber training must be downloaded and held on file for inspection.

- developing and maintaining a comprehensive cyber security policy for the centre.
- implementing and enforcing robust security measures, including:
 - mandatory MFA for all accounts and systems containing exam-related information, including those that interface between awarding body and centre systems, to enhance security and protect sensitive data
- regularly reviewing and updating security settings to align with current best practices
- updating any passwords that may have been exposed
- setting up secure account recovery options
- reviewing and managing connected applications
- monitoring accounts and regularly reviewing account access, including removing access when no longer required
- ensuring authorised members of staff securely access awarding bodies' online systems in line with awarding body regulations regarding cyber security and the JCQ document *Guidance for centres on cyber security*
 Authorised staff will have access, where necessary, to a device which complies with awarding bodies' multi-factor authentication (MFA) requirements.
- reporting any actual or suspected compromise of an awarding body's online systems immediately to the relevant awarding body

Recruitment, selection, training and support

- Retains a workforce of an appropriate size and competence, including sufficient managerial and other appropriate resources, to undertake the delivery and administration of the qualification and assessments as required by an awarding body. This includes taking reasonable steps to ensure occupational competence where this is required for the assessment of specific qualifications
- The centre's contingency planning must include succession arrangements for members of staff involved in examination and assessment administration.
- Provides fully qualified teachers/assessors for the verification and marking of centre-assessed components
- Ensures that teaching staff do not use artificial intelligence (AI) as the sole means of marking candidates work
- Enables the relevant senior leader(s), teachers, the examinations officer (EO) and the SENCo to 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
- Ensures the SENCo, the centres appointed access arrangement assessor and the EO undertake regular CPD, such as attending an annual update course.
- Ensures that the SENCo understands the JCQ document [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments](#) and is given sufficient time to manage the access arrangements process within the centre

- Ensures that the examinations officer understands relevant awarding body and JCQ documentation and has sufficient time to perform their role
- Ensures that any member(s) of the senior leadership team who are responsible for examination administration familiarise themselves with relevant awarding body and JCQ documentation (This will ensure the examinations officer and the SENCo are supported as well as ensuring effective centre decision making in line with the published regulations)
- Ensures that teachers understand the relevant awarding body and JCQ documentation for the qualifications they are delivering to ensure they are delivered in line with the relevant regulations
- Ensures that the Exams Officer is line managed and actively supported by a member of the senior leadership team who has a good working knowledge of the examination system

External and Internal governance arrangements

- Has in place a written escalation process should the head of centre, or a member of the senior leadership team with oversight of examination and assessment administration, be absent. – See **Escalation Process**
- Has in place a member of the senior leadership team who has a good working knowledge of the examination system, will provide effective line management support and supervision to the examinations officer to ensure that the integrity and security of examinations and assessments is maintained throughout an examination series
- Ensures centre staff undertake key tasks within the exams process and meet internal deadlines set by the EO
- Can confirm to an awarding body the external governance arrangements so that the awarding body has confidence in the integrity of centre activities such as the delivery of qualifications and the conducting of examinations and assessments.

Delivery of qualifications

- Delivers qualifications, as required by the awarding body and in accordance with relevant equality legislation. This includes but is not limited to ensuring that qualifications are made available to all candidates capable of undertaking them and seeking and implementing reasonable adjustments for disabled candidates
- Enables candidates to receive sufficient and up to date practical experience, or relevant training where required by the subject

Public liability

- Complies with local health and safety rules which are in place and that the centre is adequately covered for public liability claims

Controlled assessments, coursework and non-examination assessments

- Has in place arrangements to co-ordinate and standardise all marking of centre-assessed components and to ensure that candidates' centre-assessed work is produced, authenticated and marked, or assessed and quality assured in accordance with the awarding bodies' instructions (This applies to both internal and private candidates)
- Submits, in accordance with awarding bodies' instructions, information they may reasonably require in relation to their examinations and assessments, returning all subject-specific forms by the required date

Security of assessment materials

- Takes all reasonable steps to maintain the integrity of the examinations/assessments, including the security of all assessment materials, by ensuring:
- Takes all reasonable steps to maintain the integrity of the examinations/assessments, including the security of all assessment materials, by ensuring:
 - that assessment materials supplied to the centre by the awarding body, including pre-release materials and set assignments, and information about their contents are only shared with appropriate centre staff and candidates and are not shared outside the centre
 - reporting immediately to the awarding body/bodies any potential or actual breach of examination or assessment materials
- Makes arrangements to:
 - receive, check and store question papers and examination material safely and securely at all times and for as long as required in accordance with the current JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations*
 - access, download, print (where appropriate) and store electronic assessment materials safely and securely at all times in accordance with section 4 of the current JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations*
 - issue material received from the awarding bodies to staff and candidates, and notify them of any advice and instructions relevant to the examinations and assessments
- Provides candidates access to relevant pre-release materials on, or as soon as possible after, the date specified by the awarding bodies

National Centre Number Register and other information requirements

- Provides contact details as follows:
 - a physical address to which all examination and assessment materials will be despatched – this must be the registered address of the centre
 - a landline telephone number – this must be the number of the main office/ switchboard of the centre
 - a contact email address for communications – this must be the email address of the person or team responsible for the administration of examinations (Personal email addresses such as ‘Yahoo’, ‘Hotmail’ and ‘Gmail’ are not acceptable)
 - Note: Except for WJEC, if this is a shared email account it must not be used to access awarding body secure websites
 - the name of the head of centre and their email address
 - senior designated contact details (this might include a personal mobile number and/or email address) (These must be the contact details of someone who can be reached in an emergency if the centre is closed over the summer and who can mobilise resources to respond to the issue)
- Completes the National Centre Number Register annual update by the end of October every year even if there are no changes to centre details
 - informs the National Centre Number Register Team immediately (email address – ncn@ocr.org.uk) if any changes occur after the National Centre Number Register annual update has taken place (This must be on centre headed stationery which can be sent as an email attachment including the signature of the head of centre)
 - informs the National Centre Number Register Team (email address – ncn@ocr.org.uk) of any changes to relevant contact details no later than 6 weeks prior to moving to a new address or re-locating of the secure storage facility (This must be on centre headed stationery which can be sent as an email attachment)

- informs the National Centre Number Register Team immediately of any other changes in circumstances that could affect the centre's status
 - complete the National Centre Number Register Head of Centre Declaration by the end of October every year confirming they are aware of and adhering to the latest versions of the JCQ regulations
 - responds to any other reasonable requests made by the National Centre Number Register Team
- Understands that the responsibility for completing the Head of Centre declaration survey cannot be delegated to a member of the senior leadership team or the examinations officer, and acknowledges that failure to respond to the NCNR annual update, the head of centre's declaration and /or requests or actions raised by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service, will result in:
 - the centre status being suspended
 - the centre not being able to submit examination entries
 - the centre not receiving or being able to access question papers
 and ultimately, awarding bodies could withdraw their approval of the centre

Centre inspections

- Co-operates with the JCQ Centre Inspection Service, an awarding body or a regulatory authority when subject to an inspection, an investigation, an unannounced visit or any requests for information within the stipulated timeframes.
- Allows all venues used for examinations and assessments, paperwork and secure storage facilities to be open to inspection
- Understands the JCQ Centre Inspector will identify themselves with a formal identity document and must be accompanied throughout their tour of the premises, including inspection of the centre's secure storage facility

Policies available for inspection

Has in place the following policies written policies for inspection that must be reviewed and updated annually by a member of the senior leadership team and communicated within the centre:

- A Child protection/safeguarding policy, including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance, which satisfies current legislative requirements
- A complaints policy
- A conflict of interest policy
- A contingency plan which covers all aspects of examination/assessment administration and delivery
- A data protection policy
- An equalities policy
- An internal appeals procedure which covers at least appeals regarding internal assessment decisions, access to post-results services and appeals, and centre decisions relating to access arrangements and special consideration.
- A malpractice policy which covers all qualifications delivered by the centre. The policy must detail how candidates are informed and advised to avoid committing malpractice in examinations/assessments and how suspected malpractice issues should be escalated within the centre and reported to the relevant awarding body. It must also acknowledge the use of AI (e.g. what AI is, when it may be used and how it should be acknowledged, the risks of using AI, what AI misuse is and how this will be treated as malpractice).

- A policy regarding the management of non-examination assessments including controlled assessments and coursework.
- A whistleblowing policy
- A policy on the use of word processors in examinations
- A policy on Access Arrangements
- A policy on Lockdown

Conflicts of interest

- Manages conflicts of interest by informing the awarding bodies before the published deadline for entries for each examination series of any potential conflict of interest where:
 - any members of centre staff who are taking a qualification at this centre which includes internally-assessed components/units*
 - any members of centre staff who are teaching and preparing members of their family (which includes step-family, foster family and similar close relationships) or close friends and their immediate family (e.g. son/daughter) for qualifications which include internally-assessed components/units, **and**

maintains internal records (that confirm the measures taken/protocols in place to mitigate any potential risk to the integrity of the qualifications affected) of all instances where:

- exams office staff have members of their family (which includes step-family, foster family and similar close relationships) or close friends and their immediate family (e.g. son/daughter) being entered for examinations and assessments either at this centre or other centres
 - centre staff are taking qualifications at this centre which do not include internally-assessed components/units*
 - centre staff are taking qualifications at other centres
- Retains records of all conflicts of interest including details of the measures taken to mitigate any potential risk to the integrity of the qualifications affected (The records may be inspected by a JCQ Centre Inspector and/or awarding body staff. They might be requested in the event of concerns being reported to an awarding body. The records must be retained until the deadline for reviews of marking has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later)
- *Notes that entering members of centre staff for qualifications at their own centre must be as a last resort in cases where the member of centre staff is unable to find another centre, and ensures:
 - proper protocols are in place to prevent the member of centre staff having access to examination materials prior to the examination and that other centre staff are briefed on maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of the examination materials
 - during the examination series the member of centre staff is treated in the same way as any other candidate entered for that examination, does not have access to examination materials and does not receive any preferential treatment

Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments

(GR 5.4)

The head of centre/senior leadership team will:

- appoint a SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff, to coordinate the access arrangements process within the centre and determine appropriate arrangements for candidates with learning difficulties and disabilities, candidates for whom English is an additional language and those with a temporary illness or injury
- ensure that learners have the correct information and advice on their selected qualification(s) in an accessible format and that the qualification(s) meet their needs (The recruitment process

must include the centre assessing each potential learner and making justifiable and professional judgements about the learner's potential to complete the examinations/assessments successfully and achieve the qualification(s). The centre's assessment must identify, where appropriate, the support that will be made available to the learner to facilitate access to examinations/assessments)

- recognise its duties towards disabled candidates, including private candidates, ensuring compliance with all aspects of the Equality Act 2010†, particularly Section 20 (7) (This must include a duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, to submit applications for reasonable adjustments through the access arrangements process and to make reasonable adjustments to the services the centre provides to disabled candidates. Where the centre is under a duty to make a reasonable adjustment, the centre must not charge a disabled candidate any additional fee in relation to the adjustment or aid)
†for any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect
- ensure that the SENCo undertakes the necessary and appropriate steps to gather a picture of need and demonstrate normal way of working for a private candidate, such as a distance learner or a home educated student (The centre, where required, must lead on the assessment process. The candidate must be assessed by the centre's appointed assessor. In some instances, depending on their needs, the candidate may have to be assessed away from the centre, for example at home. The centre must comply with the obligation to identify the need for, request and implement access arrangements)
- ensure that where a candidate with a learning difficulty requires an assessment of their needs, they are assessed by an appropriately qualified assessor as appointed by the head of centre (Evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) must be obtained before they assess candidates and must be held on file for inspection)
- have a written process in place to check the qualification(s) of their assessor(s) and that the correct procedures are followed as in Chapter 7 of the JCQ document *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*
- assist the awarding bodies in the discharge of their duty to make reasonable adjustments by requesting access arrangements, where required, and fully support the SENCo in effectively implementing those arrangements once approved

Malpractice

The centre will:

- take all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any malpractice (which includes maladministration) before, during and after assessments have taken place
- inform the awarding immediately of any alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice or maladministration, involving a candidate or a member of staff, by completing the appropriate documentation
- as required by an awarding body, ensures evidence of any instances of alleged or suspected malpractice (which includes maladministration) is gathered in accordance with the current JCQ document *Suspected Malpractice - Policies and Procedures* and provides such information and advice as the awarding body may reasonably require
- Ensures any person involved in administering, teaching or completing examinations/assessments is advised that where malpractice is suspected, or alleged, personal data about them will be provided to the awarding body (or bodies) whose examinations/assessments are involved. Personal data about them may also be shared with other awarding bodies, the qualifications regulator or professional bodies in accordance with the JCQ document *Suspected Malpractice – Policies and Procedures*

Personal data

It is the responsibility of centres to inform candidates of the processing that the centre undertakes. For example, that the centre will provide relevant personal data including name, date of birth, gender to the awarding bodies for the purpose of examining and awarding qualifications.

Materials which are submitted by candidates for assessment may include any form of written work, audio and visual materials, computer programs and data ("Student Materials"). Awarding bodies may use the Student Materials to evaluate candidates' performance in the relevant assessment. They may also use the Student Materials for other purposes as outlined in their privacy policies and in accordance with their terms. Candidates should be directed to the relevant awarding body's privacy notice if they require further information about how their Student Materials may be used by the awarding body.

Where a centre or third party is in possession of any Student Materials for the purposes of candidate assessment, the Student Materials will be held on behalf of the awarding body.

Exams Manager/Officer

- Understands the contents of annually updated JCQ documents including:
 - General regulations for approved centres
 - Instructions for conducting examinations
 - Suspected Malpractice – Policies and Procedures
 - Post-results services (PRS)
 - A guide to the special consideration process
- Completes/submits the National Centre Number Register annual update (administered on behalf of the JCQ member awarding bodies by Cambridge OCR <https://ocr.org.uk/administration/ncn-annual-update/>) by the end of October every year even if there are no changes to centre details, to confirm the centres contact details or informs of any changes. (Follows the process in GR 5.3 if any changes occur after the annual update has taken place)
- Is familiar with the contents of annually updated information from awarding bodies on administrative procedures, key tasks, key dates and deadlines
- Ensures key tasks are undertaken and key dates and deadlines met
- Recruits, trains and deploys a team of internal/external invigilators; appoints lead invigilators, as may be applicable to the centre and keeps a record of the content of training provided to invigilators for the required period.
- Works with the SENCo to ensure invigilators supervising access arrangement candidates and those acting as a facilitator supporting access arrangement candidates fully understand the respective role and what is and what is not permissible in the exam room
- Supports the head of centre in ensuring that awarding bodies are informed (where required) of any conflict of interest declared by members of centre staff and in maintaining internal records that confirm the measures taken/protocols in place to mitigate any potential risk to the integrity of the qualifications affected before the published deadline for entries for each examination series
- Briefs other relevant centre staff where they may be involved in the receipt and dispatch of confidential materials on the requirements for maintaining the integrity and security of confidential examination/assessment materials.

Senior leaders (SLT)

- Are familiar with the contents, refer to and direct relevant centre staff to annually current JCQ documents including:
 - A guide to the special consideration process
 - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments
 - AI Use in Assessments: Your role in protecting the integrity of qualifications
 - Guidance for centres on cyber security
 - Instructions for conducting coursework
 - Instructions for conducting examinations
 - Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (GCE and GCSE specifications)
 - Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (Vocational and Technical Qualifications)
 - Notice to Centres – Informing candidates of their centre-assessed marks
 - Plagiarism in Assessments – Guidance for Teachers/Assessors
 - Post-Results Services
 - Suspected Malpractice – Policies and Procedures
- Ensures teaching staff undertake key tasks, as detailed in this policy, within the exams process and meet internal deadlines set by the EO and SENCo
- Ensures teaching staff keep themselves updated with awarding body subject and teacher-specific information to confirm effective delivery of qualifications.
- Ensures teaching staff attend relevant awarding body training and update events.

Special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo)

- Understands the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to current updated JCQ documents including:
 - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments
- Leads on the access arrangements and reasonable adjustments process (referred to in this policy as ‘access arrangements’)
- If not the qualified access arrangements assessor, works with the person appointed, on all matters relating to assessing candidates and ensures the correct procedures are followed
- Presents when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor’s qualification
- Ensures any applications for access arrangements or reasonable adjustments are submitted by the published deadline (The SENCo will hold on file appropriate documentary evidence to substantiate such an arrangement, which is open to inspection. For those qualifications covered by Access Arrangements Online, a JCQ Centre Inspector will sample a centre’s applications)
- Ensures a file is presented which must contain for each online application the downloaded approval for the respective arrangement(s) and supporting evidence of need (This information must be readily available for inspection at the venue where the candidate is taking the examination(s))
- Ensures requests for modified papers are submitted by the published deadline
- Ensures there are appropriate resources in place at the time of examinations/assessments to meet candidates’ needs, e.g. sufficient readers and scribes

Heads of departments (HoD)

- Ensures teaching staff undertake key tasks, as detailed in this policy, within the exams process (exam cycle) and meet internal deadlines set by the EM and SENCo
- Ensures teaching staff keep themselves updated with awarding body subject and teacher-specific information to confirm effective delivery of qualifications
- Ensures teaching staff attend relevant awarding body training and update events
- Notes the internal deadlines in the annual exams plan and directs teaching staff to meet these

Teaching staff

- Undertake key tasks, as detailed in this policy, within the exams process and meet internal deadlines set by the EO and SENCo
- Keep updated with awarding body subject and teacher-specific information to confirm effective delivery of qualifications
- Attend relevant awarding body training and update events

Invigilators

- Attend/undertake training, on the current regulations, update, briefing and review sessions annually or as required if sooner
- Provide information as requested on their availability to invigilate
- Sign a confidentiality and security agreement and confirm whether they have any current maladministration/malpractice sanctions applied to them

Administration Team

- Support the EO in the receipt and dispatch of confidential materials and follow the requirements for maintaining the integrity and security of confidential examination/assessment materials.

Site staff

- Support the EO in relevant matters relating to exam rooms and resources

Candidates

Where applicable in this policy, the term ‘candidates’ refers to candidates and/or their parents/carers.

The exam cycle

The exams management and administration process that needs to be undertaken for each exam series is referred to as the exam cycle and relevant tasks which need to be undertaken before, during and after an exam series grouped into the following stages:

- planning
- entries
- pre-exams
- exam time

- results and post-results

This Policy identifies roles and responsibilities of centre staff within this cycle

Planning: roles and responsibilities

Secure materials

Head of centre

- Ensures the centre has a secure storage facility in a room solely assigned to examinations

The secure room and the secure storage facility

Question papers and pre-release materials issued by the awarding bodies must always be stored at the centre's registered address in a secure room with a secure storage facility, e.g. safe or security cabinet.

The secure room

The secure room must only be used for the purpose of administering secure examination materials.

Access to the secure room **must** be restricted to between two and six key holders, one of whom **must** be the exams officer. The two to six key holders **must** be permanent members of staff or members of staff who have a formal contract of employment and are subject to standard HR policies and procedures...

The secure room **must** be accessible throughout an examination series for the storage of question papers and be available for inspection.

The secure storage facility

Access to the secure storage facility **must** be restricted to between two and six key holders, one of whom **must** be the exams officer.

The two to six key holders **must** either be part of the exams team or the senior leadership team. A key holder from the exams team **must** be a permanent member of staff or a member of staff who has a formal contract of employment and is subject to standard HR policies and procedures...

When the secure storage facility is being accessed for the storage and preparation of secure assessment materials the door to the secure room **must** be closed.

Exams Manager

- Makes arrangements to receive, check and store question papers and examination material safely and securely at all times and for as long as required in accordance with the current JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations
- Makes arrangements to receive and issue material received from the awarding bodies to staff and candidates, and notify them of any advice and instructions relevant to the examinations and assessments
- Allows candidates access to relevant pre-release materials on, or as soon as possible after, the date specified by the awarding bodies

Information sharing

Exams Manager/Officer

- Directs relevant centre staff to JCQ documents and awarding body documentation relating to the exams process that has been updated

- Signposts teaching staff to relevant JCQ documents for candidate's documents that are annually updated.
- Signposts relevant centre staff to JCQ information that must be provided for candidates
- As the centre administrator, approves relevant access rights for centre staff to access awarding body secure extranet sites

Information gathering

Exams officer

- Undertakes an annual information gathering exercise in preparation for each new academic year to ensure data about all qualifications being delivered is up to date and correct
- Collates all information gathered into one central point of reference
- Researches awarding body guidance to identify administrative processes, key tasks, key dates and deadlines for all relevant qualifications
- Produces an annual exams plan of key tasks and key dates to ensure all external deadlines can be effectively met; informs key centre staff of internal deadlines
- Collects information on internal exams/assessments to enable preparation for and conduct of Mock Exams

Senior leaders and Head of department

- Responds (or ensures teaching staff respond) to requests from the EO on information gathering
- Meets the internal deadline for the return of information
- Informs the EO of any changes to information in a timely manner minimising the risk of late or other penalty fees being incurred by an awarding body
- Notes the internal deadlines in the annual exams plan and directs teaching staff to meet these

Access arrangements

Head of centre

- Ensures the centre has documented processes in place relating to access arrangements and reasonable adjustments
- Ensures the SENCo is fully supported in effectively implementing access arrangements and reasonable adjustments once approved

SENCo

- Assesses candidates (or works with the appropriately qualified assessor as appointed by the head of centre) to identify access arrangements/reasonable adjustments requirements
- Gathers evidence to support the need for access arrangements for a candidate
- Liaises with teaching staff to gather evidence of normal way of working of a candidate
- Determines candidate eligibility for arrangements or adjustments that are centre-delegated
- Informs relevant candidates that an application for access arrangements will be processed using Access Arrangements Online (AAO), complying with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018
- Applies for approval using AA) via the Centre Admin Portal (CAP), where required or through the awarding body where any qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO
- Passes relevant paperwork to the EO to apply for approval through AAO via CAP, where required or through the awarding body where any qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO

- Keeps a file for each candidate for JCQ inspection purposes containing all the required documentation (if documentation is stored electronically, an e-folder must be created for each individual candidate. The candidate's e-folder must hold each of the required documents for inspection)
- Notification of AA to parents/guardians
- Employs good practice in relation to the Equality Act 2010
- Liaises with the EO regarding exam time arrangements for access arrangement candidates
- Ensures staff appointed to facilitate access arrangements for candidates are thoroughly trained and understand the rules of the particular arrangement(s) and keeps a record of the content of training provided to facilitators for the required period
- Works with the EO to ensure invigilators and those acting as a facilitator fully understand the respective role and what is and what is not permissible in the exam room
- Ensures criteria for candidates granted **alternative rooming arrangements** is clear, meets JCQ regulations and best meets the needs of individual candidates and remaining candidates in main exam rooms. **See Access Arrangement Policy**
- Where relevant, ensures the necessary and appropriate steps are undertaken to gather an appropriate picture of need and demonstrate normal way of working for a private candidate (including distance learners and home educated candidates) and that the candidate is assessed by the centre's appointed assessor (at the expense of the private candidate)

Exams officer

- Applies for approval using AAO via CAP, where required or through the awarding body where any qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO
- Liaises with the relevant member of SLT and SENCo on producing the centres policy on the use of word processors in examinations. **See Word Processor Policy (Exams)**

Senior Leaders, Head of department, Teaching staff

- Support the SENCo in determining and implementing appropriate access arrangements/reasonable adjustments
- Senior Leader provides an annually reviewed and updated word processor policy, specific to the centre, which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations

Internal assessment and endorsements

Head of centre

Controlled assessments, coursework, non-examination assessments and portfolios of evidence

- Ensures that where candidates are taking non-examination assessments, teaching staff check that the tasks and approach being taken are appropriate and in line with ethical standards and the centre's safeguarding responsibilities
- Ensures awarding bodies are notified of a consortium of centres with joint teaching arrangements for qualifications (This will allow the candidates for each specification to be treated as a single group for the moderation of centre- assessed work. This is only required if two or more member centres will be entering candidates for work that is centre-assessed)
- Ensures only current assessment materials/tasks are used to assess candidates' knowledge and skills (in cases where the awarding body provides such material)

- Before submitting marks to the awarding body ensures candidates are informed of their centre-assessed marks and allows a candidate to request a review of the centre's marking
- Ensures that all associated administrative tasks are completed in an accurate and timely manner, e.g. marks are correctly calculated, recorded and submitted by the published date (It is the responsibility of the centre to carefully check the marks it is submitting to an awarding body)
- Ensures submission of centre-assessed marks and moderation samples, if required by the awarding body, by the published date (It is the responsibility of the centre to ensure that moderators receive the correct samples of work to review)
- Ensures a written internal appeals procedure relating to internal assessment decisions is in place and ensures that details of this procedure are communicated, made widely available and accessible to all candidates
- Ensures a written policy regarding the management of non-examination assessments, including controlled assessments and coursework which includes details on how candidates work will be authenticated, is in place
- Ensures that where candidates' work is produced electronically it is backed-up and considers the contingency of candidates work being backed-up on two separate devices, including one off-site back-up via the Cloud. (Implementing appropriate security arrangements which protect candidates work in the event of IT system corruption and cyber-attacks).

Senior leaders

- Ensure teaching staff have the necessary and appropriate knowledge, understanding, skills, and training to set tasks, conduct task taking, and to assess, mark and authenticate candidates' work (including where relevant, private candidates)
- Ensure appropriate internal moderation, standardisation and verification processes are in place
- Ensures teaching staff delivering GCE and GCSE specifications and Vocational and Technical Qualifications (which include components of non-examination assessment) follow JCQ Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments and the specification provided by the awarding body
- Ensure teaching staff delivering qualifications which include (wholly or in part) units of coursework follow JCQ Instructions for conducting coursework and the specification provided by the awarding body
- Ensures teaching staff inform candidates of their centre-assessed marks as a candidate may request a review of the centre's marking before marks are submitted to the awarding body
- Ensures work is returned to candidates or disposed of according to the requirement

Teaching staff

- Ensure appropriate instructions for conducting internal assessment are followed
- Ensure candidates are aware of JCQ and awarding body information for candidates on producing work that is internally assessed (coursework, non-examination assessments, social media) prior to assessments taking place
- Ensure candidates are informed of their centre-assessed marks as a candidate may request a review of the centre's marking before marks are submitted to the awarding body

Exams officer

- Identifies relevant key dates and administrative processes that need to be followed in relation to internal assessment
- Signposts teaching staff to relevant JCQ *information for candidate's* documents that are annually updated

- Informs candidates and their guardians on how to access the JCQ information for candidate's documents.

Invigilation

Head of centre

- Ensures relevant support is provided to the EO in recruiting, training and deploying a team of invigilators
- Ensures, if contracting supply staff to act as invigilators, that such persons are competent and fully trained, understanding what is and what is not permissible (and not taking on its own an assurance from a recruitment agency, that this is the case)
- Determines if additional invigilators will be deployed in timed Art exams in addition to the subject teacher to ensure the supervision of candidates is maintained at all times
- Ensures that, wherever possible the following individuals are not assigned as invigilators during an examination: a teacher, a teaching assistant, a tutor or a senior member of centre staff who teaches the subject being examined or a learning support assistant who has supported one or more candidates

Exams officer

- Recruits additional invigilators where required to effectively cover all exam periods/series throughout the academic year
- Collects information on new recruits to identify if they have invigilated previously and if any current maladministration or malpractice sanctions are applied to them
- Provides through training for new invigilators on the current instructions for conducting examinations and an update for the existing invigilation team so that they are aware of any changes in a new academic year before they are allocated to invigilate an exam
- Ensures invigilators supervising access arrangement candidates understand their role (and the role of a facilitator who may be supporting a candidate) and the rules and regulations of the access arrangement(s)
- Ensures invigilators are briefed on the access arrangement candidates in their exam room and made aware of the access arrangement(s) awarded (ensuring these candidates are identified on the seating plan) and confirms invigilators understand what is and what is not permissible
- Collects evaluation of training to inform future events

Entries and Registrations: roles and responsibilities

Head of centre

Ensures the centre's obligations as detailed in the regulations are met.

Estimated entries

Exams officer

- Requests estimated or early entry information, where this may be required by awarding bodies, from HOD in a timely manner to ensure awarding body external deadlines for submission can be met

Senior Leaders/Head of department

- Provides entry information requested by the EO to the internal deadline

- Informs the EO immediately of any subsequent changes to entry information

Final entries

Head of Centre

- Ensures appropriate controls are in place which allow accurate data to be submitted to the awarding bodies, e.g. registrations, entries, learner claims

Exams officer

- Requests final entry and registration information from HOD in a timely manner to ensure awarding body external deadlines for submission can be met
- Informs senior leaders of subsequent deadlines for making changes to final entry information without charge
- Submits registrations, examination entries and certification claims by the deadline(s) and complies with the requirements of the specification including any terminal rules which need to be met at the point of certification
- Confirms with senior leaders final entry information that has been submitted to awarding bodies
- Ensures as far as possible that entry processes minimise the risk of entries or registrations being missed reducing the potential for late or other penalty fees being charged by awarding bodies
- Observes each awarding body's terms and conditions for the registration, entry and timely withdrawal of candidates for their examinations and assessments, and observes any regulatory requirements for the qualification

Senior leaders/Head of department

- Provides information requested by the EO to the internal deadline
- Informs the EO immediately, or at the very least prior to the deadlines, of any subsequent changes to final entry information, which includes
 - changes to candidate personal details
 - amendments to existing entries
 - withdrawals of existing entries
- Checks final entry submission information provided by the EO and confirms information is correct

Late entries

Exams officer

- Has clear entry procedures in place to minimise the risk of late entries
- Charges any late or other penalty fees to departmental budgets

Head of department

- Minimises the risk of late entries by
 - following procedures identified by the EO in relation to making final entries on time
 - meeting internal deadlines identified by the EO for making final entries

Candidate statements of entry

Exams officer

- Provides candidates with statements of entry for checking

Teaching staff

- Ensure candidates check statements of entry and return any relevant confirmation required to the EO

Candidates

- Confirm entry information is correct or notify the EO of any discrepancies

Pre-exams: roles and responsibilities

Head of centre

Ensures the centre's obligations as detailed in the regulations are met.

Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments

SENCo

- Ensures appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access to exams/assessments for candidates with learning difficulties or disabilities, those for whom English is an additional language and those with a temporary illness or injury
- Ensures a candidate is involved in any decisions about arrangements, adjustments and /or adaptations that may be put in place for them
- Ensures exam information (JCQ information for candidates documents, individual exam timetable etc.) is adapted where this may be required for a candidate to access it
- Where relevant, ensures the necessary and appropriate steps are undertaken to gather an appropriate picture of need and demonstrate normal way of working for a private candidate (such as a distance learner or a home educated student) and that the candidate is assessed by the centre's appointed assessor

Exams officer

- Allocates appropriately trained centre staff to facilitate access arrangements for candidates in exams and assessments (ensuring that the facilitator appointed meets JCQ requirements and fully understands the rule of the access arrangement)
- Ensures the person appointed to facilitate an access arrangement must not normally be the candidate's own subject teacher, Learning Support Assistant or teaching assistant (Where the candidate's own subject teacher, Learning Support Assistant or teaching assistant is used, a separate invigilator must always be present)

Briefing candidates

Exams officer

- Issues individual exam timetable information to candidates and informs candidates of any designated contingency sessions awarding bodies may identify in the event of national or significant local disruption to exams
- Prior to exams issues relevant JCQ information for candidates documents (coursework, non-examination assessments, on-screen tests, social media and written examinations) and awarding body privacy notices
- Where relevant, issues relevant awarding body information to candidates
- Issues centre exam information to candidates including information on:
 - exam timetable clashes
 - arriving late for an exam

- absence or illness during exams
- what equipment is/is not provided by the centre
- food and drink in exam rooms
- unauthorised items in exam rooms
- when and how results will be issued and the staff that will be available
- the post-results services information and how the centre will deal with requests from candidates
- when and how certificates will be issued

Dispatch of exam scripts

Exams officer

- Identifies and confirms arrangements for the dispatch of candidate exam scripts with the DfE (STA) 'yellow label service' or the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of the service

Internal assessment and endorsements

Head of centre

- Ensures procedures are in place for candidates to appeal internal assessment decisions and make requests for reviews of marking

SENCo

- Liaises with teaching staff to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates undertaking internal assessments and practical endorsements

Teaching staff

- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates undertaking internal assessments and practical endorsements
- Assess and authenticate candidates' work
- Assess endorsed components
- Ensure candidates are informed of centre-assessed marks prior to marks being submitted to awarding bodies

Senior leaders

- Ensures teaching staff assess and authenticate candidates' work to the awarding body requirements
- Ensures teaching staff assess endorsed components according to awarding body requirements
- Ensures teaching staff provide marks for internally assessed components and grades for endorsements of qualifications to the EO to the internal deadline
- Ensures teaching staff provide required samples of work for moderation and sample recordings for monitoring to the EO to the internal deadline
- Enters marks for internally assessed components on to the awarding body secure areas by the external deadline

Exams officer

- Ensures HODs are aware of the awarding body deadlines for submitting marks and samples of internally assessed units.
- Posts by recorded delivery of Parcel Force all requested samples of internally assessed units to awarding bodies/moderators to meet the external deadline
- Keeps a record to track what has been sent

- Logs moderated samples returned to the centre
- Ensures teaching staff are aware of the requirements in terms of retention and subsequent disposal of candidates' work

Candidates

- Authenticate their work as required by the awarding body

Invigilation arrangements

Exams officer

- Provides an annually reviewed/updated invigilator handbook to invigilators, trains new invigilators on the current regulations on appointment and updates the existing invigilation team on any regulation changes and any changes to centre-specific arrangements
- Deploys invigilators effectively to exam rooms throughout an exam series (including the provision of a roving invigilator where a candidate and invigilator [acting as a practical assistant, prompter, reader or scribe] are accommodated on a 1:1 basis to enter the room at regular intervals in order to observe the conducting of the exam, ensure all relevant rules are being adhered to and to support the practical assistant/prompter/reader and/or scribe in maintaining the integrity of the exam)
- Allocates invigilators to exam rooms (or where supervising candidates due to a timetable clash) according to the required ratios
- Liaises with the SENCo regarding the facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates

SENCo

- Liaises with the EO regarding facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates

Invigilators

- Provide information as requested on their availability to invigilate throughout an exam series

JCQ Centre Inspections

Exams officer or Senior leader

- Will accompany the Inspector throughout a visit

SENCo or relevant Senior leader (in the absence of the SENCo)

- Will meet with the inspector when requested to provide documentary evidence regarding access arrangement candidates and address any questions the inspector may raise
- Ensures that information is readily available for inspection at the venue where the candidate is taking the exam(s)

Seating and identifying candidates in exam rooms

Exams officer

- Ensures a procedure is in place to verify candidate identity including private candidates
- Ensures invigilators are aware of the procedure
- Provides seating plans for exam rooms according to JCQ and awarding body requirements (and ensures candidates with access arrangements are identified on the seating plan and

invigilators are informed of those candidates with access arrangements and made aware of the access arrangement(s) awarded)

Invigilators

- Follow the procedure provided by the EO which details how the identity of all candidates sitting exams will be confirmed
- Seat candidates in exam rooms as instructed by the EO/on the seating plan

Security of exam materials

Exams officer

- Confirms appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure that confidential exam materials are only handed over to authorised members of staff
- Ensures access to the secure room is restricted and staff approved by the head of centre are accompanied by a key holder at all times.
- Has a process in place to demonstrate the receipt, secure movement and secure storage of confidential exam materials within the centre
- Ensures a log is kept at the initial point of delivery recording confidential materials received and signed for by authorised staff within the centre and that appropriate arrangements are in place for confidential materials to be immediately transferred to the secure storage facility until they can be removed from the dispatch packaging and checked in the secure room before being returned to the secure storage facility in timetable order
- Carefully checks question paper packets when they are removed from the dispatch packaging and keeps a log of the check
- Ensures the secure storage facility contains only current and live confidential material (ensuring that past examination question papers, internal tests and mock examinations are not kept in the centre's secure storage facility)
- Ensures that examination stationery, e.g. answer booklets and formula booklets are stored in the secure room (attempting to store this material in the secure storage facility, when sufficient space allows)
- Ensures the integrity and security of any electronic question paper is maintained during the downloading, printing and collating process (ensuring printing is carried out in a secure environment at the centre to prevent unauthorised personnel accessing live assessment materials and ensuring only authorised members of centre staff have access to electronic question paper materials)
 - A minimum of two and a maximum of six members of centre staff should be authorised to handle secure electronic materials, one of whom must be the exams officer. Other members of centre staff may assist with printing and collation provided they are under supervision.
 - Ensures that the question paper is printed correctly, is of good quality and is collated in the right order

Reception staff

- Follow the process to log confidential materials delivered to/received by the centre to the point materials are issued to authorised staff for transferal to the secure storage facility

Teaching staff

- Adhere to the process to record the secure movement of confidential materials taken from or returned to secure storage throughout the time the material is confidential

Timetabling and rooming

Exams officer

- Produces a master centre exam timetable for each exam series
- Identifies and resolves candidate exam timetable clashes according to the regulations (only applying overnight supervision arrangements as a last resort, once all other options have been exhausted and according to the centre's policy)
- Identifies exam rooms and specialist equipment requirements
- Allocates invigilators to exam rooms (or where supervising candidates due to an exam timetable clash) according to required ratios
- Liaises with site staff to ensure exam rooms are set up according to JCQ and awarding body requirements
- Liaises with the SENCo regarding rooming of access arrangement candidates

SEnCo

- Liaises with the EO regarding rooming of access arrangement candidates
- Liaises with other relevant centre staff to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams

Site staff

- Liaise with the EO to ensure exam rooms are set up according to JCQ and awarding body requirements

Alternative site arrangements

Exams officer

- Ensures question papers will only be taken to an alternative site where the published criteria for an alternative site arrangement has been met
- Will inform the JCQ Centre Inspection Service to timescale by submitting a JCQ *Alternative Site* form online using CAP (or through the awarding body where a qualification may sit outside the scope of CAP) of any alternative sites that will be used to conduct timetabled examination components of the qualifications listed in the JCQ regulations

Centre consortium arrangements

Exams officer

- Processes applications for *Centre Consortium arrangements* through CAP to the awarding body deadline (or through the awarding body where a qualification may sit outside the scope of CAP)

Senior leaders

- Informs the EO of any joint teaching arrangements in place and where the centre is acting as the consortium co-ordinator

Transferred candidate arrangements

Exams officer

- Liaises with the host or entering centre, as required
- Processes requests for *Transferred Candidate arrangements* using CAP to the awarding body deadline (or through the awarding body where a qualification may sit outside the scope of CAP)
- Where relevant (for an internal candidate) informs the candidate of the arrangements that have been made for their transferred candidate arrangements

Internal exams/assessments

Exams officer

- Prepares for the conduct of internal exams/assessments under external conditions
- Provides a centre exam timetable of subjects and rooms
- Provides seating plans for exam rooms
- Requests internal exam papers from teaching staff
- Arranges invigilation
- Ensures exams are conducted according to JCQ and awarding body instructions
- Briefs invigilators on conducting internal exams

SENCo

- Liaises with teaching staff to make appropriate arrangements for access arrangement candidates

Teaching staff

- Provide exam papers and materials to the EO
- Support the SENCo in making appropriate arrangements for access arrangement candidates
- Collect completed exam papers from the EO

Exam time: roles and responsibilities

Head of centre

Ensures the centre's obligations as detailed in the regulations are met.

Access arrangements

Exams officer

- Provides cover sheets for access arrangement candidates' scripts where required for particular arrangements
- Has a process in place to deal with emergency/temporary access arrangements as they arise at the time of exams
 - Liaises with the SENCo to apply for approval through AAO where required or through the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO
- Allocates appropriately trained centre staff to facilitate access arrangements for candidates in exams and assessments (ensuring that the facilitator appointed meets JCQ requirements and fully understands the rule of the particular access arrangements)

Candidate absence

Exams officer

- Ensures there is a procedure in place for dealing with candidate absence

Invigilators

- Are informed of the policy/process for dealing with absent candidates through training
- Ensure that confirmed absent candidates are clearly marked as such on the attendance register and seating plan

Administration Team

- Supports the EO in following up candidate absences

Candidates

- Are required to inform the centre of any absence in good time before the start of each exam (see policies and procedures at the end of this document – candidate absence policy)
- Are re-charged relevant entry fees for unauthorised absence from exams

Candidate late arrival

Exams officer

- Ensures there is a procedure in place for dealing with late arrivals
- Ensures that candidates who arrive very late for an exam are reported to the awarding body by submitting a *report on candidate admitted very late to examination room* using CAP to timescale
- Warns candidates that their script may not be accepted by the awarding body

Invigilators

- Are informed of the policy/process for dealing with late/very late arrival candidates through training
- Ensure that relevant information is recorded on the exam room incident log

Candidates

- Are required to arrive promptly and on time to sit all exams and controlled assessments

Conducting exams

Head of centre

- Ensures venues used for conducting exams meet the requirements of JCQ and awarding bodies

Exams officer

- Ensures exams are conducted according to JCQ and awarding body instructions
- Uses an *exam day checklist* to ensure each exam session is fully prepared for, unplanned events can be dealt with and associated follow-up is completed

Dispatch of exam scripts

Exams officer

- Dispatches scripts as instructed by JCQ and awarding bodies
- Keeps appropriate records to track dispatch

Exam papers and materials

Exams officer

- Organises exam question papers and associated confidential resources in date order in the secure storage facility
- Attaches erratum notices received to relevant sealed exam question paper packets
- Collates attendance registers and examiner details in date order
- Regularly checks mail or email inbox for updates from awarding bodies

- In order to avoid potential breaches of security, ensures care is taken to ensure the correct question paper packets are opened by ensuring a member of centre staff, additional to the person removing the papers from secure storage, e.g. an invigilator, checks the day, date, time, subject, unit/component and tier of entry, if appropriate, immediately before a question paper packet is opened
- Ensures this second pair of eyes check is recorded
- Ensures question papers are always be kept in their sealed packets until the second pair of eyes check and log have been completed
- Ensures the second pair of eyes check takes place immediately before each question paper packet is opened in the designated examination room
- If the question paper packet needs to be split for different rooms on one or more sites or for an access arrangement, ensures the check takes place in the secure room
- Ensures this second pair of eyes check (which takes place in the secure room if a question paper packet has to be split or in the designated exam room if not) is recorded
- Ensures unused question papers are not released to any individual until 24 hours after the awarding body's published finishing time for the examination (Where a candidate is sitting an examination scheduled for the afternoon session on the following morning under an overnight supervision arrangement, unused question papers for that examination must not be released to any individual until the candidate has completed that examination)

Exam rooms

Head of centre

- Ensures that internal tests, mock exams, revision or coaching sessions are not conducted in a room 'designated' as an exam room
- Ensures that when a room is 'designated' as an exam room it is not used for any purpose other than conducting external exams
- Ensures only approved centre staff (who have not taught the subject being examined) are present in exam rooms to perform permitted tasks
- Liaises with Exams Officer regarding emergency evacuation of exam hall and cancellation of exam session following emergency evacuation of any exam room
- Ensure a procedure is in place in case of emergency invacuation (Lockdown)

Exams officer

- Ensures exam rooms are set up and conducted as required in the regulations
- Provides invigilators with appropriate resources to effectively conduct exams
- Briefs invigilators on exams to be conducted on a session by session basis (including the arrangements in place for any transferred candidates and access arrangement candidates)
- Ensures sole invigilators have an appropriate means of summoning assistance (if this is a mobile phone, instructs the invigilator that the mobile phone is only allowed to be used for this specific purpose and that it must be kept on silent mode)
- Ensures invigilators understand they must be vigilant and remain aware of incidents or emerging situations, looking out for malpractice or candidates who may be in distress, recording any incidents or issues on the exam room incident log
- Ensures invigilators understand how to deal with candidates who may need to leave the exam room temporarily and how this should be recorded on the exam room incident log
- Provides authorised exam materials which candidates are not expected to provide themselves
- Ensures invigilators and candidates are aware of the emergency evacuation procedure

- Ensures invigilators are aware of arrangements in place for a candidate with a disability who may need assistance if an exam room is evacuated
- Ensures the centre's policy relating to food and drink that may be allowed in exam rooms is clearly communicated to candidates
- Ensures the centre's policy on candidates leaving the exam room temporarily is clearly communicated to candidates
- Ensure a documented emergency evacuation procedure for exam rooms is in place. **See Emergency Evacuation Policy**
- Supervises emergency evacuation of exam hall, liaises with Head of Centre following emergency evacuation of any exam room and supervises actions following his/her decision
- Ensure arrangements are in place for a candidate with a disability who may need assistance if an exam room is evacuated

Site staff

- Ensure exam rooms are available and set up as requested by the EO
- Ensure grounds or centre maintenance work does not disturb exam candidates in exam rooms
- Ensure fire alarm testing does not take place during exam sessions

Invigilators

- Conduct exams in every exam room according to JCQ *Instructions for conducting examinations* and/or awarding body requirements and as instructed by the centre in training/update and briefing sessions
- Make the necessary announcements at the beginning and end of the exams.
- Organisation and supervision of the exam rooms.
- Verify the identity of the candidates, using photographs and name labels provided
- Supervision of candidates in the exam room.
- Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their secure return to the exams office.
- Assists with emergency evacuation of exam hall, carries out emergency evacuation of all other exam rooms when the alarm sounds and assists with recommencing or cancellation of the exam session following return to the exam room.

Candidates

- Are required to follow the instructions given to them in exam rooms by authorised centre staff and invigilators
- Are required to remain in the exam room for the full duration of the exam

Irregularities including Candidate behaviour and Malpractice

Head of centre

- Ensures (as required by an awarding body) any cases of alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice or maladministration before, during or after examinations/assessments (by centre staff, candidates, invigilators) are investigated and reported to the awarding body **immediately**, by completing the appropriate documentation

Senior leaders

- Ensure support is provided for the EO and invigilators when dealing with disruptive candidates in exam rooms

- Ensure that internal disciplinary procedures relating to candidate behaviour are instigated, when appropriate

Exams officer

- Provides an exam room incident log in all exam rooms for recording any incidents or irregularities
- Actions any required follow-up and reports to awarding bodies as soon as practically possible after the exam has taken place

Invigilators

- Record any incidents or irregularities on the exam room incident log (for example, late/very late arrival, candidate or centre staff suspected malpractice, candidate illness or needing to leave the exam room temporarily, disruption or disturbance in the exam room, emergency evacuation)

Special consideration

Senior leaders

- Support eligible applications for special consideration by authorising appropriate evidence

Exams officer

- Processes eligible applications for special consideration to awarding bodies.
- Gathers evidence which may need to be provided by other staff in centre or candidates
- Submits requests to awarding bodies to the external deadline

Candidates

- Provide appropriate evidence to support special consideration applications, where required

Unauthorised items

Exams Officer

- Ensures there is a procedure in place for dealing with unauthorised materials

Invigilators

- Are informed of the arrangements through training

Candidates

- Follow rules and regulations on unauthorised materials in the exam room (see policies and procedures at the end of this document – arrangements for unauthorised materials taken into the exam room)

Internal exams/assessments

Exams officer

- Briefs invigilators on conducting internal exams
- Returns candidate scripts to teaching staff for marking

Invigilators

- Conduct internal exams as briefed by the EO

Results and post-results: roles and responsibilities

Head of centre

Ensures the centre's obligations as detailed in the regulations are met.

Internal assessment

Senior Leaders

- Ensures teaching staff keep candidates' work, whether part of the moderation sample or not, secure and for the required period stated by JCQ and awarding bodies
- Ensures work is returned to candidates or disposed of after the retention period according to the requirements

Managing results day(s)

Senior leaders

- Identify centre staff who will be involved in the main summer results day(s) and their role
- Ensures senior members of staff are accessible to candidates immediately after the publication of results so that results may be discussed and decisions made on the submission of any requests for post-results services and ensures candidates are informed of the periods during which centre staff will be available so that they may plan accordingly

Exams officer

- Works with senior leaders to ensure procedures for managing the main summer results day(s) (a results day programme) are in place

Site staff

- Ensure the centre is open and accessible to centre staff and candidates, as required for the collection of results

Accessing results

Head of centre

- Ensures results are kept entirely confidential and restricted to key members of staff until the official dates and times of release of results to candidates
- Understands that it is not permitted to withhold provisional results from candidates under any circumstances

Exams officer

- Informs candidates in advance of when and how results will be released to them for each exam series
- Accesses results from awarding bodies under restricted release of results, where this is provided by the awarding body
- Resolves any missing or incomplete results with awarding bodies
- Issues statements of results to candidates on issue of results date
- Provides summaries of results for relevant centre staff on issue of results date

Post-results services

Head of centre

- Ensures an **internal appeals procedure** is available where candidates disagree with any centre decision not to support a clerical re-check, a review of marking, a review of moderation or an appeal
- Ensures that senior members of centre staff are available immediately after the publication of results
- Understands that if the centre has concerns about one of its component/subject cohorts, then requests for reviews of marking should be submitted for all candidates believed to be affected (candidate consent is required as marks and subject grades may be lowered, confirmed or raised)

Exams officer

- Provides information to candidates and staff on the services provided by awarding bodies and the fees charged (see also above *Briefing candidates* and *Access to scripts, Reviews of results and appeals procedures*)
- Publishes internal deadlines for requesting the services to ensure the external deadlines can be effectively met
- Provides a process to record requests for services and to collect candidate informed consent (**after** the publication of results) and fees where relevant
- Submits requests to awarding bodies to meet the external deadline for the particular service
- Tracks requests to conclusion and informs candidates and relevant centre staff of outcomes
- Updates centre results information, where applicable

Teaching staff

- Meet internal deadlines to request the services and gain relevant candidate informed consent
- Identify the budget to which fees should be charged

Candidates

- Meet internal deadlines to request the services
- Provide informed consent and fees, where relevant

Analysis of results

Assistant Head (Curriculum & Standards) / Data Officer

- Provides analysis of results to appropriate centre staff
- Provides results information to external organisations where required
- Undertakes the DfE School and College Checking Exercises

Certificates

Certificates are provided to centres by awarding bodies after results have been confirmed.

Exams Officer

- Ensures there is a procedure in place for dealing with certificates
- Ensures that candidates are informed about this procedure before exams take place

- Certificates will be posted out only after the candidate has signed a form saying that the centre will not take responsibility if they go missing. The candidate also pays for the cost of posting recorded delivery.
- SAST Schools will keep uncollected certificates for 5 years.

Candidates

- May arrange for certificates to be collected on their behalf by providing the EO with written or email permission/authorisation; authorised persons must provide ID evidence on collection of certificates

Exams review: roles and responsibilities

Exams officer

- Provides SLT with an overview of the exam year, highlighting what went well and what could be developed/improved in terms of exams management and administrative processes within the stages of the exam cycle
- Collects and evaluates feedback from staff, candidates and invigilators to inform an exams review

Senior leaders

- Work with the EO to produce a plan to action any required improvements identified in the review

Retention of records: roles and responsibilities

Exams officer

- Keeps records as required by JCQ and awarding bodies for the required period
- Keeps records as required by the centre's records management policy
- Provides an **Exams Archiving Policy** that identifies information held, retention period and method of disposal

Exam Procedures

Head of centre declaration

The Head of centre declaration, once signed is kept on file in the exams office ready for inspection purposes.

Centre consortium arrangements

The Head of centre informs the EO of any joint teaching arrangements in place and where the centre is acting as the consortium co-ordinator.

The EO will process applications for Centre Consortium arrangements using CAP to the awarding body deadline (or through the awarding body where a qualification may sit outside the scope of CAP)

Private candidates

Private candidates can be accommodated at the discretion of the EO and head of centre.

The majority of our private candidates are past pupils who wish to re-sit their exams.

An administration fee is charged on top of the exam entry fees. If there are no internal candidates sitting an exam in the same session then the private candidate will also have to pay for room hire and invigilation costs.

If a private candidate was once entitled to access arrangements but the arrangement has lapsed then a discussion will be held with the SENCo about retesting

Candidate absence

If a candidate is ill and cannot attend an exam, they must contact the school before 9am and speak to the EO, LSM or Head of Year. It is essential that medical or other appropriate evidence is obtained on the day of the absence. This should be given to the EO at the earliest opportunity, as the exam board will require it.

To be awarded a grade for a GCSE subject where a candidate misses all or part of an exam through illness or personal misfortune a total of 15% of the total assessment must be completed.

If a candidate arrives at school for their exam and finds they are unwell they must speak to the invigilator, EO, LSM or Head of Year immediately.

In exceptional circumstances special consideration may be applied for. Not all applications are granted and the criteria is very specific. It will only be applied if all of the criteria are met and a very small percentage of marks (between 0% and 5% in exceptional circumstance) are awarded to compensate for the disruption. Like AA it does not give one candidate advantage over another.

Candidates must contact the EO if they are unable to attend an exam. Failure to do so will be classed as unauthorised and the candidates may be charged for that exam paper. If less than 15% of the assessment has been completed they will not receive a grade for that subject.

A member of the administration team will follow up any absence.

Candidate late arrival

If a candidate arrives late for an exam, they report to the EO immediately. They will then be escorted to the exams room.

If a candidate arrives more than one hour after the published starting time for the exam, they will be allowed to sit the exam but the EO will have to inform the awarding body using CAP of the very late arrival and they will decide if the paper will be marked or not.

All late arrivals will be recorded and monitored.

Verifying candidate identity procedure

All students are either provided with an exam pass that has their photograph on. They must bring this to every exam. Or this is placed on their exam desk prior to the exam.

External candidates must bring with them their passport or photo driving licence.

For students wearing religious clothing, such as a veil, will be checked in a private area by a senior female member of staff. If this is needed then the candidate will be involved in the discussion about what will need to be put in place before the start of the exams.

Food and drink in exam rooms

Candidates are only allowed to take a clear bottle of water into the exam room with the label removed.

Diabetic candidates can with the agreement of the EO and HOC take some sweets or energy tablets in to the exam room but all packaging must be removed.

Managing behaviour

All incidents of poor, disruptive and/or inappropriate behaviour is recorded by the invigilators on the exam incident log and reported to the EO who will deal with it in accordance with JCQ regulations.

Where malpractice is discovered in external exams, then the appropriate procedures as set out by the awarding bodies or JCQ will be followed by SAST Schools

Malpractice associated with external exams for the purpose of this policy can include the following

- Unlawfully obtaining, selling, using or distributing exam papers prior to the exam sessions
- The possession of mobile phones or other electronic devices in the exam room (whether switched on or not)
- The passing of information between students during an examination
- Taking unauthorised material into the exam room

Arrangements for unauthorised materials taken into the exam room

Candidates are encouraged to leave all unauthorised materials in their bags on the school bag racks.

They have the chance to hand in all mobile devices and watches as they enter the exam room.

The Invigilator will also verbally remind them to check that they have handed in all unauthorised material before the exam starts.

Candidate leaving early policy

- If a candidate has to leave the exam room temporarily ie to go to the toilet, then they will be escorted at all times and the incident/toilet log filled in.
- If a candidate walks out unescorted then they will not be allowed to re-enter the exam room
- If an afternoon exam is starting at 1pm and is 1 hour then the candidates have to be kept under supervision until 2.30pm. Question papers also need to be kept in secure storage until 2.30pm.
- If an exam lasts less than 1 hour then the candidates must remain under supervision for a period equal to the length of the exam after the published starting time.

Results day programme

- Candidates can collect their results in person from 9am to 12 noon on results days
- Students results will also be available on their Arbor page from 10.30am
- Results may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so and bring in a letter of consent from the candidate as well as a form of ID
- Results will not be given over the phone or by email
- Teaching staff will be available on results days to discuss results with candidates

Alternative Site Arrangements

The EO will

- Ensure question papers will only be taken to an alternative site where the published criteria for an alternative site arrangement has been met
- Will inform the JCQ inspection service by submitting a JCQ Alternative Site arrangement notification using CAP (or through the awarding body where a qualification may sit outside the scope of CAP) form of any alternative sites that will be used to conduct timetabled examination components of the qualification listed in the JCQ regulations.

Transferred candidate arrangements

If a candidate needs to take their exams at another centre (for example Harbour Vale School) then the EO will

- Liaises with the host or entering centre, as required
- Processes requests for Transferred Candidate arrangements using CAP to the awarding body deadline (or through the awarding body where a qualification may sit outside the scope of CAP)
- Where relevant (for an internal candidate) informs the candidate of the arrangements that have been made for their transferred candidate arrangements

Contingency Plan

Purpose of the plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the examinations and assessment process at SAST Schools. By outlining actions/procedures to be invoked in case of disruption it is intended to mitigate the impact these disruptions have on our processes.

Alongside internal processes, this plan is informed by the Ofqual Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland which provides guidance in the document What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted and the JCQ Joint Contingency Plan for the examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the JCQ document Preparing for disruption to examinations.

This plan also confirms SAST Schools are compliant with the JCQ General Regulations (section 5.3, General Regulations for Approved Centres 2020-2021) that the centre has in place for inspection that must be reviewed and updated annually a written contingency plan which covers all aspects of examination/assessment administration.

Contingency arrangements

In accordance with the regulations (GR 3.17-19), SAST Schools **must** have an up to date written contingency plan.

The contingency plan **must** cover all aspects of examination/assessment administration and delivery. Senior leaders **must** have robust contingency arrangements in place that will minimise the risk to examination/assessment administration and delivery and any adverse impact on candidates.

The plan must cover the following scenarios:

- the head of centre, relevant senior leader(s) with oversight of examination and assessment administration, SENCo (or equivalent role), examinations officer or any other key staff essential to the examination process being absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle
- the potential impact of other events such as flooding which could lead to all or parts of the centre becoming unavailable
- potential issues with the centre's IT systems

As part of the contingency plan the centre **must** identify an alternative site or alternative sites which can be used if examinations cannot be conducted at the registered address. Larger centres may require more than one potential alternative site or different sites for different year groups.

SAST Schools **must** have at least one senior member of staff (senior designated contact) who is available to manage emergency requests from awarding bodies that are results related during the summer holidays. However, a number of contacts can be provided to reduce the risk of this falling on one individual throughout the summer holidays.

SAST Schools **must** ensure where candidates work is produced electronically it is backed-up and should consider the contingency of candidates' work being backed-up on two separate devices, including one off-site back-up via the Cloud. Appropriate security arrangements must be implemented which protect candidates' work in the event of IT system corruption and cyber-attacks.

Operating across more than one centre

The Trust Exams Manager operates across more than one centre, the head of centre will ensure there is suitable senior leadership team support in place, so they can meet their obligations across all centres for which they are responsible in relation to recruitment, selection, training and support of staff. The arrangements covered in this contingency plan relate to the following centres.

- The Gryphon School as the main centre
- King Arthurs school
- As consultancy for
 - Harbour vale School
 - Shaftesbury Secondary School
 - Sturminster Newton School

The Executive Exams Manager operates across 2 centres.

- Shaftesbury Secondary School
- Sturminster Newton School

National Centre Number Register and other information requirements

- In accordance with the regulations (GR 5.3), the head of each SAST Schools complete the National Centre Number Register annual update by the end of October every year (even if there are no changes to centre details) which includes providing senior designated contact details (this might include a personal mobile number and/or email address). These must be the contact details of someone who can be reached in an emergency if the centre is closed over the summer and who can mobilise resources to respond to the issue.

Head of centre/senior leader with oversight of examination and assessment administration absence at a critical stage of the exam cycle

- Where the HOC/senior leader may be absent or the Dupty Head are unavailable then the main duties and responsibilities will be escalated in accordance with the written escalation process.

Possible causes of disruption to the exam process

1. Exam Manager extended absence at a critical stage of the exams cycle

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Key tasks required in the management and administration of the exam cycle not undertaken including:

Planning

- annual data collection exercise not undertaken to collate information on qualifications and awarding body specifications being delivered
- annual exams plan not produced identifying essential key tasks, key dates and deadlines
- sufficient invigilators not recruited

Entries

- awarding bodies not being informed of early/estimated entries which prompts release of early information required by teaching staff
- candidates not being entered with awarding bodies for external exams/assessment
- awarding body entry deadlines missed or late or other penalty fees being incurred

Pre-exams

- invigilators not trained or updated on changes to instructions for conducting exams
- exam timetabling, rooming allocation; and invigilation schedules not prepared
- candidates not briefed on exam timetables and awarding body information for candidates
- confidential exam/assessment materials and candidates' work not stored under required secure conditions
- internal assessment marks and samples of candidates' work not submitted to awarding bodies/external moderators

Exam time

- exams/assessments not taken under the conditions prescribed by awarding bodies
- required reports/requests not submitted to awarding bodies during exam/assessment periods, for example very late arrival, suspected malpractice, special consideration
- candidates' scripts not dispatched as required for marking to awarding bodies
- access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms

Results and post-results

- access to examination results affecting the distribution of results to candidates
- the facilitation of the post-results services

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The Exams Officers from the other Trust schools to help support the Senior Invigilator in carrying out the exam responsibilities should the absence of the Exams Manager have the potential to affect the meeting of deadlines.
- If required the Head of Centre to appoint a member of the administration team under the direction of the Senior leadership with the responsibility of exams to take over the exam responsibilities should the absence of the Exams Manager have the potential to affect the meeting of deadlines.
- Staff member to liaise with the Exams Manager to ensure that they are up to date with the exams cycle and responsibilities at each point in time.

2. SENCo extended absence at a critical stage of the exam cycle

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Key tasks required in the management and administration of the access arrangements process within the exam cycle not undertaken including:

Planning

- candidates not tested/assessed to identify potential access arrangement requirements
- centre fails to recognise its duties towards disabled candidates as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010
- evidence of need and evidence to support normal way of working not collated

Pre-exams

- approval for access arrangements not applied for to the awarding body
- centre-delegated arrangements not put in place
- modified paper requirements not identified in a timely manner to enable ordering to meet external deadline
- staff (facilitators) providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained

Exam time

- access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The head of Centre is responsible for ensuring that the position is covered should the absence have the potential to disrupt exam preparation.
- The Exams Manager to ensure that the access arrangements are in place by the Spring Term of year 10 for all students where possible.
- LSM for year 11, 12 & 13 to plan access arrangements for exam days in advance of the summer series, in consultation with the SENCO and Exams Manager

3. Teaching staff (or other key staff essential to the examination process) extended absence at a critical stage of the exam cycle

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Key tasks not undertaken including:

Early/estimated entry information not provided to the exams officer on time; resulting in pre-release information not being received

Final entry information not provided to the exams officer on time; resulting in candidates not being entered for exams/assessments or being entered late/late or other penalty fees being charged by awarding bodies

Non-examination assessment (including controlled assessments and coursework) tasks not set/issued/taken by candidates as scheduled

Candidates not being informed of centre assessed marks before marks are submitted to the awarding body and therefore not being able to consider appealing internal assessment decisions and requesting a review of the centre's marking

Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet awarding body submission deadlines

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Head of Centre is responsible for ensuring the priority for teaching is the examination cohort and staff will be covered in good time, by trained professionals, in all circumstances.
- The Exams Manager is responsible for ensuring that deadlines are met for entries. Any omissions to be referred to the Senior Leadership member with responsibilities for exams

4. Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Failure to recruit and train sufficient invigilators to conduct exams

Invigilator shortage on peak exam days

Invigilator absence on the day of an exam

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The Exams manager is responsible for highlighting the need to recruit additional invigilators in the Autumn term with the Senior Leadership member with responsibilities for exams
- The Exams Manager holds at least one training event a year for all invigilators as per JCQ regulations. Cover supervisors and other school support staff are invited to attend as well.

5. Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Exams officer unable to identify sufficient/appropriate rooms during exams timetable planning

Insufficient rooms available on peak exam days

Main exam venues unavailable due to an unexpected incident at exam time

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The Exams Manager is responsible for ensuring planning of rooms is completed by the end of the Spring Term to identify potential rooming issues
- Alternative venues within the school to be made available by the teaching staff in the event of an unexpected incident.
- Head of Centre to liaise with the Exams Manager and Rooming Officer to ensure no disruption due to room shortages.
- Alternative venues will be sought by the Head of Centre, ideally using other trust school.
 - The Gryphon School will use King Arthurs
 - King Arthurs will use The Gryphon School
 - Shaftesbury School will use Sturminster Newton School
 - Sturminster Newton School will use Shaftesbury School
 - Harbour Vale will use Sherborne Primary School

6. Cyber Security

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Where any incidents might compromise any aspect of assessment delivery, such as a cyber-attack

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The Trust IT Manager will lead on any cyber-attack
- Exams Manager to contact the awarding bodies directly to arrange alternative methods of information exchange.
- ensuring that all members of centre staff who access awarding bodies' online systems undertake annual cyber security training...

... The training must include:

- the importance of creating strong, unique passwords for all accounts;
- keeping all account details strictly confidential;
- the critical role of Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) in protecting against unauthorised access;
- how to properly set up and use MFA for both centre and awarding bodies' systems;
- an awareness of all types of social engineering/phishing attempts;...
- the importance of staff quickly reporting any suspicious activity, events, incidents and encouraging a safe and supportive reporting culture.

Certificates of completed staff cyber training must be downloaded and held on file for inspection. The NCSC training resource provides a certificate of completion of cyber training.

- a) developing and maintaining a comprehensive cyber security policy for the centre. The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) provides resources to assist centres in creating such policies;
 - b) implementing and enforcing robust security measures, including:
 - mandatory MFA for all accounts and systems containing exam-related information, including those that interface between awarding body and centre systems, to enhance security and protect sensitive data;
- regularly reviewing and updating security settings to align with current best practices
 - updating any passwords that may have been exposed
 - setting up secure account recovery options
 - reviewing and managing connected applications
 - monitoring accounts and regularly reviewing account access, including removing access when no longer required
 - ensuring authorised members of staff securely access awarding bodies' online systems in line with awarding body regulations regarding cyber security and the JCQ document *Guidance for centres on cyber security*
 - Authorised staff will have access, where necessary, to a device which complies with awarding bodies' MFA requirements.
 - reporting any actual or suspected compromise of an awarding body's online systems immediately to the relevant awarding body

7. Failure of IT systems

Criteria for implementation of the plan

IT system corruption affecting candidates work

MIS system failure at final entry deadline

MIS system failure during exams preparation

MIS system failure at results release time

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Exams Manager to contact the awarding bodies directly to arrange alternative methods of information exchange.
- The Head of Centre to be informed along with the Head of IT support.
- Ensure where candidates work is produced electronically that it is backed-up. This is done in two places, one onsite, one offsite via the Cloud.

8. Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lockdown)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Whole centre evacuation (or lockdown) during exam time due to serious incident resulting in exam candidates being unable to start, proceed with or complete their exams

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The Exams Manager to inform the awarding bodies
- Head of Centre to communicate with parents and students

9. Disruption of teaching time in the weeks before an exam– centre closed for an extended period

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Centre closed or candidates are unable to attend for an extended period during normal teaching or study supported time, interrupting the provision of normal teaching and learning

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Head of Centre is responsible for finding alternative venues / methods of learning, ideally at other Trust Schools
 - The Gryphon School will use King Arthurs
 - King Arthurs will use The Gryphon School
 - Shaftesbury School will use Sturminster Newton School
 - Sturminster Newton School will use Shaftesbury School
 - Harbour Vale will use Sherborne Primary School
- Systems are in place for virtual learning across the whole school
- The Priority is to be given to the exam cohort
- Head of Centre to communicate with parents and students

10. Candidates may not be able to take examinations – centre remains open

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Candidates may not be able to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal because of a crisis

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The Exams manager to communicate with the awarding bodies as soon as possible and follow their advice
- Head of Centre to look at alternative sites ideally other Trust Schools
 - The Gryphon School will use King Arthurs
 - King Arthurs will use The Gryphon School
 - Shaftesbury School will use Sturminster Newton School
 - Sturminster Newton School will use Shaftesbury School
 - Harbour Vale will use Sherborne Primary School
- Liaise with SENCo as to alternative arrangements i.e. taking exams at home, hospital
- Head of Centre to communicate with parents and students
- Consider moving the starting time of the examination for all candidates (see section 6.2 of the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations*)
- Be aware of the rules for very late arrivals (see section 21 of the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations*)
- Wherever possible, it is always in the best interest for candidates to sit the examination. However, special consideration is an option where a candidate is unable to sit the examination (see Chapter 4 of the JCQ document *A guide to the special consideration process*)

11. Centre may not be able to open for examinations

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Centre may not be able to open as normal for scheduled examinations

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Open for candidates only if possible.
- The Exams manager to communicate with the awarding bodies as soon as possible for further support and guidance.
- Head of Centre to communicate with parents and students
- Head of Centre is responsible for finding alternative exams venue, ideally at another Trust school
 - The Gryphon School will use King Arthurs
 - King Arthurs will use The Gryphon School
 - Shaftesbury School will use Sturminster Newton School
 - Sturminster Newton School will use Shaftesbury School
 - Harbour Vale will use Sherborne Primary School
- The Exams Manager to notify the JCQ Centre Inspection Service of an alternative site arrangement by submitting the JCQ Alternative Site form online, using CAP

- The decision on whether it is safe for a centre to open lies with the head of centre who is responsible for taking advice or following instructions from relevant local or national agencies
- Special consideration is an option if all other avenues have been exhausted and candidates meet the published criteria

12. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Disruption to the distribution of examination papers to the centre in advance of examinations

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The Exams Manager to communicate with the awarding bodies to organise alternative delivery arrangements
- The awarding bodies to make electronic copies of exam papers available via their secure external network, copies can then be made and stored securely as per paper exam scripts

13. Delay in collection arrangements for completed examination scripts

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts/assessment evidence

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- The Exams Manager to communicate with the awarding bodies for advice and approval of alternative delivery arrangements.
- Ensure secure storage of exam papers until as close to the collection time as possible

14. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked.

Completed examination scripts/assessment evidence does not reach awarding organisations.

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Exams Manager to communicate with the awarding bodies immediately
- JCQ form 15 to be used where appropriate

15. Centre unable to distribute results as normal or facilitate post results services

Criteria for implementation of the plan

Centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post-results services

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- Exams Manager to communicate with the awarding bodies as soon as possible
- Exams Manager and Head of Centre to assess alternative arrangements for issuing results and post results with the awarding bodies.
- Ideally using another Trust School
 - The Gryphon School will use King Arthurs
 - King Arthurs will use The Gryphon School
 - Shaftesbury School will use Sturminster Newton School
 - Sturminster Newton School will use Shaftesbury School
 - Harbour Vale will use Sherborne Primary School
- Head of Centre to inform transition schools, students and parents about the delay as soon as possible.

Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning

DfE

Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges

[Cyber security standards for schools and colleges](#)

Ofqual

What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted

This document was updated in October 2023 to include Ofqual's final decisions on long-term resilience arrangements, and the Department for Education (DfE)'s guidance for education settings with confirmed reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC),

In addition to this guidance, you will need to be aware of your specific responsibilities for local and national school preparations and contingencies. You should also follow advice from relevant public health bodies.

Contingency planning

Awarding organisations are required to establish, maintain and comply with an up-to-date detailed written contingency plan, to mitigate any incident they have identified may occur. This includes having communication plans for external parties ([Ofqual General Condition of Recognition A6](#)). Schools and colleges should also be prepared for possible disruption to exams and assessments and make sure staff are aware of these plans.

Disruption to assessments or exams

In the absence of any instruction from the relevant awarding organisation, you should make sure that any exam or timetabled assessment takes place if it is possible to hold it. This may mean relocating to alternative premises. You should discuss alternative arrangements with your awarding organisation if:

- the exam or assessment cannot take place
- a student misses an exam or loses their assessment due to an emergency, or other event, outside of the student's control

You may also wish to see the [JCQ's notice to centres on exam contingency plans](#) and [JCQ's notice on preparing for disruption to examinations](#) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland for qualifications within its scope.

Steps you should take

Exam planning

Review your contingency plans well in advance of each exam or assessment series. Consider how, if the contingency plan is invoked, you will comply with the awarding organisation's requirements.

Schools, colleges and other exam centres must speak to the relevant awarding organisations as soon as possible if they are expecting any disruption that might affect the sitting of exams and assessments.

In the event of disruption

1. Contact the relevant awarding organisation and follow its instructions.
2. Take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether your centre is able to open.
3. Identify whether the exam or timetabled assessment can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation, ensuring the secure transportation of questions papers or assessment materials to the alternative venue.
4. Where accommodation is limited, prioritise students whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned.
5. In the event of an evacuation during an examination please refer to JCQ's [Centre emergency evacuation procedure](#).
6. Communicate with students, parents and carers any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue.
7. Communicate with any external assessors, invigilators or relevant third parties regarding any changes to the exam or assessment timetable.

After the exam

1. Consider whether any students' ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply to the relevant awarding organisation for special consideration.
2. Advise students, where appropriate, of the opportunities to take their exam or assessment at a later date.
3. Ensure that scripts are stored under secure conditions.
4. Return scripts to awarding organisations in line with their instructions. Never make alternative arrangements for the transportation of completed exam scripts, unless told to do so by the awarding organisation.

Steps the awarding organisation should take

Exam planning

1. Establish and maintain, and at all times comply with, an up-to-date, written contingency plan.
2. Ensure that the arrangements in place with centres and other third parties enable them to deliver and award qualifications in accordance with their conditions of recognition.

In the event of disruption

1. Take all reasonable steps to mitigate any adverse effect, in relation to their qualifications, arising from any disruption.
2. Provide effective guidance to any of their centres delivering qualifications.
3. Ensure that where an assessment must be completed under specified conditions, students are able to complete the assessment under those conditions (other than where any reasonable adjustments or special considerations require alternative conditions).
4. Promptly notify the relevant regulators about any event which could have an adverse effect on students, standards or public confidence.
5. Coordinate its communications with the relevant regulators where the disruption has an impact on multiple centres or a wide range of learners.

After the exam

Consider any requests for special consideration for affected students; for example, those who may have lost their internally assessed work or whose performance in assessments or exams could have been affected by the disruption.

If any students miss an exam or are disadvantaged by the disruption

If some of the students have been adversely affected by the disruption, you should ask the awarding organisation about applying for special consideration.

Decisions about special consideration, when it is or is not appropriate, is for each awarding organisation to make. Their decisions might be different for different qualifications and for different subjects, depending on their specific policies.

See also [JCQ's guidance on special consideration](#)

Wider communications

The regulators, [Ofqual](#) in England, [Qualifications Wales](#) in Wales and [CCEA Regulation](#) in Northern Ireland, will share timely and accurate information, as required, with awarding organisations, government departments and other stakeholders.

The [DfE in England](#), the [Department of Education in Northern Ireland](#), and the [Welsh Government](#) will inform the relevant government ministers as soon as it becomes apparent that there will be significant local or national disruption, and ensure that they are kept updated until the matter is resolved.

Awarding organisations will alert the [Universities and Colleges Admissions Service](#) (UCAS) and the [Central Applications Office](#) (CAO) about any impact of the disruption on their deadlines and liaise regarding student progression to further and higher education.

Awarding organisations will alert relevant professional bodies or employer groups if the impact of disruption particularly affects them.

Widespread national disruption to the taking of examinations or assessments

As education is devolved, in the event of any widespread sustained national disruption to examinations or assessments, national government departments will communicate with regulators, awarding organisations and centres prior to a public announcement. Regulators will provide advice to government departments on implications for examinations and assessments, including exam timetables.

In September 2023, Ofqual and the DfE published [joint consultation decisions on long-term resilience arrangements](#). As in 2023, Ofqual has provided [guidance on collecting evidence of student performance to ensure resilience in the qualifications system](#) for students entering GCSEs, AS and A levels, the Advanced Extension Award and Project qualifications. For VTQs and other qualifications used alongside or instead of GCSEs, AS and A levels, awarding organisations will provide guidance where needed and will contact schools and colleges with more information.

In December 2022, Qualifications Wales published [guidance for contingency assessment arrangements](#) for GCSEs, AS and A levels and Skills Challenge Certificates in the event that a national decision is made to cancel exams. This guidance is still relevant for the current academic year.

The DfE has updated its guidance on [handling strike action in schools](#) in England in light of the industrial action in 2023. The guidance recommends schools should prioritise the running of examinations and assessments on any strike days, and should review their contingency plans to make this happen. Schools, colleges and other exam centres must speak to the relevant awarding organisations if they are expecting any disruption that might affect the sitting of exams and assessments.

The DfE has also issued [guidance for education settings with confirmed reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete \(RAAC\)](#) in their buildings. It includes the need for contingencies for possible disruption to examinations and links to the existing emergency planning guidance.

We will update this page as necessary, with any further relevant links, should national disruption occur.

General contingency guidance

- [emergency planning and response for education, childcare and children's social care settings](#) from the DfE in England
- [handling strike action in schools](#) from the DfE in England
- [school organisation: local-authority-maintained schools](#) from the DfE in England
- [reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete: guidance for education settings with confirmed RAAC](#) from the DfE in England
- [exceptional closure days: Northern Ireland](#) from the Department of Education in Northern Ireland
- [checklist - exceptional closure of schools](#) from the Department of Education in Northern Ireland
- [school terms and school closures](#) from NI Direct
- [opening schools, childcare and play settings in extreme bad weather and extreme hot weather](#) - guidance for schools from the Welsh Government
- [emergency planning and response guidance for education and childcare settings](#)- guidance for schools and education settings from the Welsh Government
- [protective security and preparedness for education settings](#) from the DfE
- [police guidance](#) from National Counter Terrorism Security Office and partners on preparing for threats
- [cyber security guidance for schools and colleges](#) from the National Cyber Security Centre

(Ofqual guidance extract above taken directly from the Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland - **What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted** (last updated 7 May 2024) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland/what-schools-and-colleges-should-do-if-exams-or-other-assessments-are-seriously-disrupted>)

15. CONTINGENCY PLANNING

15.1 The qualification regulators, awarding bodies and government departments responsible for education have prepared and agreed information for schools and colleges in the event of examinations being seriously disrupted. This jointly agreed information will ensure consistency of response in the event of major disruption to the examinations system affecting significant numbers of candidates. Further information may be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland>

15.2 In addition, awarding bodies have their own well-established contingency plans in place to respond to disruptions. It is important that exams officers who are facing disruption liaise directly with the relevant awarding body or bodies.

15.3 All centres must have a written examination contingency plan which covers all aspects of examination administration. This will allow members of the senior leadership team to act immediately in the event of an emergency or where the head of centre, examinations officer or SENCo is absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle. The examination contingency plan should reinforce procedures in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency.

All relevant centre staff must be familiar with the examination contingency plan. Consideration should be given as to how these arrangements will be communicated to candidates, parents and staff should disruption to examinations occur.

15.4 If the head of centre decides the centre cannot be opened for scheduled examinations, the centre's contingency plan must be invoked, utilising the centre's alternative site(s) and the relevant awarding bodies must be informed as soon as possible. Awarding bodies will be able to offer advice regarding the alternative arrangements for conducting examinations that may be available and the options for candidates who have not been able to take scheduled examinations.

15.5 The awarding bodies will designate 'contingency sessions' for examinations, summer 2026. This is consistent with the qualification regulators' document *Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland*.

15.6 The designation of 'contingency sessions' within the common examination timetable is for use in the event of national or significant local disruption to examinations. It is part of the awarding bodies' standard contingency planning for examinations.

15.7 In the event of national disruption to a day of examinations in summer 2026, the awarding bodies will liaise with the qualification regulators and government departments to agree the most appropriate option for managing the impact. As a last resort, the affected examinations will be rescheduled. Although every effort would be taken to keep the impact to a minimum, it is possible that there could be more than one timetable date affected following the disruption, up to and including the last contingency day. Centres will be alerted if it is agreed to reschedule the examinations and the affected candidates will be expected to make themselves available in such circumstances. The decision regarding the rescheduling of examinations will always rest with the awarding body. The centre must conduct the examination on the scheduled date unless instructed to do otherwise by the awarding body.

15.8 Where candidates choose not to be available for the rescheduled examination(s) for reasons other than those traditionally covered by special consideration, they will not be eligible for enhanced grading. Centres **must**, therefore, ensure candidates and parents are aware of the contingency arrangements so that they may take them into account when making their plans for the summer.

(JCQ guidance above taken directly from **Instructions for conducting examinations** 2025-2026

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>, section 15, Contingency planning)

JCQ Joint Contingency Plan www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/other-documents

JCQ Preparing for disruption to examinations www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/

General Regulations for Approved Centres www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations

Guidance notes on alternative site arrangements www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms

Guidance notes for transferred candidates www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/online-forms

Instructions for conducting examinations www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations

A guide to the special consideration process www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance

Guidance for centres on cyber security (Effective from November 2023; Revised July 2025)

www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/

5 tips to get exam ready and stay cyber safe! www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/blogs/

GOV.UK

Emergency planning and response: Exam and assessment disruption

www.gov.uk/government/publications/emergency-planning-and-response-for-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care-settings

Dispatch of exam scripts guide: Contingency planning www.gov.uk/government/publications/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-yellow-label-service

Wales

School closures: examinations gov.wales/school-closures-examinations

Opening schools as well as childcare and play settings in extreme bad weather and extreme hot weather: www.gov.wales/opening-schools-well-childcare-and-play-settings-extreme-bad-weather-and-extreme-hot-weather

Northern Ireland

Exceptional closure days – Northern Ireland www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/exceptional-closure-days

Checklist - exceptional closure of schools www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/checklist-exceptional-closure-schools

National Cyber Security Centre

Cyber Security for Schools www.ncsc.gov.uk/section/education-skills/cyber-security-schools

Cyber security training for school staff www.ncsc.gov.uk/information/cyber-security-training-schools

Escalation Process

Purpose of the process

In terms of internal governance arrangements, it is the responsibility of the head of centre to ensure that their school has in place a written escalation process should the head of centre, or a member of the senior leadership team with oversight of examination and assessment administration, be absent

This process confirms the main duties and responsibilities to be escalated. It also supports SAST schools being able to confirm to an awarding body the external governance arrangements so that the awarding body has confidence in the integrity of centre activities, such as the delivery of qualifications and the conducting of examinations and assessments.

Before examinations (Planning)

In the event of the absence of the head of centre or the member of senior leadership with oversight of examination administration, responsibility for implementing JCQ regulations and requirements relating to activity prior to examinations will be escalated to another member of the senior leadership team. If no members of senior leadership can take over then it will be escalated to Mr Paul Lavis, SAST Interim Director of Education.

To support understanding of the regulations and requirements, the following JCQ documents will be referenced:

- General Regulations for Approved Centres
- Instructions for conducting examinations
- A guide to the special consideration process
- Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments
- AI use in Assessments: Your role in protecting the integrity of qualifications
- Guidance for centres on cyber security
- Instructions for conducting coursework
- Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (GCE and GCSE)
- Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (Vocational and Technical)
- Notice to Centres – Informing candidates of their centre-assessed marks
- Plagiarism in assessments – Guidance for Teacher/Assessors
- Suspected Malpractice – Policies and Procedures

Main duties and responsibilities relate to:

- Third party arrangements
- Centre status
- Confidentiality
- Resilience and contingency arrangements
- Cyber Security
- Communication
- Centre management
 - Recruitment, selection, training and support

- External and internal governance arrangements
- Delivery of qualifications
- Public liability
- Conflicts of interest
- Controlled assessments, coursework and non-examination assessments
- Security of assessment materials
- National Centre Number Register
- Centre inspections

Additional JCQ documents for reference:

- JCQ Centre Inspection Service Changes

- Policies available for inspection

Specific JCQ documents for reference:

- General Regulations for Approved Centres (section 5)
- Instructions for conducting examinations (section 25)
- Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (section 5)

- Personal data, freedom of information and copyright

Centre-specific information for reference

The SAST Examinations Handbook

Before examinations (Entries and Pre-exams)

In the event of the absence of the head of centre or the member of senior leadership with oversight of examination administration, responsibility for implementing JCQ regulations and requirements relating to entries and exam preparation will be escalated to another member of the senior leadership team. If no members of senior leadership are able to take over then it will be escalated to Mr Paul Lavis, SAST Interim Director of Education.

To support understanding of the regulations and requirements, sections of relevant JCQ documents will be specifically referenced including:

- General Regulations for Approved Centres (section 5)
- Instructions for conducting examinations (sections 1-15)
- Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (sections 6-8)

Main duties and responsibilities relate to:

- Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments
- Entries, including ensuring appropriate controls are in place which allow accurate entries to be submitted to the awarding bodies

Additional JCQ documents for reference:

- Key Dates
- Guidance Notes for Transferred Candidates
- Alternative Site guidance notes
- Guidance notes for overnight supervision of candidates with a timetable variation

- Centre assessed work, including ensuring that candidate work is backed-up and considering the contingency of candidates work being back-up in the event of IT system corruption and cyber-attacks, and ensuring appropriate controls are in place which allows accurate internally assessed marks to be submitted to the awarding bodies.

Additional JCQ documents for reference:

- Guidance Notes – Centre Consortium Arrangements

- Candidate information

Additional JCQ documents for reference:

- Information for candidates documents
- Exam Room Posters

Centre-specific information for reference

The SAST Examinations Handbook

During examinations (Exam time)

SAST schools have in place a member of the senior leadership team who will provide support and guidance to the examinations officer and ensure that the integrity and security of examinations and assessment is maintained throughout an examination series.

In the event of the absence of the head of centre or the member of senior leadership with oversight of examination administration, responsibility for implementing JCQ regulations and requirements relating to during exam time will be escalated to another member of the senior leadership team. If no members of senior leadership are able to take over then it will be escalated Mr Paul Lavis, SAST Interim Director of Education.

To support understanding of the regulations and requirements, sections of relevant JCQ documents will be specifically referenced including:

- General Regulations for Approved Centres (sections 3, 5)
- Instructions for conducting examinations (sections 16-31)
- Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (section 8)
- A guide to the special consideration process (sections 2-7)

Main duties and responsibilities relate to:

- Conducting examinations and assessments

Additional JCQ documents for reference:

- Guidance Notes – Very Late Arrival

- Malpractice
- Retention of candidates' work

Centre-specific information for reference

The SAST Examinations Handbook

After examinations (Results and Post-Results)

In the event of the absence of the head of centre or the member of senior leadership with oversight of examination administration, responsibility for implementing JCQ regulations and requirements relating to after examinations will be escalated to another member of the senior leadership team. If no

members of senior leadership are able to take over then it will be escalated to Mr Paul Lavis, SAST Interim Director of Education.

SAST schools also have in place at least one senior member of staff (senior designated contact) who is available to manage emergency requests from awarding bodies that are results related during the summer holidays. The National Centre Number register is provided with the senior designated contact details (this might include a personal mobile number and /or email address). These are the contact details of someone who can be reached in an emergency if the centre is closed over the summer and who can mobilise resources to respond to the issue

To support understanding of the regulations and requirements, sections of relevant JCQ documents will be specifically referenced including:

- General Regulations for Approved Centres (section 5)

Main duties and responsibilities relate to:

- Results

Additional JCQ documents for reference:

- Release of Results notice

- Post-results services and appeals

Additional JCQ documents for reference:

- Post-Results Services: Information and guidance to centres
- JCQ Appeals Booklet (A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes)

- Certificates

Centre-specific information for reference

The SAST Examinations Handbook

Equalities Policy (exams)

Purpose of the policy

This document is provided as an exams-specific supplement to the *SAST-wide equalities/disability/accessibility policy/plan* which details how the centre will

- recognise its duties towards disabled candidates, including private candidates, ensuring compliance with all aspects of the Equality Act 2010†, particularly Section 20 (7). This must include a duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses; to submit applications for reasonable adjustments and make reasonable adjustments through the access arrangements process and to make reasonable adjustments the services the centre provides to disabled candidates. Where the centre is under a duty to make a reasonable adjustment, the centre must not charge a disabled candidate any additional fee in relation to the adjustment or aid:

† or any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect

JCQ's General Regulations for Approved Centres (section 5.4)

This publication is further referred to in this policy as [GR](#).

This policy details how SAST Schools facilitate access to exams and assessments for disabled candidates, as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010, by outlining staff roles and responsibilities in relation to

- identifying the need for appropriate arrangements, reasonable adjustments and/or adaptations (referred to in this policy as 'access arrangements')
- requesting access arrangements
- implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams
- good practice in relation to the Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability

A definition is provided in the JCQ document (*Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties*) Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2025 – 2026 (**Definitions** section).

This publication is further referred to in this policy as AARA.

Identifying the need for access arrangements

Roles and responsibilities

Head of centre

- Is familiar with the entire contents and refers to the annually updated JCQ documents including General Regulations and Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.
- Ensures a policy demonstrating the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place
- Ensures an appropriately qualified assessor(s) is appointed, evidence of the assessor's qualification is obtained before he/she assesses candidates and that evidence of the qualification(s) of the person(s) appointed is held on file

Senior leaders

- Are familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ documents including General Regulations and Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments

Exams manager

- Directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ documents including General Regulations and Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments
- Defines and documents roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements (*Access arrangements policy*)
- Support the SENCo in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements
- Produces, annually reviews and updates a word processor policy, which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations and assessments

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- Has full knowledge and understanding of the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ document AARA
- Ensures the quality of the access arrangements process within the centre
- Ensures staff roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements for all candidates are clearly defined and documented
- Ensures the assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations and that the correct procedures are followed as in chapter 7 of AA
- Leads on the access arrangements process to facilitate access for candidates
- Ensures that the access arrangements/reasonable adjustments approves allow the candidate to access the assessment, but do not result in the candidate gaining an unfair advantage
- If not the appropriately qualified assessor, works with the person/persons appointed, on all matters relating to assessing candidates and the administration of the assessment process
- Ensures the qualified assessor has access to the assessment objectives for the relevant specifications a candidate is undertaking
- Ensures that all assessments carried out and arrangements put in place comply with JCQ and awarding body regulations and guidance
- Ensures arrangements put in place for exams/assessments reflect a candidate's *normal way of working* within the centre
- Ensures the need for access arrangements for a candidate is considered on a subject by subject basis
- Presents when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor's qualification
- Works with teaching staff, relevant support staff and the exams officer to ensure centre-delegated and awarding body approved access arrangements are put in place for candidates taking internal and external exams/assessments
- Conducts appropriate assessments to identify the need(s) of a candidate
- Completes appropriate documentation as required by the regulations of JCQ and the awarding body

Teaching staff

- Where appropriate inform the SENCo of any concerns, observations about a candidate or feedback about a candidate or any support that might be needed by a candidate
- Provide information to evidence the normal way of working of a candidate
- Provides appropriate evidence to confirm the need(s) of a candidate

Support Staff

- Where appropriate provide comments and observations to support the SENCo in painting a holistic picture of need confirming normal way of working for a candidate.

Assessor of candidates with learning difficulties

- Has detailed understanding of the current JCQ publication [AA](#)

Use of Word Processors

SAST Schools Word Processor Policy (exams) which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for exams can be found in this handbook page 90.

A centre must have a policy on the use of word processors.... A member of the centre's senior leadership team must produce a statement for inspection purposes which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations."

[AA 5.8]

Requesting access arrangements

Roles and responsibilities

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- Determines if the arrangements identified for a candidate require prior approval from the awarding body before the arrangements are put in place or if approval is centre-delegated
- To comply with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, ensures relevant candidates are informed that an application for access arrangements will be processed using Access Arrangements Online
- Follows guidance in AARA Section 8 to process approval applications for access arrangements for those qualifications included
- Ensures that where approval is required the application is processed on time and no later than the awarding body's published deadline
- Ensures that the full supporting evidence is in place before an online application is processed.
- Reviews the evidence before an online application is processed, ensuring that the candidate does meet the published criteria for the respective arrangement.
- Ensures that the agreed adjustment has been put in place before the candidates first examination, e.g. internal tests and mock examinations.
- Ensures appropriate and required evidence is held on file to confirm validation responses in AAO including (where required) the completion of relevant JCQ Forms, such as Form 8 (Application for access arrangements – Profile of learning difficulties), Form 9 (profile of need), Form 8RF, etc. supplemented by written statements, where required.
- Ensures where JCQ forms are required to be completed, the original forms are signed (and electronic signature is permissible) and dated as required prior to approval being sought and that the form is provided for processing and inspection purposes this may be a hard copy paper version or an electronic version.
- Ensures the names of all assessors, who are assessing candidates studying qualifications covered by AAO, are entered into AAO to confirm their status.

- Maintains a file/e-folder for each candidate (the required documentation for a candidate will be in hard copy within the candidates file/each of the required documents held electronically within the candidates e-folder) that will include:
 - completed JCQ/awarding body application forms and evidence forms
 - appropriate evidence to support the need for the arrangement where required
 - appropriate evidence to support normal way of working within the centre
 - in addition, for those qualifications covered by AAO (where approval is required), a print out/PDF of the AAO approval
- Holds all supporting evidence and presents such evidence to a JCQ Centre Inspector upon request.
- Liaises with teaching staff regarding any appropriate modified paper requirements for candidates
- As may be applicable in relation to the use of coloured paper, explores alternative ways of working such as the use of coloured overlay or the candidate wearing coloured glasses / the provision of a single colour, such as buff or grey

Specialist Literacy Practitioner

- If the SENCo is unavailable, presents the files/e-folders of access arrangements candidates when requested by a JCQ Centre inspector and addresses any queries/questions raised.
- Is familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publication GR and is aware of information contained in AA

Exams manager

- Is familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publication GR and is aware of information contained in AARA where this may be relevant to the EM role
- Applies for approval where this is required, through *Access arrangements online* (AAO), or through the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO
- Confirms by ticking the '*Confirmation*' box prior to submitting the application for approval that the '*malpractice consequence statement*' has been read and accepted
- In liaison with SENCo makes an *awarding body referral* through AAO where the initial application for approval may not be approved by AAO, where it is deemed by the centre that the candidate does meet the criteria for the arrangement(s)
- Liaises with the SENCo to ensure arrangements are in place to either order a non-interactive electronic (PDF) question paper or to download a PDF copy of the standard question paper or to open a question paper packet in the secure room within 90 minutes of the awarding body's published starting time for the exam where the centre is permitted to modify a timetabled written component exam paper (copy on coloured paper, enlarge to A3 or copy to single sided print)
- Following the appropriate process, orders published modified papers, by the awarding body's deadline for the exam series, where these may be required for a candidate.

Implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams

Roles and responsibilities

External assessments

These are assessments which are normally set and marked/examined by an awarding body which must be conducted according to awarding body instructions and/or the JCQ publication [Instructions for conducting examinations](#) (ICE).

Head of centre

- Supports the SENCo, the exams manager and other relevant centre staff in ensuring appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- Ensures appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for candidates where they are disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act (unless a temporary emergency arrangement is required at the time of an exam)
- Is familiar with the instructions for Invigilation arrangements for candidates with access arrangements and Access arrangements in the current ICE
- Monitors, internal tests/mock exams, the use of arrangements granted to a candidate and where a candidate has never made use of the arrangement, may consider withdrawing the arrangement, provided the candidate will not be placed at a substantial disadvantage
- Ensures that prior to any arrangements being put in place checks are made that arrangements do not impact on any assessment criteria/competence standards being tested
- Ensures that any arrangements put in place do not unfairly disadvantage or advantage disabled candidates

Exams manager

- Is familiar with and follows the *Checklist for heads of centre and examination officers – The Equality Act 2010 and conduct of examinations* provided in the current [ICE](#)
- Ensures exam information (JCQ information for candidates documents, individual exam timetable etc.) is adapted where this may be required for a disabled candidate to access it
- Understands and follows instructions for Invigilation arrangements for candidates with access arrangements and Access arrangements in the current ICE
- Ensures cover sheets, where these are required by the arrangement are completed as required by facilitators
- Liaises with the SENCo and other relevant centre staff to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams
- Liaises with the SENCo to ensure exam information (JCQ information for candidates documents, individual exam timetable etc.) is adapted where this may be required for a disabled candidate to access it
- Liaises with the SENCo regarding the facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates
- Liaises with the SENCo and Site Team regarding rooming and equipment that may be required to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams.

- Appoints appropriate centre staff as facilitators to support candidates (practical assistant, prompter, Language Modifier, reader, scribe or Sign Language Professional)
- Ensures appropriate seating arrangements are in place where different arrangements may need to be made for a candidate to facilitate access to his/her exams
- Ensures candidates with access arrangements are identified on exam room seating plans and invigilators are made aware of the arrangements awarded
- Ensures invigilators are briefed prior to each exam session of the arrangements in place for a disabled candidate in their exam room
- Checks in advance of dated exams/assessments that modified paper orders have arrived (and if not will contact the awarding body to ensure that papers are available when required)
- Makes modifications that are permitted by the centre (a question paper copied onto coloured paper, an A4 to A3 enlarged paper or a paper printed on single sheets or where a question paper may need to be scanned into PDF format where a candidate is approved the use of a computer reader) that may be required and either access a non-interactive electronic (PDF) question paper or opens the exam question paper packet in the secure room no earlier than 90 minutes prior to the published start time of the exam
- Understands that where permitted/approved, a secure question paper packet may need to be opened early in the secure room to facilitate the following
 - A Language Modifier may have access to the question paper 60 minutes prior to the awarding body's published start time for the exam in order to prepare
 - A Sign Language Professional may have access to the question paper 60 minutes prior to the awarding body's published start time for the exam in order to prepare
 - A Live Speaker may have access to the question paper 60 minutes prior to the awarding body's published start time for the exam in order to prepare

Provides cover sheets prior to the start of an exam where required for particular access arrangements and ensures that these have been fully completed before candidates' scripts are dispatched to examiners/markers

- Has a process in place to deal with emergency (temporary) access arrangements as they arise at the time of exams in terms of rooming and invigilation
- Liaises with the SENCo where a facilitator may be required to support a candidate requiring an emergency (temporary) access arrangement at the time of exams
- Where required for emergency (temporary) access arrangements, applies for approval through AAO or through the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO
- Ensures facilitators supporting candidates are trained and understand rules of the particular access arrangements
- Ensures a record of the training given to those facilitating an access arrangement for a candidate under examination conditions is kept and retained on file until the deadline for enquiries about results has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later
- Ensures where a person is appointed to facilitate an access arrangement, the person appointed is not normally the candidates own subject teacher, Learning Support assistant or teaching assistant. Where the candidates own subject teacher, Learning Support assistant or teaching assistant has to be used, a separate invigilator is always present.
- Ensures where a person is appointed to facilitate an access arrangement, the person appointed is not a relative, friend, peer or private tutor of the candidate.
- Ensures cover sheets, where they are required by the arrangement are completed as required by facilitators.

Specialist Literacy Practitioner

- Ensures a candidate is involved in any decisions about access arrangements, adjustments and /or adaptations that may be put in place for them and ensures the candidate understands what will happen at exam time
- Ensures a facilitator acting as a prompter is aware of the appropriate way to prompt depending on the needs of the candidate

Other relevant centre staff

- Support the SENCo and the exams officer to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams
- IT support are made aware of any candidates who require adaptations in a timely manor

Internal assessments

These are non-examination assessments (NEA) which are normally set by a centre/awarding body, marked and internally moderated/standardised by the centre and moderated by the awarding body. However, NEA is not limited to internal assessment as externally marked and /r externally set practical examinations taken at different times across centres are also classified as NEA.

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- Liaises with teaching staff to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- Liaises with The exams manager to ensure facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s)

Specialist Literacy Practitioner

- Ensures candidates are aware of the access arrangements that are in place for their assessments
- Ensures a candidate has had appropriate opportunities to practice using the access arrangements before their first examination

Exams manager

- Ensures centre-delegated and awarding body approved arrangements are in place prior to a candidate taking his/her first formal supervised assessment
- Ensures cover sheets are completed as required by facilitators
- Liaises with the teacher where a facilitator may be required to support a candidate requiring an emergency (temporary) access arrangement at the time of their formal supervised assessment
- Liaise with the SENCo regarding assessment materials that may need to be modified for a candidate

Teaching staff

- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- Provide the SENCo with assessment schedules to ensure arrangements are put in place when required

Internal exams and assessments

These are exams or tests which are set and marked within the centre, normally a pre-cursor to external assessments.

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- Liaises with teaching staff to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates

Exams manager

- Provide the SENCo with internal exam timetable to ensure arrangements are put in place when required

Teaching staff

- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- Provide exam materials that may need to be modified for a candidate

Facilitating access - examples

The following information confirms the centre's good practice in relation to the Equality Act 2010 and the conduct of examinations.

On a candidate-by-candidate basis, consideration is given to

- adapting assessment arrangements
- adapting assessment materials
- the provision of specialist equipment or adaptation of standard equipment
- adaptation of the physical environment for access purposes

The table provides example arrangements, adjustments and adaptations that are considered to meet the need(s) of a candidate and the actions considered/taken by the centre for the purposes of facilitating access.

Example of candidate need(s)	Arrangements explored	Centre actions
A medical condition which prevents the candidate from taking exams in the centre	Alternative site for the conduct of examinations Supervised rest breaks	SEnCo gathers evidence to support the need for the candidate to take exams at home and for SRB Pastoral head provides written statement for file to confirm the need Approval confirmed by SEnCo; AAO approval for both arrangements not required Pastoral head discussion with candidate to confirm the arrangements should be put in place EO submits 'Alternative site form' for timetabled written exams to awarding body/bodies online using CAP EO provides candidate with exam timetable and JCQ information for candidates Pastoral head confirms with candidate the information is understood Pastoral head agrees with candidate that prior to each exam will call to confirm fitness to take exam EO allocates invigilator(s) to candidate's timetable; confirms time of collection of exam papers and materials Invigilator monitors candidate's condition for each exam and records any issues on incident log Invigilator records supervised rest breaks (time and duration) on incident log and confirms full time given for exam Invigilator briefs EO after each exam on how candidate's performance in exam may have been affected by his/her condition EO discusses with pastoral head if candidate is eligible for special consideration (candidate present but disadvantaged)

		EO processes request(s) for special consideration where applicable; incident log(s) provides supporting evidence, supported by appropriate evidence signed by a member of the senior leadership team (evidence retained until after the publication of results) Pastoral head informs candidate that special consideration has been requested
Persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text	Reader/computer reader 25% Extra time Alternative rooming arrangement	Confirms candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 Papers checked for those testing reading Computer reader/examination reading pen sourced for use in papers (or sections of papers) testing reading OR up to 50% extra time awarded Candidate informed that an application for access arrangements will be processed using Access arrangements online AAO application for approval processed Supporting evidence and AAO approval kept on file
Significant difficulty in concentrating	Prompter Alternative rooming arrangement	Gathers evidence to support substantial and long term adverse impairment Candidate informed that an application for access arrangements will be processed using Access arrangements online AAO application for approval processed Supporting evidence and AAO approval kept on file Confirms with candidate how and when they will be prompted Briefs invigilator to monitor candidate and the method of prompting (call out his name to bring his attention back to the paper - confirms requirement for alternative room)
A wheelchair user	Desk Rooms Facilities Seating arrangements Practical assistant	Candidate informed that an application for access arrangements will be processed using Access arrangements online. Applies for practical assistant to help candidate set up wheelchair and other equipment in a practical assessment; approval automatically fails so awarding body referral lists the tasks that will be performed Supporting evidence and AAO approval kept on file Provides height adjustable desk in exam room Allocates exam room near adapted bathroom facilities Spaces desks to allow wheelchair access Seats candidate near exam room door Confirms arrangements in place to assist the candidate in case of emergency evacuation of the exam room Practical assistant cover sheet printed from AAO; to be completed by facilitator and inserted inside the candidate's work where this may be applicable to the assessment

Access Arrangements Policy

What are access arrangements?

Access arrangements

“**Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment.** They allow candidates with specific needs, such as special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment and show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment. The intention behind an access arrangement is to meet the particular needs of an individual candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment. Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010* to make ‘reasonable adjustments’.”
[AARA Definitions]

Reasonable adjustments

The Equality Act 2010* requires an awarding body to make reasonable adjustments where a candidate, who is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, would be at a **substantial disadvantage** in comparison to someone who is not disabled. The awarding body is required to take reasonable steps to overcome that disadvantage. An example would be a Braille paper which would be a reasonable adjustment for a vision impaired candidate who could read Braille. A reasonable adjustment may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available access arrangements.

Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on several factors which will include, but are not limited to:

- the needs of the disabled candidate;
- the effectiveness of the adjustment;
- the cost of the adjustment; **and**
- the likely impact of the adjustment upon the candidate and other candidates.

An adjustment will not be approved if it:

- involves unreasonable costs to the awarding body;
- involves unreasonable timeframes; **or**
- affects the security and integrity of the assessment.

This is because the adjustment is not ‘reasonable’.

The centre **must** ensure that approved adjustments can be delivered to candidates. (AARA¹, Definitions)

*References to legislation are to the Equality Act 2010. Separate legislation is in place for Northern Ireland (see [AARA 1.8](#)). The definitions and procedures in [AARA](#) relating to access arrangements and reasonable adjustments will also apply in Northern Ireland.

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that SAST Schools have a written record which clearly shows they are leading on the access arrangements process and are complying with their obligation to identify the need for, request and implement access arrangements.

[JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres section 5.4]

The policy is annually reviewed to ensure that arrangements are carried out in accordance with the current edition of the JCQ document Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties -

Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments’

This publication is further referred to in this policy as [AA](#).

General principles

The head of centre/senior leadership team will appoint a SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff, to coordinate the access arrangements process within the centre and determine appropriate arrangements for candidates with learning difficulties and disabilities, those for whom English is an additional language and those with a temporary illness or temporary injury. (GR 5.4)

The principles of access arrangements for the centre to consider are detailed in AA (section 4.2). These include:

- The purpose of an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate, preventing them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage due to persistent and significant difficulties. The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate.
- The SENCo must ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment does not unfairly disadvantage or advantage the candidate.
- A centre **must** make decisions on appropriate access arrangements for their candidates. Although professionals from other organisations may give advice, they **cannot** make the decision for the centre. They will not have a working knowledge of an individual candidate’s needs and how their difficulties impact in the classroom and/or in timed assessments. It is the responsibility of the SENCo to make appropriate and informed decisions based on the JCQ regulations.
- Applications should be processed at the start of or during the first year of a two year course having firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working
- Arrangements must always be approved before an examination or assessment.
- The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre.
- The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangements/reasonable adjustments before their first examination.

Equalities policy (Exams)

A large part of the access arrangements/reasonable adjustments policy is covered in the Equalities Policy (Exams) which covers staff roles and responsibilities in identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams.

This policy further covers the assessment process and related issues in more detail.

The assessment process

Assessments are carried out by an assessor, appointed by the head of centre. The assessor is appropriately qualified as required in JCQ regulations in AA section 7.3

Checking the qualifications of the assessor

The Head of Centre and SENCo check the qualifications of the assessor and holds the evidence of their qualification. At the point an assessor is engaged/employed, evidence of the assessor's qualification is obtained and checked against the current requirements. This process is carried out prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate as required in AA section 7.3

Process for the assessment of a candidates learning difficulties by an assessor.

Where a candidate has been identified and possibly having learning difficulties and is not subject to a current Education, Health and Care Plan or Statement of Special Educational Needs, the SENCo prepares a detailed picture of need demonstrating the candidate's normal way of working and completing Section 1 of Form 8 prior to the candidate being assessed.

Picture of need and confirming normal way of working

Before the candidate's assessment, the SENCo will provide the assessor with background information, and all evidence of the candidate's normal way of working.

Teaching staff are asked to provide evidence of a candidate's normal way of working as the arrangements put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre.

- in the classroom.
- working in small groups for reading and/or writing.
- literacy support lessons.
- literacy intervention strategies.
- mock examinations.

GCSE level requires at least 3 pieces of evidence across their subjects being taken, 1 x Essey based (English) 1 x maths/science based and 1 x MFL/alternative based

A level requires 1 piece of evidence per subject being taken.

Processing applications for access arrangements and reasonable adjustments

Arrangements/adjustments requiring awarding body approval

Access arrangements online (AAO) is a tool provided by JCQ member awarding bodies for centres to apply for required access arrangement approval for the qualifications covered by this tool. This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for those qualifications included.

AAO is accessed within the JCQ Centre Admin Portal (CAP) using any of the awarding body secure extranet sites. A single application is required for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used.

Online applications must only be processed where they are supported by the centre and the candidate meets the published criteria for the arrangements with the full supporting evidence in place.

Candidates must be informed that an application for access arrangements will be processed using Access arrangements online, complying with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018

Once approved the candidates report is held in their file. The approved arrangements are added to Arbor.

Centre-delegated access arrangements

Where exam body approval is not required, SAST Schools may grant individual candidates' personal arrangements to meet their individual needs if at a substantial disadvantage when compared with other non-disabled candidates undertaking the assessment. Candidates are only entitled arrangements/adjustments if they are disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act. Appropriate evidence is held on their file and implemented through lessons and all exams undertaken.

Centre-specific criteria for particular access arrangements

Word Processor Policy (Exams)

An exam candidate may be approved the use of a word processor where this is appropriate to the candidate's needs and not simply because the candidate now wants to type rather than write in exams or can work faster on a keyboard, or because they use a laptop at home. The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.

Alternative Rooming Arrangement within the centre

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved alternative rooming arrangements, e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates with similar needs (formerly known as separative invigilation) will be made by the SENCo.

Arrangements to do exams in a smaller exam room, or with other specific seating arrangement, will be decided based on the following guidelines:

- Students with an anxiety and/or mental health issue for which they have specialist support or intervention from CAMHS, an NHS Psychiatrist, etc. (not just a letter from a GP or parent) can be considered for specific seating arrangements, including a room rather than the Hall, if required and requested. This should also have been their "normal way of working" over time leading up to the examination period
- Students whose normal way of working involves specific seating arrangements across the board in lessons and / or doesn't attend hall events e.g. assembly, may qualify to have a similar provision for exams (SENCo / HOY will hold the paperwork and evidence of this)
- Students with other difficulties for example a long term medical condition which has a substantial and adverse effect, for whom we consider invigilation in a smaller room or specific seating arrangements to be an appropriate and reasonable adjustment in light of those difficulties, and for whom evidence over time has been collected and is held by SENCo / HOY, will be seated accordingly

- Any student who has an extenuating circumstance that occurs in the lead up to, or during, the exam period that is likely to impact on their usual exam performance, will be considered under the usual special consideration requirements by the Exams Manager, evidence collected and the exam board advised if JCQ criteria are met. Seating arrangements may also be varied at the last minute on these occasions and in consultation with the student
- Nervousness, low level anxiety or being worried about examinations is not sufficient grounds for separate invigilation within the centre
- 1:1 invigilation and the use of an alternative room would apply where the candidate has a serious medical condition such as frequent seizures, Tourette's or significant behavioural issues which would disturb other candidates in the examination room

Cases in categories 1-3 will be agreed by Christmas of Y11 at the latest following discussion with SENCo, Exams, HOY and SLT

Any case that does not fall clearly under any of these categories will be looked at individually and all final decisions will be made by SENCo

No special seating arrangements should be put into place for internal exams, mocks etc unless agreed by the SENCo / Exams manager so that there is a full audit trail going forward to external exams

Non- Examination Assessment Policy

What does this policy affect?

This policy affects the delivery of all specifications with one or more non-examination assessments components, controlled assessments (where applicable) and coursework.

“The regulator’s definition of an examination is very narrow. In effect, a non-examination assessment (NEA) is classified as any type of assessment that is not

- Set by an awarding body
- Designed to be taken simultaneously by all relevant candidates at a time determined by the awarding body
- Taken under conditions specified by the awarding body (including conditions relating to the supervision of candidates during the assessment and the duration of the assessments)

‘NEA’ therefore includes, but is not limited to, internal assessment. Externally marked and/or externally set practical examinations taken at different times across centres are classified as ‘NEA’.

[Definition taken directly from the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (GCSE and GCE)– Foreword]

This document is further referred to in this policy as NEA

The JCQ has written these instructions for the setting, supervision, authentication, marking, internal standardisation and external moderation of non-examination assessments (Vocational and Technical Qualifications) in examination centres. These instructions are for use in VTQ’s (JCQ’s Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (VTQ). Introduction.)

This document is further referred to in this policy as NEA VTQ

These instructions are for use in CCEA GCE unitised AS and A -level qualifications, ELC and Project Qualifications. (JCQ’s Instructions for conducting coursework)

This document is further referred to in this policy as ICC

Purpose of the policy

This policy confirms the JCQ requirement that SST schools have in place for inspection that must be reviewed and updated annually, a written policy regarding the management of non-examination assessments including controlled assessments and coursework, which includes details on how candidates work will be authenticated.

Awarding bodies require each centre to have a non-examination policy in place to:

- cover procedures for planning and managing non-examination assessments
- define staff roles and responsibilities for non-examination assessments
- manage risks associated with non-examination assessments

a JCQ Centre Inspector may ask the examinations officer to confirm that policy is in place. Guidance provided in this document will help the head of centre to ensure that the centre's policy is robust and fit for purpose.

What are non-examination assessments?

(GCE and GCSE) Non-examination assessments measure subject-specific knowledge and skills that cannot be tested by timed written papers.

There are three assessment stages and rules, which apply to each stage. These rules often vary across subjects. The stages are: [\[NEA 1\]](#)

- task setting;
- task taking;
- task marking.

(VTQ's) Non-examination assessment components assess candidates knowledge, understanding and skills that may not readily be assessed by timed written papers. Non-examination assessments will take many different forms (NEA VTQ)

What is Coursework?

Coursework components assess candidates knowledge, understanding and skills that may not readily be assessed by timed written papers. Coursework will take many different forms. (ICC 1)

Procedures for planning and managing non-examination assessments identifying staff roles and responsibilities

Where reference is made in these procedures to non-examination assessment, this is intended to include all non-examination assessments, controlled assessment (where applicable) and coursework.

The basic principles

Head of centre

- Returns an declaration (managed as part of the National Centre Number Register annual update) to confirm awareness of, and that relevant centre staff are adhering to, the latest version of NEA, NEA VTQ and ICC
- Ensures that the centre's Policy is robust and fit for purpose and covers all types of non-examination assessments
- Ensures the centre's internal appeals procedures clearly detail the procedure to be followed by candidates (or their parents/carers) appealing against internal assessment decisions (centre-assessed marks) and requesting a review of the centre's marking

Senior leaders

- Ensure the correct conduct of non-examination assessments (including endorsements) which comply with NEA, NEA VTQ, ICC and awarding body subject-specific instructions
- Ensure the centre-wide calendar records assessment schedules by the start of the academic year

Quality assurance (QA) lead/Lead internal verifier

- Confirms with subject heads that appropriate awarding body forms and templates for non-examination assessments (including endorsements) are used by teachers and candidates

- Ensures appropriate procedures are in place to internally standardise/verify the marks awarded by subject teachers in line with awarding body criteria
- Ensures appropriate centre-devised templates are provided to capture/record relevant information given to candidates by subject teachers
- Ensures appropriate centre-devised templates are provided to capture/record relevant information is received and understood by candidates
- Where not provided by the awarding body, ensures a centre-devised template is provided for candidates to keep a detailed record of their own research, planning, resources etc.

Subject head/lead

- Ensures subject teachers understand their role and responsibilities within the non-examination assessment process
- Ensures NEA, NEA VTQ, ICC and relevant awarding body subject specific instructions are followed in relation to the conduct of non-examination assessments, including endorsements
- Works with the QA lead/Lead internal verifier to ensure appropriate procedures are followed to internally standardise/verify the marks awarded by subject teachers

Subject teacher

- Understands and complies with the general instructions as detailed in NEA, NEA VTQ and ICC
- Where instructions may also be provided by the awarding body, understands and complies with the awarding body's specification for conducting non-examination assessments, including any subject-specific instructions, teachers' notes or additional information on the awarding body's website
- Marks internally assessed work to the criteria provided by the awarding body
- Ensures the Exams Manager is provided with relevant entry codes for subjects (whether the entry for the internally assessed component forms part of the overall entry code for the qualification or is made as a separate unit entry code) to the internal deadline for entries for the relevant exam series

Exams Manager/Officer

- Signposts the annually updated JCQ NEA, NEA VTQ and ICC documents to relevant centre staff
- Carries out tasks where these may be applicable to the role in supporting the administration/management of non-examination assessment

Task setting

Subject teacher

- Selects tasks to be undertaken where a number of comparable tasks are provided by the awarding body OR designs tasks where this is permitted by criteria set out within the subject specification
- Makes candidates aware of the criteria used to assess their work

Issuing of tasks

Subject teacher

- Determines when set tasks are issued by the awarding body
- Identifies date(s) when tasks should be taken by candidates
- Accesses set tasks in sufficient time to allow planning, resourcing and teaching and ensures that materials are stored securely at all times

- Ensures the correct task is issued to candidates

Task taking

Supervision

Subject teacher

- Checks the awarding body's subject-specific requirements ensuring candidates take tasks under the required conditions and supervision arrangements
- Ensures there is sufficient supervision to enable the work of a candidate to be authenticated
- Ensures there is sufficient supervision to ensure the work a candidate submits is their own
- Is confident where work may be completed outside of the centre without direct supervision, that the work produced is the candidates own.
- Where candidates may work in groups, keeps a record of each candidate's contribution and it must be possible to attribute assessable outcomes to individual candidates
- Ensures candidates are aware of the current JCQ documents Information for candidates - non-examination assessments and Information for candidates - Social Media
- Ensures candidates understand and comply with the regulations in relevant JCQ Information for candidates documents
- Ensures candidates:
 - Understand that information from all sources must be referenced
 - Receive guidance on setting out references
 - Are aware that they must not plagiarise other material

Advice and feedback

Subject teacher

- As relevant to the subject/component, advises candidates on relevant aspects before candidates begin working on a task
- Will not provide candidates with model answers or writing frames specific to the task
- When reviewing candidates' work, unless prohibited by the specification, provides oral and written advice at a general level to candidates
- Allow candidates to revise and re-draft work after advice has been given at a general level
- Records any assistance given beyond general advice and takes it into account in the marking or submits it to the external examiner
- Ensures when work has been assessed, candidates are not allowed to revise it

Resources

Subject teacher

- Refers to the awarding body's specification and/or associated documentation to determine if candidates have restricted/unrestricted access to resources including the internet and AI when planning and researching their tasks
- Refers to the JCQ document AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications as well as the awarding body's specification and/or associated documentation published by the awarding bodies and the regulator

- By referencing this document and the centre's malpractice policy makes candidates aware of the appropriate and inappropriate use of AI, the risks of using AI, and the possible consequences of using AI inappropriately in a qualification assessment
- Ensures conditions for any formally supervised sessions are known and put in place
- Ensures appropriate arrangements are in place to keep the work to be assessed, and any preparatory work, secure between any formally supervised sessions, including work that is stored electronically
- Ensures conditions for any formally supervised sessions are understood and followed by candidates
- Ensures candidates understand that they are not allowed to introduce augmented notes or new resources between formally supervised sessions
- Ensures that where appropriate to include references, candidates keep a detailed record of their own research, planning, resources etc.
- Ensures candidates understand how all sources included in work that is submitted for assessment must be acknowledged.

Word and time limits

Subject teacher

- Refers to the awarding body's specification to determine whether there are minimum and/or maximum time and word limits

Collaboration and group work

Subject teacher

- Unless stated otherwise in the awarding body's specification, and where appropriate, allows candidates to collaborate when carrying out research and preparatory work
- Ensures that it is possible to attribute assessable outcomes to individual candidates
- Ensures that where an assignment requires written work to be produced, each candidate writes up their own account of the assignment
- Assesses the work of each candidate individually

Authentication procedures – how candidates work is authenticated

Subject teacher

- Where required by the awarding body's specification
 - ensures candidates sign a declaration confirming the work they submit for final assessment is their own unaided work and ensures that this takes place as soon as the candidate has completed the assessment
 - signs the teacher declaration of authentication confirming the requirements have been met
- Keeps signed candidate declarations on file until the deadline for requesting a review of results has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later
- Provides signed candidate declarations where these may be requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector (Electronic signatures are acceptable)
- Where there may be doubt about the authenticity of the work of a candidate or if malpractice is suspected, follows the authentication procedures and malpractice information in NEA, NEA VTQ or ICC and informs a member of the senior leadership team

- Understands that if, during the external moderation process, it is found that the work has not been properly authenticated, the awarding body will set the mark(s) awarded by the centre to zero

Presentation of work

Subject teacher

- Obtains informed consent at the beginning of the course from parents or carers if videos, photographs or images of candidates will be included as evidence of participation or contribution.
- Instructs candidates to present work as detailed in NEA, NEA VTQ or ICC unless the awarding body's specification gives different subject-specific instructions
- Instructs candidates to add their candidate number, centre number and the component code of the assessment as a header/footer on each page of their work
- Endures if candidates work is to be submitted electronically, that it meets the awarding body's specified requirements.

Keeping materials secure

Subject teacher

- When work is being undertaken by candidates under formal supervision, ensures work is securely stored between sessions (if more than one session)
- When work is submitted by candidates for final assessment, ensures work is securely stored
- Follows secure storage instructions as defined in [NEA 4.8](#)
- Takes sensible precautions when work is taken home for marking
- Stores internally assessed work, including the sample returned after awarding body moderation, securely until all possible post-results services have been exhausted.
- If post-results services have not been requested, returns internally assessed work to candidates (if requested by a candidate) after the deadline for requesting a review of results for the relevant series
- If post-results services have been requested, return internally assess work to candidates (if requested by a candidate) once the review of results and any subsequent appeal has been completed
- Reminds candidates of the need to keep their own work secure at all times and not share completed or partially completed work on-line, on social media or through any other means (the JCQ document Information for candidates – social media should be brought to the attention of candidates)
- Where work is stored electronically, liaises with the IT Manager to ensure the protection and back-up of candidates work and that appropriate arrangements are in place to restrict access to it between sessions
- Understands that during the period from the submission of work for formal assessment until the deadline for requesting a review of results, copies of work may be used for other purposes, provided that the originals are stored securely as required.

IT Manager

- Ensures appropriate arrangements are in place to restrict access between sessions to candidates' work where work is stored electronically
- Restricts access to this material and utilises appropriate security safeguards such as firewall protection and virus scanning software

- Employs an effective back-up strategy so that an up to date archive of candidates' evidence is maintained
- Considers the contingency of candidates work being backed-up on two separate devices, including one off-site back-up and implementing appropriate security arrangements which protect candidates work in the event of IT system corruption and cyber-attacks
- Considers encrypting any sensitive digital media to ensure the security of the data stored within it and refers to awarding body guidance to ensure that the method of encryption is suitable

Task marking – externally assessed components

Conduct of externally assessed work

Subject teacher

- Liaises with the exams officer regarding the arrangements for any externally assessed components of a specification which must be conducted within a window of dates specified by the awarding body and where applicable, according to JCQ ICE
- Liaises with the Visiting Examiner where this may be applicable to any externally assessed component

Exams manager/officer

- Arranges timetabling, rooming and invigilation where and if this is applicable to any externally assessed non-examination component of a specification
- Conducts the externally assessed component within the window specified by the awarding body and where applicable according to the JCQ ICE

Submission of work

Subject teacher

- Pays close attention to the completion of the attendance register, if applicable

Exams Manager/officer

- Provides the attendance register to the subject teacher where applicable
- Ensures the awarding body's attendance register for any externally assessed component is completed correctly.
- Where candidates' work must be despatched to an awarding body's examiner, or uploaded electronically, ensures this is completed by the date specified by the awarding body.
- Keeps a copy of the attendance register until after the deadline for reviews of results for the exam series
- Packages the work as required by the awarding body and attaches the examiner address label
- Ensures that the package in which the work is despatched is robust and securely fastened
- Despatches the work to the awarding body's instructions by the required deadline

Task marking – internally assessed components

Marking and annotation

Head of Centre

- Makes every effort to avoid situations where a candidate is assessed by a person who has a close personal relationship with the candidate, for example, members of their family (which includes step family, foster family and similar close relationships) or close friends and their immediate family (e.g. son/daughter)
- Where this cannot be avoided, ensures the possible conflict of interest is declared to the relevant awarding body and the marked work is submitted for moderation wherever or not it is part of the moderation sample.

Subject head/lead

- Sets timescales for teachers to inform candidates of their centre-assessed marks that will allow sufficient time for a candidate to appeal an internal assessment decision/request a review of the centre marking prior to the marks being submitted to the awarding body external deadline.
- Annotates candidates' work as required to facilitate internal standardisation of marking and enable external moderation to check that marking is in line with the assessment criteria
- Informs candidates of their marks which could be subject to change by the awarding body moderation process
- Ensures candidates are informed of the timescale set by the subject lead or indicated in the centres internal appeals procedure to enable an internal appeal/request for a review of marking to be submitted by a candidate and the outcome known before final marks are submitted to the awarding body

Internal standardisation

Quality assurance (QA) lead/Lead internal verifier

- Ensures that internal standardisation of marks across assessors and teaching groups takes place as required and to sequence
- Supports staff not familiar with the mark scheme (eg NQT, supply staff)
- Ensures accurate internal standardisation by
 - Obtaining reference materials at an early stage of the course
 - Holding a preliminary trial marking session prior to marking
 - Carrying out further trial marking at appropriate points during the marking period
 - After most marking has been completed, holds a further meeting to make final adjustments
 - Marking final adjustments to marks prior to submission, retaining work and evidence of standardisation
- Retains evidence that internal standardisation has been carried out

Subject teacher

- Indicates on work (or cover sheet) the date of marking

- Marks to common standards
- Keeps candidates work secure until after the closing date for review of results for the series concerned or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later

Consortium arrangements for centre assessed NEA components

Subject head/lead

- Ensures a consortium co-ordinator is nominated (where this may be required as the consortium lead)
- If the consortium lead, liaises with the exams officer to ensure the relevant awarding body is notified that the centre is part of a consortium by submitting Form JCQ/CCA Centre consortium arrangements for centre-assessed work (including Spoken Language Endorsements, GCSE English Language) for each exam series affected
- Ensures procedures for internal standardisation as a consortium are followed

Subject teacher

- Provides marks to the exams officer to the internal deadline
- Provides the moderation sample to the exams officer to the internal deadline
- Retains all candidates' work in the consortium until after the deadline for reviews of results for the exam series concerned or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later

Exams Manager/Officer

- Where the centre is the consortium lead
 - submits an online notification of Centre consortium arrangements for centre-assessed work to the relevant awarding body through Centre Admin Portal (CAP) by no later than the published deadline for each exam series affected
 - submits marks for home centre candidates to the awarding body deadline
 - where relevant, liaises with other consortium exams officers to arrange despatch of a single moderation sample to the awarding body deadline
- Where not consortium lead centre. Submits marks for home centre candidates to the awarding body deadline

Submission of marks and work for moderation

Head of Department / Subject teacher

- Inputs and submits marks online, via the awarding body secure extranet site, keeping a record of the marks awarded, to the external deadline/Provides marks to the exams officer to the internal deadline
- Where responsible for marks input, ensures checks are made that marks for any additional candidates are submitted and ensures mark input is checked before submission to avoid transcription errors
- Submits the requested samples of candidates' work to the awarding body moderator by the external deadline, keeping a record of the work submitted/Provides the moderation sample to the exams manager to the internal deadline
- Ensures that where a candidate's work has been facilitated by a scribe or practical assistant, the relevant completed cover sheet is securely attached to the front of the work and sent to the moderator in addition to the sample requested.

- Ensures the moderator is provided with authentication of candidates' work, confirmation that internal standardisation has been undertaken and any other subject-specific information where this may be required
- Submits any supporting documentation required by the awarding body/Provides the exams officer with any supporting documentation required by the awarding body

Exams manager/officer

- Mark amendments - Inputs and submits marks online, via the awarding body secure extranet site. Ensures checks are made that marks for any additional candidates are submitted and ensures mark input is checked before submission to avoid transcription errors.
- Submits the requested samples of candidates' work to the moderator by the awarding body deadline, keeping a record of the work submitted/Confirms with Subject teacher that the moderation sample has been submitted to the awarding body deadline
- Ensures that for postal moderation
 - work is dispatched in packaging provided by the awarding body
 - moderator label(s) provided by the awarding body are affixed to the packaging
 - proof of dispatch is obtained and kept on file until the successful issue of final results
- Through the subject teacher, ensures the moderator is provided with authentication of candidates' work, confirmation that internal standardisation has been undertaken and any other subject-specific information where this may be required
- Through the subject teacher, submits any supporting documentation required by the awarding body

Storage and retention of work after submission of marks

Subject teacher

- Keeps a record of names and candidate numbers for candidates whose work was included in the moderation sample
- Retains all marked candidates' work (including any sample returned after moderation) under secure conditions for the required retention period
- In liaison with the IT manager, takes steps to protect any work stored electronically from corruption and has a back-up procedure in place
- If retention is a problem because of the nature of the work, retains some form of evidence such as photos, audio or media recordings.

Exams manager/officer

- Ensures any sample returned after moderation is logged and returned to the subject teacher for secure storage and required retention

External moderation – the process

Subject teacher

- Ensures that awarding body or its moderator receive the correct samples of candidates work
- Where relevant, liaises with the awarding body/moderator where the moderator visits the centre to mark the sample of work,
- Complies with any request from the moderator for remaining work or further evidence of the centre marking

External moderation - feedback

Subject head/lead

- Checks the final moderated marks when issued to the centre when the results are published.
- Checks any moderator reports/feedback forms and ensures that any remedial action, if necessary, is undertaken before the next examination series

Exams manager/officer

- Accesses or signposts any moderator reports/feedback forms to relevant staff
- Takes remedial action, if necessary, where feedback may relate to centre administration

Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments

Subject teacher

- Works with the SENCo to ensure any access arrangements for eligible candidates are applied to assessments

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- Follows the regulations and guidance in the JCQ document *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*
- Where arrangements do not undermine the integrity of the qualification and is the candidate's normal way of working, will ensure access arrangements are in place and awarding body approval, where required, has been obtained prior to assessments taking place
- Makes subject teachers aware of any access arrangements for eligible candidates which need to be applied to assessments
- Works with subject teachers to ensure requirements for access arrangement candidates requiring the support of a facilitator in assessments are met
- Ensures that staff acting as an access arrangement facilitator are fully trained in their role

Special consideration and loss of work

Subject teacher

- Understands that a candidate may be eligible for special consideration in assessments in certain situations where a candidate
 - is absent
 - produces a reduced quantity of work
 - work has been lost
- Liaises with the exams manager when special consideration may need to be applied for a candidate taking assessments
- Liaises with the exams manager to report loss of work to the awarding body

Exams manager/officer

- Refers to/directs relevant staff to the JCQ document A guide to the special consideration process
 - Where a candidate is eligible, submits an application for special consideration via the awarding body's secure extranet site to the prescribed timescale

- Where application for special consideration via the awarding body's secure extranet site is not applicable, submits the required form to the awarding body to the prescribed timescale
 - Keeps required evidence on file to support the application
- Refers to/directs relevant staff where applicable to Form 15 and where applicable submits to the relevant awarding body. For Coursework, AQA and OCR centres must not use this form, applications must be submitted online using AQA Centre Service or OCR Interchange as appropriate

Malpractice

Head of centre

- Understands the responsibility to immediately report to the relevant awarding body any alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice involving candidates or centre staff
- Ensures any irregularity identified by the centre before the candidate has signed the authentication statement (where required) are dealt with under its own internal procedures, with no requirement to report the irregularity to the awarding body (The only exception being where the awarding body's confidential assessment materials has been breached, the breach must be reported to the awarding body)
- Is familiar with the JCQ document Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures
- Ensures that those members of teaching staff involved in the direct supervision of candidates producing non-examination assessments or coursework are aware of the potential for malpractice and ensures that teaching staff are reminded that failure to report allegations of malpractice or suspected malpractice constitutes malpractice in itself.

Subject teacher

- Is aware of the JCQ Notice to Centres - Sharing NEA material and candidates' work to mitigate against candidate and centre malpractice
- Ensures candidates understand what constitutes malpractice in non-examination assessments and coursework
- Ensures candidates understand the JCQ document Information for candidates - non-examination assessments and where necessary Information for candidates – coursework assessments
- Ensures candidates understand the JCQ document Information for candidates - Social Media
- Escalates and reports any alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice involving candidates to the head of centre

Exams manager/officer

- Signposts the JCQ document Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures to the head of centre
- Signposts the JCQ Notice to Centres - Sharing NEA and candidates' work to subject heads
- Signposts candidates to the relevant JCQ information for candidates documents
- Where required, supports the head of centre in investigating and reporting incidents of alleged, suspected or actual malpractice

Post results service

Head of centre

- Is familiar with the JCQ publication Post-results Services

- Ensures the centre's *internal appeals procedures* clearly details the procedure to be followed by candidates appealing against a centre decision not to support an appeal following the outcome of a review of results

Subject head/lead

- Provides relevant support to subject teachers making decisions about reviews of results

Subject teacher

- Provides advice and guidance to candidates on their results and the post-results services available
- Provides the exams officer with the original sample or relevant sample of candidates' work that may be required for a review of moderation to the internal deadline

Exams manager/officer

- Is aware of the individual post-results services available for externally assessed and internally assessed components as detailed in the JCQ document Post Results Services, Information and guidance for centres
- Provides/signposts relevant centre staff and candidates to post-results services information
- Ensures any requests for post-results services that are available to centre-assessed work are submitted online via the awarding body secure extranet site to deadline

Practical Skills Endorsement for the A Level Sciences designed for use in England

Head of centre

- Returns the 'Head of Centre declaration at the time of the National Centre Number Register annual update confirming, that all reasonable steps have been or will be taken to ensure that all candidates at the centre have had, or will have, the opportunity to undertake the prescribed practical activities
- Ensures new lead teachers undertake the required training provided by the awarding body on the implementation of the practical endorsement
- Ensures relevant centre staff liaise with all relevant parties in relation to arrangements for and conduct of the monitoring visit

Quality assurance (QA) lead/Lead internal verifier

- Ensures arrangements are in place for implementing the requirements of the practical endorsement appropriately and applying the standards appropriately

Subject head/lead

- Confirms understanding of the Practical Skills Endorsement for the A Level Sciences designed for use in England and ensures any relevant JCQ/awarding body instructions are followed.
- Ensures where the centre intends to enter candidates for the first time for one or more A level subjects, the relevant awarding body will be contacted at the beginning of the course.
- Undertakes any training provided by the awarding body on the implementation of the practical endorsement
- Disseminates information to subject teachers ensuring the standards can be applied appropriately
- Liaises with all relevant parties in relation to arrangements for and conduct of the monitoring visit

Subject teacher

- Ensures all the JCQ/awarding body requirements/instructions in relation to the endorsement are known, understood and followed
- Ensures the required arrangements for practical activities are in place
- Provides all the required centre records
- Ensures candidates provide the required records
- Provides any required information to the subject lead regarding the monitoring visit
- Assesses candidates using Common Practical Assessment Criteria (CPAC)
- Applies for an exemption where a candidate cannot access the practical endorsement due to a substantial impairment
- Follows the awarding body's instructions for the submission of candidates *Pass* or *Not Classified* assessment outcome/provides assessment outcomes to the exams manager to the internal deadline

Exams manager/officer

- Accepts contact with the monitor and passes information to the subject lead for a visit to be arranged with at least two weeks notice.
- Confirms with the subject teacher that the assessment outcomes have been submitted to the awarding body by the external deadline/follows the awarding body's instructions for the submission of candidates *Pass* or *Not Classified* assessment outcome

Spoken Language Endorsement for GCSE English Language specifications designed for use in England

Head of centre

- Returns an online 'Head of Centre Declaration' at the time of the National Centre Number Register annual update, that all reasonable steps have been or will be taken to ensure that all candidates at the centre have had, or will have, the opportunity to undertake the Spoken Language endorsement

Quality assurance (QA) lead/Lead internal verifier

- Ensures the appropriate arrangements are in place for internal standardisation of assessments

Subject head/lead

- Confirms understanding of the Spoken Language Endorsement for GCSE English Language specifications designed for use in England and ensures any relevant JCQ/awarding body instructions are followed
- Ensures the required task setting and task taking instructions are followed by subject teachers
- Ensures subject teachers assess candidates, either live or from recordings, using the common assessment criteria
- Ensures for monitoring purposes, audio-visual recordings of the presentations of a sample of candidates are provided

Subject teacher

- Ensures all the requirements in relation to the endorsement are known and understood
- Follows the required task setting and task taking instructions
- Assesses candidates, either live or from recordings, using the common assessment criteria
- Provides audio-visual recordings of the presentations of a sample of candidates for monitoring purposes

- Follows the awarding body's instructions for the submission of grades (*Pass, Merit, Distinction or Not Classified*) and the storage and submission of recordings

Exams manager/officer

- Follows the awarding body's instructions for the submission of grades and recordings

Private candidates

Subject head/lead

- According to centre policy, confirms if private candidates (including distance learners and home educated candidates) are accepted by the centre for entry for subjects containing components/units of non-examination assessment/coursework (where the specification may be made available to private candidates by the awarding body)
- Ensures relevant staff in the centre administer all aspects of the non-examination assessment process for a private candidate, according to the awarding body's specification

Management of issues and potential risks associated with non-examination assessments

Reference to non-examination assessment is intended to include any specifications with one or more non-examination assessment component or unit, controlled assessment (where applicable) and coursework

Issue/Risk	Centre actions to manage issue/mitigate risk	Action by
Centre staff malpractice	Records confirm that relevant centre staff are familiar with and follow: • the current JCQ documents Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments and (where applicable) Instructions for conducting coursework • the JCQ document Notice to Centres - Sharing NEA material and candidates' work - http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/non-examination-assessments	HOC/EM
Candidate malpractice	Records confirm that candidates are informed and understand they must not: • submit work which is not their own • make available their work to other candidates through any medium • allow other candidates to have access to their own independently sourced material • assist other candidates to produce work • use books, the internet, AI or other sources without acknowledgement or attribution • submit work that has been word processed by a third party without acknowledgement • include inappropriate, offensive or obscene material Records confirm that candidates have been made aware of the JCQ documents Information for candidates - non-examination assessments, (where applicable Information for candidates – coursework assessments and Information for candidates – Social Media - https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/information-for-candidates-	HOC/EM/HOD

	documents and understand they must not post their work on social media	
Task setting		
Awarding body set task: IT failure/corruption of task details where set task details accessed from the awarding body online	Awarding body key date for accessing/downloading set task noted prior to start of course IT systems checked prior to key date Alternative IT system used to gain access Awarding body contacted to request direct email of task details	EM / IT
Centre set task: Subject teacher fails to meet the assessment criteria as detailed in the specification	Ensures that subject teachers access awarding body training information, practice materials etc. Records confirmation that subject teachers understand the task setting arrangements as defined in the awarding body's specification Samples assessment criteria in the centre set task	HOD
Candidates do not understand the marking criteria and what they need to do to gain credit	A simplified version of the awarding body's marking criteria described in the specification that is not specific to the work of an individual candidate or group of candidates is produced for candidates Records confirm all candidates understand the marking criteria Candidates confirm/record they understand the marking criteria	HOD
Subject teacher long term absence during the task setting stage	See centre's exam contingency plan - Teaching staff extended absence	Head of Centre / HOD
Issuing of tasks		
Awarding body set task not issued to candidates on time	Awarding body key date for accessing set task as detailed in the specification noted prior to start of course Course information issued to candidates contains details when set task will be issued and needs to be completed by Set task accessed well in advance to allow time for planning, resourcing and teaching	HOD
The wrong task is given to candidates	Ensures course planning and information taken from the awarding body's specification confirms the correct task will be issued to candidates Awarding body guidance sought where this issue remains unresolved	HOD EM / HOD
Subject teacher long term absence during the issuing of tasks stage	See centre's contingency plan - Teaching staff extended absence	Head of Centre / HOD
A candidate (or parent/carer) expresses concern about safeguarding, confidentiality or faith in undertaking a task such as a presentation that may be recorded	Ensures the candidates presentation does not form part of the sample which will be recorded Contacts the awarding body at the earliest opportunity where unable to record the required number of candidates for the monitoring purpose	DSL / HOD
Task taking		
Supervision		
Planned assessments clash with other centre or candidate activities	Assessment plan identified for the start of the course Assessment dates/periods included in centre wide calendar	HOD HOD to liaise with Assistant Head in charge of school calendar
Rooms or facilities inadequate for candidates to take tasks under appropriate supervision	Timetabling organised to allocate appropriate rooms and IT facilities for the start of the course Staggered sessions arranged where IT facilities insufficient for number of candidates Whole cohort to undertake written task in large exam venue at the same time (exam conditions do not apply)	EM / HOD / IT / room officer

Insufficient supervision of candidates to enable work to be authenticated	Confirm subject teachers are aware of and follow the current JCQ document Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments and any other specific instructions detailed in the awarding body's specification in relation to the supervision of candidates Confirm subject teachers understand their role and responsibilities as detailed in the centres non-examination assessment policy	HOD HOD / EM
A candidate is suspected of malpractice prior to submitting their work for assessment	Instructions and processes in the current JCQ documents Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (chapter 9 Malpractice) and (where applicable) Instructions for conducting coursework (6. Malpractice in coursework) are followed An internal investigation and where appropriate internal disciplinary procedures are followed	EM to ensure relevant documents are issued to staff Head of Centre / HOD / EM
Access arrangements were not put in place for an assessment where a candidate is approved for arrangements	Relevant staff are signposted to the JCQ document A guide to the special consideration process (chapter 2), to determine the process to be followed to apply for special consideration for the candidate	DENCO to advise all subject staff of AA 's EM to apply for SC
Advice and feedback		
Candidate claims appropriate advice and feedback not given by subject teacher prior to starting on their work	Ensures a centre-wide process is in place for subject teachers to record all information provided to candidates before work begins as part of the centre's quality assurance procedures Regular monitoring of subject teacher completed records and sign-off to confirm monitoring activity Full records kept detailing all information and advice given to candidates prior to starting on their work as appropriate to the subject and component Candidate confirms/records advice and feedback given prior to starting on their work	HOD Subject teacher
Candidate claims no advice and feedback given by subject teacher during the task-taking stage	Regular monitoring of subject teacher completed records and sign-off to confirm monitoring activity	HOD / subject teacher
A third party claims that assistance was given to candidates by the subject teacher over and above that allowed in the regulations and specification	An investigation is conducted; candidates and subject teacher are interviewed and statements recorded where relevant Where appropriate, a suspected malpractice report is submitted to the awarding body	Head of Centre / EM
Candidate does not reference information from published source	Candidate is advised at a general level to reference information before work is submitted for formal assessment Candidate is again referred to the JCQ document Information for candidates: non-examination assessments and (where applicable) Information for candidate – coursework assessments	HOD / subject teacher EM – information on student intranet
Candidate does not set out references as required	Candidate is advised at a general level to review and re-draft the set out of references before work is submitted for formal assessment Candidate is again referred to the JCQ document Information for candidates: non-examination assessments	HOD / subject teacher EM – information on student intranet
Candidate joins the course late after formally supervised task taking has started	A separate supervised session(s) is arranged for the candidate to catch up	HOD / subject teacher

Candidate moves to another centre during the course	Awarding body guidance is sought to determine what can be done depending on the stage at which the move takes place	EM
An excluded pupil wants to complete his/her non-examination assessment(s)	The awarding body specification is checked to determine if the specification is available to a candidate outside mainstream education If so, arrangements for supervision, authentication and marking are made separately for the candidate	Deputy Head / SENCO
Resources		
A candidate augments notes and resources between formally supervised sessions	Preparatory notes and the work to be assessed are collected in and kept secure between formally supervised sessions Where memory sticks are used by candidates, these are collected in and kept secure between formally supervised sessions Where work is stored on the centre's network, access for candidates is restricted between formally supervised sessions	Subject teacher IT
A candidate fails to acknowledge sources on work that is submitted for assessment	Candidate's detailed record of his/her own research, planning, resources etc. is checked to confirm all the sources used, including books, websites and audio/visual resources Awarding body guidance is sought on whether the work of the candidate should be marked where candidate's detailed records acknowledges sources appropriately Where confirmation is unavailable from candidate's records, awarding body guidance is sought and/or a mark of zero is submitted to the awarding body for the candidate	Subject teacher / HOD EM / HOD
Word and time limits		
A candidate is penalised by the awarding body for exceeding word or time limits	Records confirm the awarding body specification has been checked to determine if word or time limits are mandatory Where limits are for guidance only, candidates are discouraged from exceeding them Candidates confirm/record any information provided to them on word or time limits is known and understood	Subject teacher / HOD
Collaboration and group work		
Candidates have worked in groups where the awarding body specification states this is not permitted	Records confirm the awarding body specification has been checked to determine if group work is permitted Awarding body guidance sought where this issue remains unresolved	HOD / Deputy Head HOD / EM
Authentication procedures		
A teacher has doubts about the authenticity of the work submitted by a candidate for internal assessment Candidate plagiarises other material	Records confirm subject staff have been made aware of the JCQ document Teachers sharing assessment material and candidates' work Records confirm that candidates have been issued with the current JCQ document Information for candidates: non-examination assessments and (where applicable information for candidates – coursework assessments Candidates confirm/record that they understand what they need to do to comply with the regulations for non-examination assessments as outlined in the JCQ document Information for candidates: non-examination assessments and (where applicable information for candidates – coursework assessments The candidate's work is not accepted for assessment A mark of zero is recorded and submitted to the awarding body	EM to inform updated document is available on staff resources EM to put on student intranet HOD
Candidate does not sign their authentication statement/declaration	Records confirm that candidates have been issued with the current JCQ document Information for candidates: non-examination assessments Declaration is checked for signature before accepting the work of a candidate for formal assessment	Em put on student intranet Subject teacher / HOD

Subject teacher not available to sign authentication forms	Ensures a centre-wide process is in place for subject teachers to sign authentication forms at the point of marking candidates work as part of the centre's quality assurance procedures	HOD
Presentation of work		
Candidate does not fully complete the awarding body's cover sheet that is attached to their worked submitted for formal assessment	Cover sheet is checked to ensure it is fully completed before accepting the work of a candidate for formal assessment	Subject teacher / HOD / EM
Keeping materials secure		
Candidates work between formal supervised sessions is not securely stored	Records confirm subject teachers are aware of and follow current JCQ document Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments Regular monitoring/internal audit ensures subject teacher use of appropriate secure storage	JCQ documents added to staff resources a start of year HOD / EM
Adequate secure storage not available to subject teacher	Records confirm adequate/sufficient secure storage is available to subject teacher prior to the start of the course Alternative secure storage sourced where required	HOD
Candidates work produced electronically is not securely stored	Records confirm subject teachers are aware of and follow current JCQ document Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments Internal processes and regular monitoring/internal audit by IT Manager ensures: • access to this material is restricted (insert how) • appropriate security safeguards are in place (insert names/types of protection) • an effective back-up strategy is employed so that an up to date archive of candidates' evidence is maintained (insert details of how work is backed up) • any sensitive digital media is encrypted (according to awarding body guidance to ensure that the method of encryption is suitable) to ensure the security of the data stored within it (insert relevant details of how)	HOC/IT Manager
Task marking – externally assessed components		
A candidate is absent on the day of the examiner visit for an acceptable reason	Awarding body guidance is sought to determine if alternative assessment arrangements can be made for the candidate If not, eligibility for special consideration is explored and a request submitted to the awarding body where appropriate	HOD EM to apply for SC
A candidate is absent on the day of the examiner visit for an unacceptable reason	The candidate is marked absent on the attendance register	Subject teacher / HOD
Task marking – internally assessed components		
A candidate submits little or no work	Where a candidate submits no work, the candidate is recorded as absent when marks are submitted to the awarding body Where a candidate submits little work, the work produced is assessed against the assessment criteria and a mark allocated appropriately; where the work does not meet any of the assessment criteria a mark of zero is submitted to the awarding body	Subject teacher / HOD
A candidate is unable to finish their work for unforeseen reason	Relevant staff are signposted to the JCQ document A guide to the special consideration process (chapter 5), to determine eligibility and the process to be followed for shortfall in work	HOD / EM
The work of a candidate is lost or damaged	Relevant staff are signposted to the JCQ document Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (8)/VTQs (15), and (where applicable) Instructions for conducting coursework (16) to determine eligibility and the process to be followed for lost or damaged work	HOD / EM to complete lost work form
Candidate malpractice is discovered	Instructions and processes in the current JCQ document Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (9)/VTQs (5) and (where applicable) Instructions for conducting coursework (6) are followed Investigation and reporting procedures in the current JCQ document Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures are followed	Head of Centre / EM / HOD

	Appropriate internal disciplinary procedures are also followed	
A teacher assesses the work of a candidate with whom they have a close personal relationship e.g. members of their family (which includes step-family, foster family and similar close relationships) or close family friends and their immediate family (e.g. son/daughter)	A possible conflict of interest is declared by informing the awarding body before the published deadline for entries for each examination series. Marked work of said candidate is submitted for moderation whether part of the sample requested or not	Subject teacher / HOD EO to inform EB
An extension to the deadline for submission of marks is required for a legitimate reason	Awarding body is contacted to determine if an extension can be granted Relevant staff are signposted to the JCQ document A guide to the special consideration process (chapter 5), to determine eligibility and the process to be followed for an extension	EM
After submission of marks, it is discovered that the wrong task was given to candidates	Awarding body is contacted for guidance Relevant staff are signposted to the JCQ publication A guide to the special consideration process (chapter 2), to determine eligibility and the process to be followed to apply for special consideration for candidates	EM / Head of Centre / HOD
A candidate wishes to appeal the marks awarded for their work by their teacher	Candidates are informed of the marks they have been awarded for their work prior to the marks being submitted to the awarding body Records confirm candidates have been informed of their marks Candidates are informed that these marks are subject to change through the awarding body's moderation process Candidates are informed of their marks at least two weeks prior to the internal deadline set by the exams officer for the submission of marks Through the candidate exam handbook, candidates are made aware of the centre's internal appeals procedures and timescale for submitting an appeal prior to the submission of marks to the awarding body	Subject teacher Document also published on school website
Deadline for submitting work for formal assessment not met by candidate	Records confirm deadlines given and understood by candidates at the start of the course Candidates confirm/record deadlines known and understood Depending on the circumstances, awarding body guidance sought to determine if the work can be accepted late for marking providing the awarding body's deadline for submitting marks can be met Decision made (depending on the circumstances) if the work will be accepted late for marking or a mark of zero submitted to the awarding body for the candidate	Subject teacher EM EM / EB
Deadline for submitting marks and samples of candidates work ignored by subject teacher	Reminders are issued through senior leaders/subject heads as deadlines approach Records confirm deadlines known and understood by subject teachers Where appropriate, internal disciplinary procedures are followed	EM sends out schedule in timely manner
Subject teacher long term absence during the marking period	See Contingency Plan (Teaching staff extended absence)	Head of Centre / HOD

Internal Appeals Procedure (exams)

Purpose of the procedure

This procedure confirms SAST Schools compliance with JCQ's General Regulations for Approved Centres (5.3z, 5.8) that the centre will:

- have in place for inspection that must be reviewed and updated annually by a member of the senior leadership team and communicated within the centre, an internal appeals procedure which must cover at least appeals regarding internal assessment decisions, access to post-results services and appeals and centre decisions relating to access arrangements and special consideration
- draw to the attention of candidates and their parents/carers their internal appeals procedure

This procedure covers appeals relating to:

- Internal assessment decisions (centre assessed marks)
- Centre decisions not to support an application for clerical re-check, a review of marking, a review of moderation or an appeal
- Centre decisions relating to access arrangements and special consideration
- Centre decisions relating to other administrative issues

Appeals relating to internal assessment decisions (centre assessed marks)

Certain qualifications contain components/units of non-examination assessment, controlled assessment and/or coursework which are internally assessed (marked) by SAST Teaching staff and internally standardised. The marks awarded (the internal assessment decisions) which contribute to the final grade of the qualification are then submitted by the deadline set by the awarding body for external moderation.

This procedure confirms SAST Schools compliance with JCQ's General Regulations for Approved Centres 2020-2021 (section 5.7) that the centre will:

- have in place for inspection that must be reviewed and updated annually purposes, a written internal appeals procedure relating to internal assessment decisions and to ensure that details of this procedure are communicated, made widely available and accessible to all candidates
- before submitting marks to the awarding body inform candidates of their centre assessed marks and allow a candidate to request a review of the centre's marking

Deadlines for the submission of marks

Dates to be confirmed	Qualification	Details	Exam series
07/05/2026	GCSE	Final date for submission of centre assessed marks (AQA, OCR, Pearson and WJEC)	Summer - 26
31/05/20246	GCSE	AQA Art and Design	Summer - 26
15/05/20246	GCE	Final date for submission of centre assessed marks (AQA, OCR, Pearson and WJEC)	Summer - 26

SAST Schools are committed to ensuring that whenever its staff marks candidates' work this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the awarding body's specification and subject-specific associated documents.

SAST Schools ensure that all centre staff follow a robust policy regarding the management of non-examination assessments including controlled assessments and coursework. This policy details the procedures relating to non-examination assessments and coursework for GCE, GCSE, Project qualifications, BTEC's, Applied Generals, Cambridge Nationals and NCFE, including the marking and quality assurance/internal standardisation processes which relevant teaching staff are required to follow.

Candidates' work will be marked by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skill, who have been trained in this activity and do not have any potential conflict of interest. If AI tools have been used to assist in the marking of candidates work, they will not be the sole marker. SAST Schools are committed to ensuring that work produced by candidates is authenticated in line with the requirements of the awarding body. Where more than one subject teacher/tutor is involved in marking candidates' work, internal moderation and standardisation will ensure consistency of marking.

On being informed of their centre-assessed marks, if a candidate believes that the above procedures were not followed in relation to the marking of their work, or that the assessor has not properly applied the marking standards to the marking, then the candidate may make use of the appeals procedure below to consider whether to request a review of the centre's marking.

N.B: An appeal may only be made against the assessment process and not against the mark to be submitted to the awarding body.

SAST Schools will

- Ensure that candidates are informed of their centre-assessed marks so that they may request a review of the centre's marking before marks are submitted to the awarding body.
- Inform candidates that they will need to explain on what grounds they wish to request a review of an internally assessed mark as a review will only focus on the quality of work submitted.
- Inform candidates that they may request copies of materials (as a minimum, a copy of the marked assessment material (work) and the mark scheme or assessment criteria plus

additional materials which may vary from subject to subject) to assist them in considering whether to request a review of the centre's marking of the assessment.

- Having received a request for copies of materials, promptly make them available to the candidate as soon as possible. This will either be the originals viewed under supervised conditions or copies.
- Inform candidates they will not be allowed access to original material, including artefacts, unless supervised.
- Provide candidates with sufficient time, normally at least five working days, to allow them to review copies of materials and reach a decision.
- Provide a clear deadline for candidates to submit a request for a review of the centre's marking. Requests will not be accepted after this deadline. Requests must be made in writing by completing the internal appeals form. Candidates must explain on what grounds they wish to request a review.
- Will allow 14 working days for the review to be carried out, to make any necessary changes to marks and to inform the candidate of the outcome, all before the awarding body's deadline or the submission of marks
- Ensure that the review of marking is conducted by an assessor who has appropriate competence, has had no previous involvement in the assessment of that candidate for the component in question and has no personal interest in the outcome of the review.
- Instruct the reviewer to ensure that the candidate's mark is consistent with the standard set by the centre.
- Inform the candidate in writing of the outcome of the review of the centre's marking.
- The outcome of the review of the centre's marking will be made known to the head of centre, who will have the final decision if there is any disagreement on the mark to be submitted to the awarding body. A written record of the review will be kept and made available to the awarding body upon request.
- The awarding body will be informed if the centre does not accept the outcome of a review.

The moderation process carried out by the awarding body may result in a mark change, either upwards or downwards, even after an internal review. The internal review process is in place to ensure consistency of marking within the centre, whereas moderation by the awarding body ensures that the centres marking is in line with national standards. The mark submitted to the awarding body is subject to change and should, therefore, be considered provisional.

Appeals against decisions to reject a candidate's work on the grounds of malpractice

The JCQ Information for candidates documents (Coursework, Non-examination assessments, Social media) which are distributed to all candidates prior to relevant assessments taking place, inform candidates of the things they must and must not do when they are completing their work.

The JCQ Information for candidates – AI (Artificial Intelligence and assessments) or similar centre document is issued to candidates prior to assessments taking place (and prior to a candidate signing the declaration of authentication which relates to their work).

SAST Schools ensure that staff delivering/assessing coursework, internal assessments and/or non-examination assessments are aware of centre procedures relating to the authentication of learner work and have robust processes in place for identifying and reporting plagiarism (including AI misuse) and other potential candidate malpractice.

Candidate malpractice offences relating to the content of work (i.e. inappropriate/offensive content, copying/collusion, plagiarism (including AI misuse) and/or false declaration of authentication) which are discovered in a controlled assessment, coursework or non-examination assessment component prior to the candidate signing the declaration of authentication do not need to be reported to the awarding body but will be dealt with in accordance with the centre's internal procedures.

Malpractice by a candidate discovered in a controlled assessment, coursework or non-examination assessment where the offence does not relate to the content of candidate's work (e.g. possession of unauthorised materials, breach of assessment conditions) or where a candidate has signed the declaration of authentication, must be reported to the awarding body.

If there are doubts about the authenticity of the work of a candidate or irregularities are identified in a candidate's work before the candidate has signed the declaration of authentication/authentication statement (where required) and malpractice is suspected SAST Schools will:

- Follow the authentication procedures and/or malpractice instructions in the relevant JCQ document (*Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments/Instructions for conducting coursework*) and any supplementary guidance that may be provided by the awarding body. Where this may lead to the decision to **not** accept the candidate's work for assessment or to reject a candidate's coursework on the grounds of malpractice, the affected candidate will be informed of the decision.

If a candidate who is the subject of the decision disagrees with the decision:

- A written request, setting out as clearly and concisely as possible the grounds for the appeal including any further evidence relevant to supporting the appeal, should be submitted using the **internal appeals form**.

The appellant will be informed of the outcome of the appeal within 14 calendar days.

Appeals relating to centre decisions not to support an application for a clerical check, a review of marking, a review of moderation or an appeal

This procedure confirms SAST schools compliance with JCQ's General Regulations for Approved Centres (section 5.13) that the centre will:

- have available for inspection purposes and draw to the attention of candidates and their parents/carers, a written internal appeals procedure to manage disputes when a candidate disagrees with a centre decision not to support an application for a clerical re-check, a review of marking, a review of moderation or an appeal

Following the issue of results, awarding bodies make post-results services available. Full details of these services, internal deadlines for requesting a service and fees charged are provided by the exams officer in the candidate's results envelope.

Candidates are also made aware of the arrangements for post-results services prior to the issue of results. Candidates are also informed of the periods during which senior members of centre staff will

be available immediately after the publication of results so that results may be discussed, and decisions made on the submission of reviews of marking. Candidates are made aware/informed **before** they sit any exams in their Exams Handbook

If the centre or a candidate (or their parent/carer) has a concern and believes a result may not be accurate, post-results services may be considered.

The JCQ post-results services currently available are detailed below.

Reviews of Results (RoRs):

- Service 1 (Clerical re-check)
This is the only service that can be requested for objective tests (multiple choice tests)
- Service 2 (Review of marking)
- Priority Service 2 (Review of marking)
This service is available for externally assessed components of both unitised and linear GCE A-level specifications It is also available for Level 3 Vocational and Technical qualifications. For NCFE tis service only applies to T-Levels
- Service 3 (Review of moderation)
This service is not available to an individual candidate

Access to Scripts (ATS):

- Copies of scripts to support reviews of marking
- Copies of scripts to support teaching and learning

Where a concern is expressed that a particular result may not be accurate, the centre will look at the marks awarded for each component part of the qualification alongside any mark schemes, relevant result reports, grade boundary information etc. when made available by the awarding body to determine if the centre supports any concerns.

Written candidate consent (informed consent via candidate email is acceptable) is required in all cases before a request for a RoR service 1 or 2 (including priority service 2) is submitted to the awarding body. Consent is required to confirm the candidate understands that the final subject grade and/or mark awarded following a clerical re-check or a review of marking, and any subsequent appeal, may be lower than, higher than, or the same as the result which was originally awarded. Candidate consent must only be collected after the publication of results.

If a concern is raised about a particular examination result, the exams manager, teaching staff and head of department will investigate the feasibility of requesting a review.

The candidate will then be advised as to whether a request is feasible. The candidate will pay the appropriate RoR fee to the centre, and a request will be made to the awarding body on the candidate's behalf.

Following the RoR outcome, an external appeals process is available if the head of centre remains dissatisfied with the outcome and believes there are grounds for appeal. The JCQ publications Post-Results Services and JCQ Appeals Booklet (A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes) will be consulted to determine the acceptable grounds for a preliminary appeal.

Where the head of centre is satisfied after receiving the EAR outcome, but the candidate (or their parent/carer) believes there are grounds for a preliminary appeal to the awarding body, an internal appeal may be made to the head of centre. Following this, the head of centre's decision as to whether to proceed with a preliminary appeal will be based upon the acceptable grounds as detailed in the JCQ

Appeals Booklet. Candidates or parents/carers are not permitted to make direct representations to an awarding body.

The **internal appeals form** should be completed and submitted to the centre within 10 calendar days of the notification of the outcome of the RoR. Subject to the head of centre's decision, this will allow the centre to process the preliminary appeal and submit to the awarding body within the required **30 calendar days** of receiving the outcome of the review of results process. Awarding body fees which may be charged for the preliminary appeal must be paid to the centre by the appellant before the preliminary appeal is submitted to the awarding body (fees are available from the exams manager). If the appeal is upheld by the awarding body, this fee will be refunded by the awarding body and repaid to the appellant by the centre.

Appeals regarding centre decisions relating to access arrangements and special consideration

This procedure confirms SAST Schools compliance with JCQ's **General Regulations for Approved Centres** (section 5.3z) that the centre will:

- have in place for inspection that must be reviewed and updated annually, by a member of the senior leadership team and communicated within the centre, an internal appeals procedure which must cover at least appeals regarding... centre decisions relating to access arrangements and special consideration

SAST Schools will:

- comply with the principles and regulations governing access arrangements and special consideration as set out in the JCQ documents **Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments** and **A guide to the special consideration process**
- ensure that all staff who manage and implement access arrangements and special consideration are aware of the requirements and are appropriately supported and resourced

Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments

In accordance with the regulations, SAST Schools:

- recognise their duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, submit applications for reasonable adjustments and make reasonable adjustments through the access arrangements process and make reasonable adjustments to the services the centre provides to disabled candidates.
- complies with its responsibilities in identifying, determining and implementing appropriate access arrangements and reasonable adjustments

Failure to comply with the regulations have the potential to constitute malpractice which may impact on a candidate's result(s).

Examples of failure to comply include:

- putting in place access arrangements/adjustments that are not approved
- failing to consider putting in place access arrangements (which may be a failure to comply with the duty to make reasonable adjustments)
- permitting access arrangements/adjustments within the centre which are not supported by appropriate evidence
- charging a fee for providing reasonable adjustments to disabled candidates

Special consideration

Where SAST Schools has appropriate evidence authorised by a member of the senior leadership team to support an application, it will apply for special consideration at the time of the assessment for a candidate who is affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control when the issue or event has had, or is reasonably likely to have had, a material effect on the candidate's ability to take an assessment or demonstrate their normal level of attainment in an assessment.

Centre decisions relating to access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration

This may include the centre's decision not to make/apply for a specific reasonable adjustment or to apply for special consideration, in circumstances where a candidate does not meet the criteria for, or there is no evidence/insufficient evidence to support the implementation of an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment or the application of special consideration.

Where the centre makes a decision in relation to the access arrangement(s), reasonable adjustment(s) or special consideration that apply for a candidate or candidates:

- If a candidate who is the subject of the relevant decision (or the candidate's parent/carer) disagrees with the decision made and reasonably believes that the centre has not complied with its responsibilities or followed due procedures, a written request setting out the grounds for appeal should be submitted
- An **internal appeals form** should be completed and submitted within 2 weeks of the decision being made known to the appellant.

To determine the outcome of the appeal, the head of centre will consult the respective JCQ publication to confirm the centre has complied with the principles and regulations governing access arrangements and/or special consideration and followed due procedures.

The appellant will be informed of the outcome of the appeal within 1 week of the appeal being received and logged by the centre.

If the appeal is upheld, the centre will proceed to implement the necessary arrangements/submit the necessary application.

Appeals regarding centre decisions relating to other administrative issues

Circumstances may arise that cause the centre to make decisions on administrative issues that may affect a candidate's examinations/assessments.

Where the centre may make a decision that affects a candidate or candidates:

- If a candidate who is the subject of the relevant decision (or the candidate's parent/carer) disagrees with the decision made and reasonably believes that the centre has not complied with the regulations or followed due process, a written request setting out the grounds for appeal should be submitted
- An **internal appeals form** should be completed and submitted within 2 week of the decision being made known to the appellant.

The appellant will be informed of the outcome of the appeal within 1 week of the appeal being received and logged by the centre.

Internal appeals form

Please tick box to indicate the nature of your appeal and complete all white boxes on the form below

FOR CENTRE USE ONLY	
Date received	
Reference No.	

- ☐ Appeal against an internal assessment decision and/or request for a review of marking
- ☐ Appeal against a decision to reject candidate's work on the grounds of malpractice
- ☐ The Outcome of an enquiry about results
- ☐ Appeal against the centre's decision relating to access arrangements or special consideration
- ☐ Appeal against the centre's decision relating to an administrative issue

*Where the nature of the appeal does not relate directly to an awarding body's specific qualification, indicate N/A in awarding body specific detail boxes

Name of appellant		Candidate name if different to appellant	
Awarding body		Exam paper code	
Qualification type and Subject		Exam paper title	

Please state the grounds for your appeal below:

Continue overleaf if necessary

Signature:

Date of signature:

This form must be signed, dated and returned to the Exams Manager on behalf of the head of centre to the timescale indicated in the relevant appeals procedure

Appeals log

On receipt, all appeals are assigned a reference number and logged. Outcome and outcome date is also recorded.

The outcome of any review of the centre's marking will be made known to the head of centre. A written record of the review will be kept and logged as an appeal, so information can be easily made available to an awarding body upon request. The awarding body will be informed if the centre does not accept the outcome of a review – this will be noted on this log

Ref No.	Date received	Appellant name	Outcome	Outcome date

Further guidance to inform and implement appeals

JCQ publications

- General Regulations for Approved Centres
<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>
- Post-Results Services
<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/post-results-services>
- JCQ Appeals Booklet
<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/appeals>
- Notice to Centres – informing candidates of their centre assessed marks
<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/non-examination-assessments>

Ofqual publications

- GCSE (9 to 1) qualification-level conditions and requirements
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-9-to-1-qualification-level-conditions>
- GCE qualification-level conditions and requirements
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-qualification-level-conditions-and-requirements>

Complaints (exams)

Purpose of the policy

This policy confirms SAST Schools compliance with JCQ's General Regulations for Approved Centres, in drawing to the attention of candidates and their parents/carers our written complaints policy which covers general complaints regarding the centre's delivery or administration of a qualification and our internal appeals procedure.

Grounds for complaint

A candidate (or their parent/carer) may make a complaint on the grounds below (this is not an exhaustive list).

Teaching and learning

- Quality of teaching and learning, for example
 - Non-subject specialist teacher without adequate training/subject matter expertise utilised on a long-term basis
 - Teacher lacking knowledge of new specification/incorrect core content studied/taught
 - Core content not adequately covered
 - Inadequate feedback for a candidate following assessment(s)
- Pre-release/advance material/set task issued by the awarding body not provided on time to an exam candidate
- The taking of an assessment, which contributes to the final grade of the qualification, not conducted according to the JCQ/awarding body instructions
- Candidate not informed of their centre assessed marks prior to marks being submitted to the awarding body
- Candidate not informed of their centre assessed marks in sufficient time to request/appeal a review of marking prior to marks being submitted to the awarding body
- Candidate not given sufficient time to review materials to make a decision whether to request a review of centre assessed marks.
- Candidate unhappy with internal assessment decision (complainant to refer via Head of Department to the centre internal appeals procedure)
- Centre fails to adhere to its internal appeals procedure.

Access arrangements and special consideration

- Candidate not assessed by the centre's appointed assessor
- Candidate not involved in decisions made regarding their access arrangements
- Candidate was not informed that an application for access arrangements was to be processed using Access Arrangements online, complying with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018
- Candidate not informed/adequately informed of the arrangements in place and the subjects or components of subjects where the arrangements would not apply

- Exam information not appropriately adapted for a disabled candidate to access it
- Adapted equipment/assistive technology put in place failed during exam/assessment
- Approved access arrangement(s) not put in place at the time of an exam/assessment
- Appropriate arrangements not put in place at the time of an exam/assessment as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment
- Candidate unhappy with the centre decision relating to access arrangements or special consideration (complainant to refer via SENCo to the centres internal appeals procedure)
- Centre fails to adhere to its internal appeals procedure

Entries

- Failure to clearly explain a decision of early entry for a qualification to candidate (or parent/carer)
- Candidate not entered/entered late (incurring a late entry fee) for a required exam/assessment
- Candidate entered for a wrong exam/assessment
- Candidate entered for a wrong tier of entry

Conducting examinations

- Failure to adequately brief candidate on exam timetable/exam regulations prior to exam/assessment taking place
- Room in which exam held did not provide candidate with appropriate conditions for taking the exam
- Inadequate invigilation in exam room
- Failure to conduct exam according to the regulations
- Online system failed during (on-screen) exam/assessment
- Disruption during exam/assessment
- Alleged, suspected or actual malpractice incident not investigated/reported
- Eligible application for special consideration for a candidate not submitted/not submitted to timescale
- Failure to inform/update candidate on the accepted/rejected outcome of a special consideration application if provided by the awarding body

Results and Post-results

- Before exams, candidate not made aware of the arrangements for post-results services and the accessibility of senior members of centre staff after the publication of results
- Candidate not having access to a member of senior staff after the publication of results to discuss/make decision on the submission of a review/enquiry
- Candidate request for return of work after moderation and work not available/disposed of earlier than allowed in the regulations
- Candidate (or parent/carer) unhappy with a result (complainant to refer via exams officer to awarding body *post-results services*)
- Candidate (or parent/carer) unhappy with a centre decision not to support an appeal (complainant to refer via the Exams Manager to the centre's *internal appeals procedure*)
- Centre fails to adhere to its internal appeals procedure
- Centre applied for the wrong post-results service/for the wrong script for a candidate

- Centre missed awarding body deadline to apply for a post-results service
- Centre applied for a post-results service for candidate without gaining required candidate consent/permission

Raising a concern/complaint

If a candidate (or their parent/carer) has a general concern or complaint about the centre's delivery or administration of a qualification they are following, SAST encourages the candidate to try to resolve this informally in the first instance. A concern or complaint should be made in person, by telephone or in writing to the head of centre or exams manager.

If a complaint fails to be resolved informally, the candidate (or their parent/carer) is then at liberty to make a formal complaint.

How to make a formal complaint

- A formal complaint should be submitted in writing by completing a **complaints form**
- Forms are available from the Exams Manager
- Completed forms should be returned to either the Exams Manager or Head of Centre
- Forms received will be logged by the centre and acknowledged within 5 calendar days

How a formal complaint is investigated

- The head of centre will further investigate or appoint a member of the senior leadership team (who is not involved in the grounds for complaint and has no personal interest in the outcome) to investigate the complaint and report on the findings and conclusion]
- The findings and conclusion will be provided to the complainant within 3 working weeks

Internal Appeals procedure

Following the outcome, if the complainant remains dissatisfied and believes there are clear grounds, an appeal can be submitted.

- By following the Internal appeals procedure and completing an internal appeals form
- Forms received will be logged by the centre and acknowledged within 5 calendar days
- The appeal will be referred to The Academy Committee Chair (or a special Committee of the Academy Committee body) for consideration
- If thought necessary, the appeal will be referred to SAST trustees
- The Academy Committee Chair (or Committee) will inform the appellant of the final conclusion in accordance with the internal appeals procedure



- ☐ Complaint against the SAST Schools delivery of a qualification
- ☐ Complaint against the SAST Schools administration of a qualification

Name of complainant		Candidate name if different to complainant	
Please state the grounds for your complaint below			
If your grounds are lengthy please write as bullet points; please keep to the point and include relevant detail such as dates, names etc. and provide any evidence you may have to support what you say <i>If necessary, continue on an additional page if this form is being completed electronically or overleaf if hard copy being completed</i>			
Detail any steps you have already taken to resolve the issue(s) and what you would consider to be a good resolution to the issue(s)			
Complainant signature:		Date of signature:	

This form must be signed, dated and returned to the Exams Manager on behalf of the head of centre to the timescale indicated in the relevant appeals procedure

This form must be completed in full; an incomplete form will be returned to the complainant

Complaints log

On receipt, all complaints are assigned a reference number and logged. Outcome and outcome date is also recorded.

Ref No.	Date received	Complaint name	Outcome	Outcome date

Word Processor Policy (exams)

This policy is reviewed and updated annually on the publication of updated JCQ regulations and guidance on access arrangements and instructions for conducting exams.

References in this policy to AARA and ICE relate to/are directly taken from the Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2025-2026 and Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2025-2026 publications.

Introduction

The use of a word processor in exams and assessments is an available access arrangement/reasonable adjustment.

(AA 4.2.1)

The purpose of an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage due to persistent and significant difficulties. The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate.

A centre must make decisions on appropriate access arrangements for their candidates. Although professionals from other organisations may give advice, they cannot make the decision for the centre. They will not have a working knowledge of an individual candidates needs and how their difficulties impact in the classroom and /or in times assessments. It is the responsibility of the SENCo to make appropriate and informed decisions based on JCQ regulations.

(AA 4.2.2)

Although access arrangements/adjustments are intended to allow access to assessments, they cannot be granted where they will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question.

(AA 4.2.3)

Candidates may not require the same access arrangement/reasonable adjustment in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate. SENCos must consider the need for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments on a subject-by-subject basis.

(AA 4.2.1)

The SENCo must ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment does not unfairly disadvantage or advantage the candidate.

(AA 4.2.7)

The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustment before their first examination.

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how SAST Schools comply with AARA (chapter 4) managing the needs of candidates - principles for centres (chapter 5.8) Word processor and ICE (sections 14.20-27) when awarding and allocating a candidate the use of word processor in examinations.

The term 'word processor' is used to describe for example, the use of a computer, laptop or tablet.

The criteria that SAST schools use to award and allocate word processors for examinations and assessments

The normal way of working for exam candidates, as directed by the head of centre, is that candidates handwrite their exams unless there are exceptions.

Exceptions

A candidate may be awarded the use of a word processor in examinations where:

- The candidate may have an approved access arrangement in place, for example the use of a scribe/speech recognition technology
- The candidate had a firmly established need, it reflects the candidate normal way of working and by not being awarded a word processor would be at a substantial disadvantage to other candidates

The centre will

- allocate the use of a word processor to a candidate with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text switched off where it is their normal way of working within the centre (AARA 5.8.1) which is defined as support:
 - in the classroom (where appropriate)
 - working in small groups for reading and/or writing
 - literacy support lessons
 - literacy intervention strategies
 - in internal school tests/exams
 - Mock exams
- award the use of a word processor to a candidate where appropriate to their needs
For example, a candidate with
 - a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly
 - a medical condition
 - a physical disability
 - a sensory impairment;
 - planning and organisational problems when writing by hand
 - poor handwriting (AA 5.8.4)
- only permit the use of a word processor where the integrity of the assessment can be maintained (AA 4.2.1)
- not grant the use of a word processor where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question (AA 4.2.2)
- consider on a subject-by-subject basis if the candidate will need to use a word processor in each specification (AA 4.2.3)

- process access arrangements/reasonable adjustments at the start of the course, or as soon as practicable having firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working, ensuring arrangements are always approved before an examination or assessment (AA 4.2.4)
- provide the use of word processors to candidates in non-examination assessment components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification (AA 5.8.2)

The centre will not

- simply grant the use of a word processor to a candidate because they now want to type rather than write in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because they use a laptop at home (AA 5.8.4)

Additionally the use of a word processor would be considered for a candidate

- in the event of a temporary injury or impairment, or a diagnosis of a disability or manifestation of an impairment relating to an existing disability arising after the start of the course (AA 4.2.4)
- where the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates (AA 5.8.4)

Centre specific processes

- The use of a word processor is agreed and arranged by the SENCo and the AA co-ordinator, once evidence has been received

Arrangements at the time of the assessment for the use of a word processor

Candidates using word processors (including laptops and chrome books) are internally accommodated in the following manner:

- Candidates are seated within a dedicated IT room to use PC's
- In classrooms if using Chrome Books
- If this is not possible or there are only a couple of candidates, then laptops/chrome books will be used in the main exam rooms or in a room for a smaller group of candidates with similar needs.

In compliance with the regulations, the centre:

- provides a word processor, with the spelling and grammar check and predictive text switched off, to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre, unless an awarding body's specification says otherwise (ICE 14.20)
- Laptops are positioned in exam rooms next to power sockets so that they have a constant power supply.
- Chrome Books are charged overnight to ensure the battery is sufficiently charged to last for the duration of the exam (ICE 14.21)
- ensures the candidate is reminded to ensure that their centre number, candidate number and the unit or component code appear on each page as a header or footer e.g. 12345/8001 – 6391/01 (ICE 14.22)
 - Where possible candidates will use Trelson which automatically adds a footer and header
 - If a candidate is using the software application Notepad or Wordpad these do not allow for the insertion of a header or footer. In these instances once the candidate has completed the examination and printed off their typed script, they are instructed to handwrite their details as a header or footer. The candidate must be supervised throughout this process to ensure that they are solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way.

- ensures the candidate understands that each page of the typed script must be numbered, e.g. page 1 of 6 (ICE 14.23)
- ensures the candidate is reminded to save their work at regular intervals. (or where possible, an IT technician will set up 'autosave' on each laptop or tablet) to ensure that if there is a complication or technical issue, the candidate work is not lost
- instructs the candidate to use a minimum of 12pt font and double spacing to make marking easier for examiners (ICE 14.24)

(ICE 14.25)

The centre will ensure the word processor

- is only used in a way that ensures a candidate's script is produced under secure conditions.
- Is not used to perform skills which are being assessed
- is in good working order at the time of the exam
- is accommodated in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen
- is used as a typewriter, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable
- is cleared of any previously stored data
- does not give the candidate access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), email, the internet, social media sites or spreadsheets.
- does not include graphic packages or computer aided design software unless permission has been given to use these
- does not have any predictive text software or an automatic spelling and grammar check enabled unless the candidate has been permitted a scribe (a scribe cover sheet must be completed), or the awarding body's specification permits the use of automatic spell checking
- does not include computer reading (text to speech) software unless the candidate has permission to use a computer reader
- does not include speech recognition technology unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe (a scribe cover sheet must be completed)
- does not include AI tools
- is not used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe (a scribe cover sheet must be completed)

Printing the script after the exam has ended

The centre will ensure

- the word processor is either connected to a printer so that a script can be printed off, or have the facility to print from a portable storage medium
- the candidate is present to verify that the work printed is their own
- a word-processed script is attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers
- If a candidate omits to insert the required header or footer, they are instructed to handwrite the details as a header or footer; the candidate is supervised throughout this process to ensure they are solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way (ICE 14.22)

The centre will also ensure that where an awarding body may require a word processor cover sheet, this is included with the candidates typed script (and according to the relevant body's instructions). (ICE 14.26)

The centre may retain electronic copies of word-processed scripts as the electronic copy of a word-processed script may be accepted by an awarding body where the printed copy has been lost. However, the centre would need to demonstrate to the awarding body that the electronic file has been kept securely. The head of centre would be required to confirm this in writing to the awarding body (ICE 14.27)

Allocating word processors at the time of the assessment

Appropriate exam-compliant word processors will be provided by the IT department in liaison with the SENCo and the exams officer.

In exceptional circumstances where the number of appropriate word processors may be insufficient for the cohort of candidates approved to use them in an exam session, the cohort will be split into two groups. One group will sit the exam earlier than or later than the awarding body's published start time.

The security of the exam will be maintained at all times and candidates will be supervised in line with ICE 7

Plagiarism and Malpractice Policy (exams)

Introduction

What is malpractice and maladministration

‘Malpractice’ and ‘Maladministration’ are distinct related concepts, the common theme being that they involve a failure to follow the rules of an examination or assessment. This policy and procedure uses the word ‘malpractice’ to cover both and it means any act, default or practice which is:

- A breach of the regulations, and/or
- A breach of awarding body requirements regarding how a qualification should be delivered, and/or
- A failure to follow established procedures in relation to a qualification
 - Which:
- Gives rise to prejudice to candidates, and/or
- Compromise public confidence in qualifications, and or
- Compromises, attempts to compromise or may compromise the process of assessment, the integrity of any qualification or the validity of a result or certificate, and/or
- Damages the authority, reputation or credibility of any awarding body or centre or any officer, employee or agent of any awarding body or centre (SMPP 1)

Candidate Malpractice

Normally involves malpractice by a candidate in connection with any examination or assessment, including the preparation and authentication of any controlled assessments, coursework or non-examination assessments, the presentation of any practical work, the compilation of portfolio of assessment evidence and the completion of any examination. (SMPP 2)

Centre Staff Malpractice

Means malpractice committed by

- A member of staff, contractor (whether employed under a contract of employment or a contract for services) or a volunteer at a centre, or
- An individual appointed in another capacity by a centre such as an invigilator, a Sign Language Professional, a Language Modifier, a practical assistant, a prompter, a reader or a scribe.

Centre Malpractice

Normally involves malpractice where there is an element of systemic failure, a breach in policies or widespread malpractice such that a centre-level sanction is appropriate (SMPP 2)

Suspected Malpractice

for the purposes of this document, suspected malpractice means all alleged or suspected incidents of malpractice (regardless of how the incident might be categorised, as described in SMPP, section 1.9) (SMPP 2)

Purpose of the policy

To confirm that SAST schools:

- have in place for inspection that must be reviewed and updated annually, a written malpractice policy which covers all qualifications delivered by the centre detailing how candidates are informed and advised to avoid committing malpractice in examinations and assessments, how suspected malpractice issues should be escalated within the centre and reported to the relevant awarding body; it must also acknowledge the use of AI (e.g. what AI is, when it may be used and how it should be acknowledged, the risks of using AI, what AI misuse is and how this will be treated as malpractice

General Principles

In accordance with regulations SAST Schools will

- Take all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any malpractice (which includes maladministration) before, during and after assessments have taken place
- Inform the awarding body **immediately** of any alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice or maladministration, involving a candidate or a member of staff, by completing the appropriate documentation.
- As required by an awarding body, gather evidence of any instances of alleged or suspected malpractice (which includes maladministration) in accordance with the current JCQ document Suspected Malpractice – Policies and Procedures and provide such information and advice as the awarding body may reasonably require

What is meant by plagiarism?

The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) defines plagiarism as:

“The failure to acknowledge sources properly and/or the submission of another person’s work as if it were the candidate’s own”.

This could be either copying from published texts, either in print or from the internet, or copying pieces of work that have previously been submitted for examinations.

Plagiarism for the purpose of this document is restricted to those examination components where students undertake examination work in unsupervised conditions, such as coursework, pre-release work, or the production of research notes which can be used in the examination. It can also occur when candidates are allowed to annotate texts and take these into an examination.

What is meant by malpractice?

There are many different instances where malpractice may be identified by either the centre or the Awarding Body. Examples of malpractice can include:

- a breach of the instructions or advice of an invigilator, supervisor, or the awarding body in relation to the examination or assessment rules and regulations.

- failing to abide by the conditions of supervision designed to maintain the security of the examinations or assessments.
- collusion: working collaboratively with other candidates, beyond what is permitted.
- copying from another candidate (including the use of IT to aid the copying);
- allowing work to be copied e.g. posting written coursework on social networking sites prior to an examination/assessment.
- the deliberate destruction of another candidate's work.
- disruptive behaviour in the examination room or during an assessment session (including the use of offensive language);
- exchanging, obtaining, receiving, passing on information (or the attempt to) which could be examination related by means of talking, electronic, written or non-verbal communication.
- making a false declaration of authenticity in relation to the authorship of controlled assessments, coursework or the contents of a portfolio.
- allowing others to assist in the production of controlled assessments, coursework or assisting others in the production of controlled assessments or coursework.
- the misuse, or the attempted misuse, of examination and assessment materials and resources (e.g. exemplar materials); being in possession of confidential material in advance of the examination.
- behaving in a manner to undermine the integrity of the examination.

Preventing Malpractice

SAST Schools have in place

- Robust processes to prevent and identify malpractice, as outlines in section 3 of the JCQ document Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures.
- This includes ensuring that staff involved in the delivery of assessments and examinations understand the requirements for conducting these as specified in the following JCQ documents and any further awarding body guidance.
 - General Regulations for Approved Centres
 - Instructions for conducting examinations
 - Instructions for conducting coursework
 - Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments
 - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments
 - A guide to the Special Consideration process
 - Suspected malpractice: Policies and Procedures
 - Plagiarism in Assessments
 - AI use in Assessments: Protecting the integrity of Qualifications
 - Post Results Services
 - A guide to the awarding bodies appeals process
 - Guidance for centres on cyber security

Informing and advising candidates how to avoid committing malpractice in examinations and assessments

Candidates and parents/carers are directed to the centre website where they can find the following JCQ Information for candidates documents

- Written Exams
- Non-examination assessments
- Coursework assessments
- AI guidance
- Social Media
- On Screen Tests
- Warning to candidates poster

- Unauthorised items poster
- Exam board Privacy notices

They are also informed by the teachers of the subjects that require non-examination/coursework assessments of best practice.

The use of AI in Assessments

AI use refers to the use of AI tools to obtain information and content which might be used in work produced for assessments which lead towards qualifications.

While the range of AI tools, and their capabilities, is likely to expand greatly in the near future, misuse of AI tools in relation to qualification assessments at any time constitutes malpractice. Teachers and students should also be aware that AI tools are still being developed and there are often limitations to their use, such as producing inaccurate or inappropriate content.

AI chatbots are AI tools which generate text in response to user prompts and questions. Users can ask follow-up questions or ask the chatbot to revise the responses already provided. AI chatbots respond to prompts based upon patterns in the data sets (large language model) upon which they have been trained. They generate responses which are statistically likely to be relevant and appropriate. AI chatbots can complete tasks such as the following:

- Answering questions
- Analysing, improving, and summarising text
- Authoring essays, articles, fiction, and non-fiction
- Writing computer code
- Translating text from one language to another
- Generating new ideas, prompts, or suggestions for a given topic or theme
- Generating text with specific attributes, such as tone, sentiment, or format

What is AI Misuse

AI misuse constitutes malpractice as defined in the JCQ Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures.

The malpractice sanctions available for the offences of ‘making a false declaration of authenticity’ and ‘plagiarism’ include disqualification and debarment from taking qualifications for a number of years. Students’ marks may also be affected if they have relied on AI to complete an assessment and, as noted above, the attainment that they have demonstrated in relation to the requirements of the qualification does not accurately reflect their own work.

Examples of AI misuse include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Copying or paraphrasing sections of AI-generated content so that the work is no longer the student’s own
- Copying or paraphrasing whole responses of AI-generated content
- Using AI to complete parts of the assessment so that the work does not reflect the student’s own work, analysis, evaluation or calculations
- Failing to acknowledge use of AI tools when they have been used as a source of information
- Incomplete or poor acknowledgement of AI tools
- Submitting work with intentionally incomplete or misleading references or bibliographies.

Acknowledging AI Use

If a student uses an AI tool which provides details of the sources it has used in generating content, these sources must be verified by the student and referenced in their work in the normal way. Where an AI tool does not provide such details, students should ensure that they independently verify the AI-generated content – and then reference the sources they have used.

In addition to the above, where students use AI, they must acknowledge its use and show clearly how they have used it. This allows teachers and assessors to review how AI has been used and whether that use was appropriate in the context of the particular assessment. This is particularly important given that AI-generated content is not subject to the same academic scrutiny as other published sources.

Where AI tools have been used as a source of information, a student's acknowledgement must show the name of the AI source used and should show the date the content was generated. For example: ChatGPT 3.5 (<https://openai.com/blog/chatgpt/>), 25/01/2026. The student must retain a copy of the question(s) and computer-generated content for reference and authentication purposes, in a non-editable format (such as a screenshot) and provide a brief explanation of how it has been used.

This must be submitted with the work so the teacher/assessor is able to review the work, the AI-generated content and how it has been used. Where this is not submitted, and the teacher/assessor suspects that the student has used AI tools, the teacher/assessor will need to consult the centre's malpractice policy for appropriate next steps and should take action to assure themselves that the work is the student's own

Identification and reporting of malpractice

Student's responsibilities

In the context of examination assessments, candidates must not:

- submit work which is not their own.
- lend work to other candidates or allow other candidates to copy their work.
- allow other candidates to have access to their own independently sourced material.
- assist other candidates to produce work.
- use books, the internet or other sources without acknowledgement or attribution.
- submit work that has been word processed by a third party without acknowledgement.

Staff Responsibilities

Teaching staff must:

- accept the obligation to authenticate the work which is submitted for assessment.
- **not** accept work which they suspect is not the candidate's own without further investigation.
- know the policy and procedures of the centre concerning plagiarism.
- Understand and comply with the general guidelines detailed within the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting controlled assessments*, Instructions for conducting Coursework and the Instructions for conducting Non-Examined Assessment
- Understand and comply with the awarding body's specification for conducting NEA, controlled assessments, including any subject-specific instructions, teachers' notes or additional information on the awarding body's website.
- explain to candidates the importance of them producing their own work and the sanctions that can be imposed if plagiarism is discovered.
- explain to candidates how to reference, provide techniques and allow them to practice the skill.

- allow time for sufficient work to be completed in class under direct supervision to allow authentication of candidate's work with confidence.
- set reasonable deadlines for submission of work and provide reminders.
- ensure that work undertaken in previous years examinations is not copied by the current seasons candidates. Its issue to candidates for reference purposes must be carefully monitored.
- check the content of work and look out for pointers such as the varying quality of the work submitted, varying styles of punctuation, questioning if the language contained in the work is at the level expected of the candidate.
- try to locate the source of the plagiarised work.
- report to the Examinations Manager any case where plagiarism has been detected after the candidate has signed the declaration of authenticity form.

Escalating suspected malpractice issues

Once suspected malpractice is identified, any member of staff at the centre can report it using the appropriate channels

Suspected malpractice should be reported to the Exams Manager and /or the Head of Centre

- Concerns regarding the Exams Manager should be reported to the Head of Centre
- Concerns about the Head of Centre should be reported to Mr Paul Lavis, SAST Interim Director of Education.

Reporting suspected malpractice to the awarding body

- The head of centre will notify the appropriate awarding body immediately of all alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice, using the appropriate forms, and will conduct any investigation and gathering of information in accordance with the requirements of the JCQ publication Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures
- The head of centre will ensure that, where a candidate is a child or an adult at risk and is subject of a malpractice investigation, the candidates parent/carer/appropriate adult is kept informed of the progress of the investigation
- Form JCQ/M1 will be used to notify an awarding body of an incident of candidate malpractice. Form JCQ/M2 will be used to notify an awarding body of an incident of suspected staff malpractice/maladministration
- Candidate malpractice offences relating to the content of work (i.e. inappropriate/offensive content, copying/collusion, plagiarism (including AI misuse) and /or false declaration of authentication) which are discovered in a controlled assessment, coursework or non-examination assessment component prior to the candidate signing the declaration of authentication, do not need to be reported to the awarding body. Instead, they will be dealt with in accordance with the centres internal procedures.
- Malpractice by a candidate discovered in a controlled assessment, coursework or non-examination assessment where the offence does not relate to the content of candidates work (e.g. possession of unauthorised materials, breach of assessment conditions) or where a candidate has signed the declaration of authentication, must be reported using JCQ M1 to the relevant awarding body. If, at the time of the malpractice, there is no entry for the candidate

(who the centre intended to enter), the centre is required to submit an entry by the required deadline

- If, in the view of the investigator, there is sufficient evidence that an individual may have committed malpractice, that individual (the candidate or the member of staff) will be informed of all the required information and the accused individual informed of their rights and responsibilities
- Once the information gathering has concluded, the head of centre (or other appointed information-gatherer) will submit a written report to the relevant awarding body summarising the information obtained and actions taken, accompanied by the information obtained during the course of their enquiries
- Form JCQ/M1 will be used when reporting candidate cases; for centre staff, form JCQ/M3 will be
- The awarding body will decide on the basis of the report, and any supporting documentation, whether there is evidence of malpractice and if any further investigation is required. The head of centre will be informed accordingly

Communicating Malpractice Decisions

Once a decision has been made, it will be communicated in writing to the head of centre as soon as possible. The head of centre will communicate the decision to the individuals concerned and pass on any sanctions and action where this is indicated. The head of centre will also inform the individuals if they have the right to appeal

Appeals Against Decisions Made in Cases of Malpractice

SAST Schools will

- Provide the individual with information on the process for submitting an appeal, where relevant
- Refer to further information and follow the process provided in the JCQ publication A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes
- All appeals can only be made by the Head of Centre

Penalties

The following penalties could be applied:

Candidate

Centre Applied Penalties

- a warning may be given regarding future conduct;
- loss of marks;
- if the declaration form has not been signed, and where it is allowed, the candidate may be required to complete an alternative piece of work under supervision;
- awarding body are notified of plagiarism/malpractice, see penalties below which could be applied by them

Awarding Body Penalties

- Warning about further sanctions if the offence is repeated within a set period of time;
- Loss of marks for a section/component or unit;

- Disqualification from a unit or all units preventing the candidate aggregating or requesting certification in that series, if the candidate has applied for it;
- Disqualification from a whole qualification or all qualifications preventing the candidate aggregating if the candidate has applied for it;
- Candidate debarred, preventing a candidate from entering one or more examinations for a set period of time

Staff

- Written warning
- Training
- Special conditions
- Suspension (not being allowed to be involved in the delivery of an awarding bodies assessments or examinations)

Centre

- Written warning
- Review and Report (Action plans)
- Approval of specific assessment tasks
- Additional monitoring or inspection
- Removal of direct claim status
- Restrictions on examination and assessment materials
- Independent invigilators
- Suspension of candidate registrations and entries
- Suspension of certification

Withdrawal of specific qualifications and centre recognition

Emergency Evacuation Policy (Exams)

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how SAST Schools deals with an emergency evacuation of the exam room(s) by defining staff roles and responsibilities and confirming the emergency evacuation procedure

When is an emergency evacuation required?

An emergency evacuation is required where it is unsafe for candidates to remain in the exam room. This might include a fire in the exam room, the fire alarm sounding to warn of fire, bomb alert or other serious threat.

In exceptional situations, where candidates might be severely disadvantaged or distressed by remaining in the exam room, the emergency evacuation procedure may also need to be followed. This might include situations where there is severe disruption in the exam room, serious illness of a candidate or invigilator or similarly serious incidents.

As each incident may be different, advice will be sought from the relevant awarding body as soon as it is safe to do so.

Where candidates are unable to return to the building to complete the examination, the relevant awarding body will be contacted immediately for advice.

Emergency evacuation of an exam room

Roles and responsibilities

Head of centre

- Ensures the emergency evacuation policy for exams is fit for purpose and complies with relevant health and safety regulation
- Ensures any instructions from relevant local or national agencies are referenced and followed where applicable.
- Ensures any breach of question paper security or malpractice is reported to the awarding body immediately.

Senior leader

- Where responsible for the centre-wide emergency evacuation procedure, ensures all staff and appointed fire marshals are aware of the policy and procedures to be followed when an emergency evacuation of an exam room is required

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- Ensures appropriate arrangements are in place for the emergency evacuation of a disabled candidate from an exam room where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for the candidate
- Ensures the candidate is informed prior to taking their exams of what will happen in the event of an emergency evacuation

Exams manager / officer

- Ensures invigilators are trained in emergency evacuation procedures and how an incident and actions taken must be recorded
- Ensures candidates are briefed (*Candidate exam handbook and assemblies*), prior to exams taking place, on what will happen in the event of an emergency in the exam room
- Provides invigilators with a copy of the emergency evacuation procedures for every exam room
- Provides a standard invigilator announcement for each exam room which includes appropriate instructions for candidates about emergency procedures and what will happen if the fire alarm sounds
- Provides an exam room incident log in each exam room
- Liaises with the SENCo and other relevant staff prior to each exam where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for a disabled candidate
- Briefs invigilators prior to each exam where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for a disabled candidate
- Ensures appropriate follow-up is undertaken after an emergency evacuation, reporting the incident to the awarding body and the actions taken.
- Ensures a full report of the incident is produced and retained on file if required by an awarding body
- Ensures an online application for special consideration is submitted to the relevant awarding body where candidates have been disadvantaged

Invigilators

- By attending training, ensure they understand what to do in the event of an emergency in the exam room
- Follow the actions required in the emergency evacuation procedure issued to them for every exam room
- Confirm with the exams officer, where different procedures or assistance may need to be provided for a disabled candidate they are invigilating
- Record details on the exam room incident log to support follow-up reporting to the awarding body by the Exams Manager

Other relevant centre staff

- Support the Senior Leader, SENCo, Exams Officer and Invigilators in ensuring the safe emergency evacuation of exam rooms

Recording details

As soon as practically possible and safe to do so, details should be recorded. Details must include:

- The actual time of the start of the interruption
- The actions taken
- The actual time the exam resumed
- The actual finishing time of the resumed exam

Further details could include

- Report on candidate behaviour throughout the interruption/evacuation
- A judgement on the impact on candidates after the interruption/evacuation

Emergency evacuation procedure

Each SAST School will have its own procedure.

Invigilators are trained in this procedure and understand the actions they must take in the event of a fire alarm or a bomb alert or other emergency that leads to an evacuation of the exam room.

Lockdown Policy (Exams)

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions should be noted:

Lockdown

This is a protective measure implemented when there is a credible threat to the safety of candidates/students and staff. During a lockdown, individuals are instructed to remain inside the building and seek shelter in a secure location, away from the source of danger.

The purpose of a lockdown is to minimise exposure to potential harm and ensure the safety and wellbeing of everyone on site until the threat has been resolved or emergency services arrive.

Lockdown procedures may be activated in situations including:

- The presence of an unauthorised or suspicious individual on the grounds or within the building
- A violent, aggressive, or abusive parent/carer causing disruption
- A specific threat made against the centre or its occupants

All staff must be familiar with the centre's lockdown protocol and ensure candidates/students are guided calmly and efficiently to designated safe areas. Communication with emergency services and internal coordination will be managed by the head of centre or designated safeguarding lead.

Invacuation

This is a safety measure used when there is a potential external threat in the surrounding area. While lockdowns are activated in response to immediate risks within or directly threatening the premises, invacuations are employed when it is safer for candidates/students, staff, and visitors to remain inside the building due to hazards outside.

Invacuation procedures are designed to ensure that all individuals are brought indoors promptly and remain inside until the external threat has passed or further guidance is provided by emergency services.

An invacuation may be applicable to exam candidates if they have left the exam room in the event of an emergency evacuation (for example, due to a fire alarm).

Examples of situations requiring invacuation include:

- The presence of loose or potentially dangerous animals on the grounds
- Environmental hazards such as gas leaks, smoke, or chemical pollution in the vicinity
- Nearby incidents (e.g. police activity or civil disturbance) that may pose a risk if individuals exit the building

Staff are expected to follow the invacuation protocol calmly and efficiently, ensuring that all candidates/students are accounted for and safely indoors. The head of centre or designated safeguarding lead will oversee communication and coordination during such events.

Purpose of the policy

This policy details the measures taken at SAST Schools in the event of a centre lockdown during the conducting of examinations.

In addition to this policy, a summary is provided to all centre staff of the information relating to a lockdown during the examination period using the framework of the Department for Education's *Lockdown Template* (see Appendix 1).

Staff engaged directly with the conducting of examinations (e.g. exams officer, exams officer assistant, invigilators, facilitators of access arrangements etc.) are instructed to refer to the full policy.

Depending on the nature of the incident, a decision will be made to evacuate, invacuate or use a protected space. However, this policy focuses specifically upon the actions, roles and responsibilities during an exams -related lockdown.

SAST has devised lockdown procedures during the conducting of examinations after consulting guidance.

The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025

Although SAST Schools are not classified as a high-risk venues under current legislation, we are committed to embedding the principles of Martyn's Law into our safeguarding and emergency preparedness framework. These include:

- **Risk awareness:** Staff being equipped to identify potential threats and recognise suspicious behaviour or activity that may pose a risk to students, staff and visitors
- **Emergency planning:** Maintaining clear, comprehensive, and regularly reviewed procedures to respond effectively to a range of emergency scenarios
- **Rapid response capability:** Training staff to act swiftly and appropriately in the event of an emergency to ensure the safety and protection of students, colleagues, and visitors

These principles underpin our broader approach to security and safeguarding, and will be reflected in staff training, policy reviews, and incident management protocols.

Compliance

To ensure that all staff at SAST Schools are meeting the requirements of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, the following procedures are in place:

Evacuation (Getting people out of the building)

An evacuation of the exam room will be initiated when it is deemed safer for candidates and staff to leave the room and the building due to an internal threat such as fire, gas leak, structural damage, or other emergencies. This procedure ensures a swift, orderly, and safe exit to designated assembly points.

Step-by-step procedure:

1. Activation of alarm

- The fire alarm or emergency alert system will be triggered manually or automatically
- Invigilators will immediately begin evacuation procedures without waiting for further instruction unless advised otherwise

2. Immediate response

- Candidates will be instructed to stop their examination and prepare to leave the exam room in line with the invigilator's instructions
- Invigilators will lead candidates out of the building via the nearest safe exit, avoiding lifts and blocked routes

3. Use of evacuation routes

- Pre-assigned evacuation routes and exits will be followed
- Invigilators will check the exam room (and any candidates who may have temporarily left the exam room) to ensure that no one is left behind

4. Assembly at designated point

- Invigilators will take candidates to the designated assembly point(s) outside the building
- Registers will be taken promptly to account for all candidates and invigilators
- Any missing candidates will be reported immediately to the senior leadership team or emergency services

5. Communication and co-ordination

- The head of centre or designated safeguarding lead will liaise with emergency services and provides updates
- Invigilators will supervise candidates and maintain calm until further instructions are given

6. Re-entry or dismissal

- No one will be permitted to re-enter the building until it has been declared safe by emergency personnel

Invacuation (Moving people to a safe place)

If candidates have been outside of the exam room, for example, for an emergency evacuation, or on a supervised rest break, they will be brought back into the exam room promptly and remain inside until the situation is resolved. The procedure will include:

1. Initial Alert

- The head of centre or designated safeguarding lead will assess the situation and initiate the invacuation protocol
- A clear announcement will be made via the centre's communication system (e.g. internal messaging)

2. Movement Indoors

- All outdoor activities (for example, an emergency evacuation or supervised rest break) being undertaken by candidates sitting an examination will be halted immediately
- Candidates will be escorted indoors quickly and calmly, using the nearest safe entry point

3. Securing the Building

- External doors and windows will be closed and secured
- Access points will be monitored to prevent entry or exit until the all-clear is given

4. Internal Safety Measures

- Candidates and staff (invigilators) will remain in the exam room or designated safe area(s)
- Movement within the building will be restricted unless necessary
- Invigilators will take registers to account for all candidates and report any discrepancies to the exams office/officer (unless instructed otherwise)

5. Communication

- The head of centre or designated safeguarding lead will maintain contact with emergency services and monitor updates
- Parents/carers will be informed if appropriate, depending on the nature and duration of the incident

6. All-Clear and Debrief

- Once the threat has passed, an all-clear message will be issued
- Candidates will resume their examination

- The incident will be reported to the relevant awarding body/bodies, and a short debrief may be conducted to review the response and identify any improvements]

Lockdown procedure

Before an examination

If a lockdown is required as candidates are entering/waiting to enter the exam room, the following procedure will be employed:

- A member of the senior leadership team (SLT) will be present around exam room areas
- Candidates will be instructed to enter the exam room immediately
- Candidates will be instructed to remain silent, hide under exam desks or sit against a wall/around a corner but not near the door if required to do so and to ensure mobile phones are on silent and non-vibrate mode
- Where safe/possible, the SLT member will communicate (via mobile phone / email) the situation to the exams officer (ensuring that all mobile phones are on silent and non-vibrate mode)
- Where safe/possible, The exams officer will collate the information from all exam rooms and forward this to the head of centre immediately
- Invigilators will, if required to do so
 - lock all windows and close all curtains/blinds
 - switch off all lights
 - lock all doors and/or use tables, or any other furniture, to barricade the entrance to the examination room
 - take an attendance register/head count if possible
 - (if the threat is a chemical or toxic release) instruct candidates to cover their nose and mouth (their own clothing can be used) and attempt to use anything to hand to seal up cracks around doors and any vents into the room
 - Where safe/possible, not leave the examination question papers unattended/out of sight.
- The Head of centre will make informed decisions on alerting parents/carers, awarding body and emergency services

During an examination

If a lockdown is required during the exam/when candidates are in the exam room, the following procedure will be employed:

- Invigilators will:
 - tell candidates to stop writing immediately and close their answer booklets
 - collect the attendance register
 - make a note of time when the examination was suspended
 - instruct candidates to remain silent, leave all examination materials on their desks and hide under desks if required
 - where safe/possible, communicate (via mobile phone) the situation to the exams officer (ensuring that all mobile phones are on 'silent' mode).
 - lock all windows and close any/all curtains/blinds
 - switch off all lights

- lock all doors and/or use tables, or any other furniture, to barricade the entrance to the examination room
- (if the threat is a chemical or toxic release) instruct candidates to cover their nose and mouth (their own clothing can be used) and attempt to use anything to hand to seal up cracks around doors and any vents into the room
- Where safe/possible, not leave the examination question papers and candidates scripts unattended/out of sight
- Where safe/possible, the exams officer will collate the information from all exam rooms and forward this to the head of centre immediately
- The head of centre will make informed decisions on alerting parents/carers, awarding bodies and emergency services
- If appropriate, where safe/possible, and following centre policy, the exams officer (or invigilators in the absence of the exams officer) will initiate the emergency evacuation procedure
- Where safe/possible, the exams officer will collect all examination papers and materials for safe/secure storage following advice from the appropriate awarding bodies

After an examination

If a lockdown is required after the exam/as candidates are leaving the exam room, the following procedure will be employed:

- Invigilators will, if required:
 - stop dismissing candidates from the exam room
 - instruct candidates who have left the room to re-enter the exam room
 - instruct candidates to remain silent and hide under desks/tables
 - where safe/possible, communicate (via mobile phone) the situation to the exams officer (ensuring that all mobile phones are on silent and non-vibrate mode)
 - lock all windows and close any/all curtains/blinds
 - switch off all lights
 - lock all doors and/or use tables, or any other furniture, to barricade the entrance to the exam room
 - (if the threat is a chemical or toxic release) instruct candidates to cover their nose and mouth (their own clothing can be used) and attempt to use anything to hand to seal up cracks around doors and any vents into the room
 - Where safe/possible, not leave the examination question papers and candidate scripts unattended/out of sight
- Where safe/possible, the exams officer will collate the information from all exam rooms and forward this to the head of centre immediately

Ending a lockdown

- The lockdown will be ended by either
 - the sound of a defined alarm, or
 - the identification/authorisation of Emergency Service officers/SLT/head of centre entering each exam room
- A specific word or phrase may be used to confirm that the instruction to end the lockdown is genuine
- Invigilators will undertake a head count/register and confirm attendance with the exams officer/SLT

- Where applicable and if advised to do so by SLT/head of centre, and following JCQ guidelines, if there is sufficient time remaining, candidates may restart their examination
- Invigilators will then:
 - ask candidates to return to their desks, remind them they are under formal exam conditions and allow a settling down period
 - allow candidates the full working time remaining to do their examination
 - recalculate the revised finish time(s)
 - tell the candidates to open their answer booklets and re-start their exam
 - amend the revised finish time(s) on display to candidates
 - note how long the lockdown lasted on the exam room incident log (to later inform a report to the awarding body/bodies and where relevant, any centre-wide lockdown recording form/log)
- The exams officer will
 - safely/securely store all collected exam papers and materials pending awarding body advice/guidance

Where this may be applicable:

 - ensure appropriate follow-up is undertaken after the incident, reporting the incident to the awarding body and the actions taken
 - ensure a full report of the incident is produced and retained on file if required by an awarding body
 - ensure an online application for special consideration is submitted to the relevant awarding body where candidates have been disadvantaged.
- At the earliest immediate opportunity the head of centre will ensure that any breach of question paper security or malpractice is reported to the awarding body
- Where applicable/possible/available, SLT/exams officer will
 - discuss any alternative exam sittings with the awarding body/bodies
 - offer, arrange and provide support services to staff and candidates
- At the earliest opportunity, SLT/head of centre will prepare a communication to parents/carers advising them of events (including relevant actions and outcomes)
- Where possible, exams staff and candidates will be invited to attend an assembly led by the head of centre to discuss the lockdown and offer ongoing support
 - If this is not possible, communications will be provided via a centre text/email/newsletter and information uploaded to the centre website

Roles and responsibilities

Head of centre

- To ensure that vulnerability and space assessments are conducted to:
 - Identify specific risks (for example, intruders, violent or aggressive individuals or incidents happening in the local area)
 - Consider different times of the day/during an examination when candidates may be more dispersed across the site or away from the exam room (for example, during a supervised rest break, a toilet break)
 - Highlight areas where an attacker might carry out an attack, and where the easiest places to gain access are
 - Assess how many candidates can be accommodated in a particular (safe) area (for example, the exam room)

- To ensure that a dedicated lockdown alarm tone is in place and recognised by all staff and candidates
- To ensure that all staff involved in the conducting of examinations are trained in how to raise the alarm for a lockdown, act effectively and made aware of their responsibilities
- To arrange appropriate training for all exams-related staff in evacuation, invacuation and lockdown procedures
- To ensure that candidates are aware of the procedures relating to a lockdown, particularly those arriving late for an examination who cannot access the exam room due to it being in lock down
- To ensure that all candidates and staff are aware of a possible exit point in case an intruder manages to gain access, or the exam room becomes unsafe
- To provide written invacuation and lockdown procedures for exam room/invigilator use
- To inform the relevant Emergency Services immediately in the case of any potential threat to the safety of exams staff and candidates

Senior leadership team (SLT)

- To have accountability for all exams staff and candidates taking examinations during an invacuation/lockdown
- To run training/drills for examination candidates on invacuation and lockdown procedures
- To inform parents/carers about the centre's Lockdown policy in relation to the conducting of examinations
- To have a presence around exam room areas prior to the start of each exam session
- To liaise with the appropriate authorities and awarding bodies regarding candidates taking examinations during an invacuation/lockdown
- To use the exam room attendance register(s) to compile a list of all candidates not accounted for

Exams officer

- To train invigilators in the centre's invacuation and lockdown procedures – this should also include identifying all access and egress points within exam rooms, an awareness of the design of the locking device within each room and if there is more than one invigilator, whose role it would be to secure the exam room
- Where safe/possible, to liaise with SLT/invigilators in all exam rooms during an invacuation/lockdown
- To assist with Lockdown training for staff and students where applicable to the conducting of examinations

Invigilators

- To be aware of the centre's invacuation and lockdown procedures
- To quickly and physically secure access/egress points
- To be aware of an effective communication system to inform authorities of the situation
- To complete attendance registers as soon as possible so candidates can be identified in the event of an invacuation/lockdown
- Where safe/possible, to communicate with the exams officer during an invacuation/lockdown to confirm the situation in a particular exam room
- Where safe/possible, not to leave the examination question papers and candidates scripts unattended/out of sight.



Lockdown Template

There are important differences between the lockdown and shelter arrangements. Lockdown is necessary when children and staff need to be **locked** within buildings for their own safety i.e. in an emergency situation such as a hostile intruder, terrorist attack or other criminal activity.

Signals

Alarm or signal for lockdown shelter	[insert]
Signal for stand down / all-clear	[insert]

Incident Control Officers & Response Team

Role	Name	Emergency Contact Number
Incident Control Officer		
Deputies		
Communications Officer		

It is important to remember that it is very much **the exception** to evacuate a building in the event of a hostile intruder. Unless the location of the intruders is known, a "blind" evacuation may be putting people in more danger (e.g. from an intruder or device at one of the entrances/exits) than if they had remained within the building.

Rooms most suitable for lockdown
1 Classrooms
2 Hall
3 Sports hall
4 Offices

It is important to make sure that items that could be used as weapons (kitchen implements, sports equipment, tools, cleaning products) are securely locked away when not in use.

Communication arrangements
Wherever possible use silent communications and keep noise to a minimum especially if the intruders are close by. Make sure any communications devices are secure and cannot be intercepted.
Two-way radios
Classroom telephones

Mobile phones
Instant messaging / email
Other (TV's / Whiteboards / etc)

Alternative place of safety in the event that it is considered necessary to leave site (for example, partner school/college / leisure centre) <u>must be pre-arranged.</u>	
Name of venue	
Type of venue	
Contact name	
Contact telephone number	
Useful info such as distance from school, directions, capacity, opening hours	

Other useful contacts:

Name	Emergency Contact Number

Action Plan	Completed by (sign and time)
Sound Alert - Activate lock-down procedures immediately	
Dial 999	
Direct all children, staff, parents and signed in visitors to the nearest safe place (this may be dependent on what and where the risk is)	
Secure rooms and take action to increase protection from attack - Lock and barricade doors and windows	
Close windows / blinds	
Turn off the lights, fans or mobile air conditioning units (this will reduce noise and the risk of exposure to any chemical/biological attack)	
Hide, sit on the floor under desks, and away from windows	
Stay as silent as possible - put any mobile devises to silent (consider writing / displaying instructions on whiteboards / TV's etc as long as it can't be seen by the intruder)	
Ensure that students, staff and visitors are aware of an exit point in case the intruder does manage to gain access	
If possible, check for missing / injured students, staff and visitors	
Keep doors and windows locked shut and remain inside until an all-clear has been given, or unless told to evacuate by the emergency services	

Special Consideration Policy

What defines special consideration?

Special consideration can only be awarded where a candidate has been fully prepared for assessments and covered the entire course but their ability to demonstrate their subject knowledge and understanding is materially affected by adverse circumstance beyond their control at the time of the assessment.

A centre must decide whether the candidate meets the published criteria for special consideration. An awarding body cannot determine the candidate's eligibility and make the decision for the centre.

Applications must only be processed where they are supported by the centre and the candidate meets the published criteria for special consideration with evidence in place

If the centre does not support an online application for special consideration, then it must not be submitted to the relevant awarding body or bodies. Speculative applications for special consideration cannot be accepted.

Where a candidate does not meet the published criteria for special consideration, the awarding body will reject the application and provide clear reasons for doing so.

Centres **must not** submit applications for special consideration for trivial cases.

Special consideration can only go some way to assist a candidate affected by a potentially wide range of difficulties, emotional or physical, which may influence performance in their assessments. It cannot remove the difficulty faced by the candidate. This means that there will be some situations where candidates should not be entered for a qualification or a unitised examination. This is because only minor adjustments can be made to the mark awarded. To make larger adjustments would jeopardize the standard of the qualification. (JCQ's **A guide to the special consideration process**, section 1)

This document is further referred to in this policy as SC

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to identify roles and responsibilities in the special consideration process and confirms that SAST Schools will "submit any applications for special consideration where candidates meet the published criteria."

[JCQ [General regulations for approved centres](#) section 5.9]

Eligibility for special consideration

Roles and responsibilities

Head of centre

- Is familiar with the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ document A guide to the Special Consideration process
- Ensures that, where relevant and in eligible situations, applications for special consideration will be submitted to awarding bodies by the exams manager

Exams manager/officer

- Understands the criteria as detailed in A guide to the Special Consideration process to determine where candidates will/will not be eligible for special consideration
- Ensures that, where relevant and in eligible situations, applications for special consideration will be submitted to awarding bodies

Teaching staff and/or SENCo

- Provide any appropriate evidence or information that may be required to determine a candidate's eligibility for special consideration.

Candidates (or parents/carers)

- Provide any medical or other evidence that may be required to determine eligibility for special consideration

Applying for special consideration

Where eligible, special consideration will be applied for at the time of the assessment where candidates ...have been fully prepared and have covered the whole course but performance in the examination, or in the production of controlled assessment, coursework or non-examination assessment, is materially affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control. [\[SC 2\]](#)

For candidates who are present for the assessment but disadvantaged SAST schools must be satisfied that there has been a material detrimental effect on candidate examination performance or in the production of coursework or non-examination assessment (SC 3)

Examples of where special consideration may be applied for.

- Where a candidate may arrive for an exam and is clearly unwell, extremely distressed and/or may have sustained an injury that requires emergency access arrangements to be put in place:
 - the candidate will be kept comfortable and under centre supervision from the required time while appropriate arrangements are put in place for the candidate to take the exam in the best possible conditions
 - a judgement will be made on how the candidate's situation or disposition affected performance in the exam
 - where appropriate and where eligible, special consideration is applied for
- Where candidates may be affected by a major disturbance in the exam room (emergency evacuation etc.), an online application for special consideration will be submitted to the relevant awarding body where candidates have been disadvantaged.
- Special consideration will be applied for an allowance on the last paper taken in a day when a candidate has been entered for three or more exams timetabled for the same day and the total duration of these papers is more than 5 hours 30 minutes (GCSE, Level 1 and Level 2 examinations) or 6 hours (GCE and Level 3 examinations). Where extra time has been used following formal approval, this will be included in the calculation. Supervised rest breaks will not be included in the total duration of the papers when applying for special consideration.

- Where a candidate may be affected by a minor disturbance in the exam room caused by another candidate, such as momentary bad behaviour, a mobile phone ringing, or a momentary fire alarm, the candidate would not be eligible for special consideration.

The centre must not submit applications for special consideration for trivial cases. Examples of trivial cases which would not warrant special consideration include, but are not limited to:

- A bird tweeting outside the examination room
- A lorry reversing
- A toilet being flushed
- Doors in a corridor adjacent to the examination room opening and closing
- Very short, momentary noise from, for example, aeroplanes, helicopters, lawn mowers

If a candidate is absent from a timetabled component or unit for acceptable reasons, and the centre is prepared to support an application, special consideration will be applied for if the exam missed is in the terminal series and the minimum requirements for enhanced grading in cases of acceptable absence can be met. For unitised examinations taken in an examination series prior to certification, candidates must be entered for any missed units at the next assessment opportunity. Unless there are difficulties arising, e.g. group performances which cannot be repeated, special consideration will not be awarded (SC 4)

Where other issues or problems affect a candidate or a group of candidates, special consideration will be explored in [SC 5](#) and applied for where eligible. This might include, for example:

- requesting an honorary certificate
- shortfall in work (coursework / non-examination assessment)
- lost or damaged work (non-examination assessment components)
- candidates issued with an incorrect or incomplete question paper, set the wrong coursework or non-examination assessment task or taught the wrong set text.

Where a candidate may be eligible for special consideration (a post assessment adjustment) in other vocational qualifications, the centre will follow [SC 7](#) and awarding body guidance to determine if, when and how an adjustment can be applied for.

Processing applications for special consideration

Roles and responsibilities

Head of centre

- Ensures, before any online applications are processed, that the centre is satisfied that the candidates circumstances warrant special consideration, as set out within the JCQ document A guide to the special consideration process
- Ensures that any applications for special consideration where candidates meet the published criteria and are sufficiently evidenced will be submitted to the relevant awarding body.

Senior leadership team

- Authorises evidence to support all eligible applications
- Ensures that if the centre does not support an online application for special consideration, it will not be submitted to the relevant awarding body

Exams manager/officer

- Understands that special consideration must be applied for at the time of the assessment
- Understands that special consideration cannot be applied in a cumulative fashion and that where a candidate may be affected by different indispositions, special consideration should only be applied for the most serious indisposition
- Ensures applications will be processed as required by the awarding bodies
- Keeps evidence to support all applications on file until after the publication of results and provides the appropriate evidence authorised a member of the senior leadership team to support an application where this may be requested by an awarding body.
- Meets the required deadline(s) for submitting applications

Teaching staff and/or SENCo

- Provide any appropriate evidence or information that may be required to support a candidate's application for special consideration

Candidates (or parents/carers)

- Will be asked to provide any medical or other evidence that may be required to support an application for special consideration
- Will be informed that all cases must be dealt with by the centre

Submitting applications for special consideration

Where a candidate or group of candidates is/are eligible for special consideration, applications will be submitted to the relevant awarding body following the published processes in [SC](#).

In cases of online applications for special consideration, the candidate/candidates will be informed when an application for special considerations submitted to the awarding body (to ensure compliance with the UK GDPR/Data Protection Act 2018

Evidence to support applications will be retained on file until after the publication of results.

Timetabled written exams

- Applications for individual candidates will be submitted online (where the awarding body's secure system accepts these) by logging into the relevant awarding body secure extranet site and following the links to special consideration
- The processes for submitting a single application to cover all exams affected where a candidate is present but disadvantaged and a separate application for each day on which exams are missed where a candidate is absent from an examination for an acceptable reason detailed in [SC 6](#) will be followed
- Form 14 JCQ/ME Self certification for candidates who have missed an examination will only be completed by a candidate/parent/carer where circumstances warrant this and will not be used where the centre knows the candidate was ill

Internally assessed work

- Where appropriate, applications will be made online where the awarding body's secure system accepts them or form 10 Application for special consideration will be completed and submitted to the awarding body
- Where an application relates to a shortfall in work for an individual candidate, this will be submitted by completing form 10, attached to a breakdown of marks across the assessment objectives

- Where an application relates to lost or damaged work, this will be submitted online or by completing [form 15](#) JCQ/LCW Notification of lost centre assessed work, dependent on the awarding body

Private candidates

- Any private candidate entered by the centre must liaise with the exams officer (not the awarding body) regarding any application for special consideration

Applications post-publication of results

If, after the publication of results for a particular exam series, a claim is made that special consideration was not applied for at the time of an assessment where a candidate was eligible, the claimant will be informed that late applications will only be accepted by an awarding body in the most exceptional circumstances and where a member of the senior leadership team is able to produce compelling evidence to support a late application.

The application must be submitted before the deadline for reviews of results for the respective exam series.

Cyber Security Policy (Exams)

Purpose of the policy

At SAST Schools, the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of our information assets, IT systems, and the personal data of students, staff, and stakeholders are of paramount importance.

This policy establishes our comprehensive cyber security framework, delineates the duties and accountabilities of all relevant parties, and ensures strict adherence to JCQ regulations, the Data Protection Act 2018, the UK General Data Protection Regulation, and the statutory guidance detailed in *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.

This Cyber Security Policy details the measures taken at SAST Schools to mitigate the risk of cyber threats under the following sections:

1. Roles and responsibilities
2. Complying with JCQ regulations
3. Cyber security best practice
4. Account management best practice
5. Training

The senior leadership team recognises the need for staff involved in the management, administration and conducting of examinations to play a critical role in maintaining and improving cyber security at SAST schools. This includes ensuring that all members of centre staff who access awarding bodies' online systems undertake annual cyber security training.

In addition to adhering to industry best practices, the following areas are addressed in this policy to ensure that members of the exams team protect their individual digital assets:

- Cyber Security Awareness and Training
- Device Security and Asset Register
- Creating strong, unique passwords
- Keeping all account details secret
- Enabling additional security settings wherever possible
- Updating any passwords that may have been exposed
- Setting up secure account recovery options
- Reviewing and managing connected applications
- Staying alert for all types of social engineering/phishing attempts
- Monitoring accounts and reviewing account access regularly

Scope

This policy applies to all staff who have access to SAST schools's IT systems and data, with particular focus placed upon those members of staff who are involved in the management, administration and conducting of examinations and assessments.

Review

A designated member of the Senior Leadership Team will carry out annual evaluation of this policy, incorporating updates as required to remain abreast of new technologies, threat developments, and industry best practices.

Upon completion of the review and any revisions, the policy will receive formal approval from Neil Burroughs Head of IT Services and Estates.

1. Roles and responsibilities

Academy Committee Representatives

- To oversee and review cyber security arrangements and policy compliance

Head of centre/Senior leadership team

- To provide overall responsibility for policy implementation and cyber security strategy
- To ensure that an up-to-date device security and asset register is maintained which details all computers, devices, and user accounts used for examinations and assessment administration. This ensures that all technology used is regularly reviewed, patched, and secured, thus reducing the risk of overlooked vulnerabilities being exploited
- To ensure that all devices are secured with up-to-date anti-malware and software updates
- To ensure that members of the exams team, supported/led by the IT team, adhere to best practice(s) in relation to:
 - the management of individual/personal data/accounts
 - centre wide cyber security including:
 - Establishing a robust password policy
 - Enabling multi-factor authentication (MFA)
 - Keeping software and systems up to date
 - Implementing network security measures
 - Conducting regular data backups
 - Educating employees on security awareness
 - Developing and testing an incident response plan
 - Regularly assessing and auditing security controls
 - Managing and reporting a cyber-attack which impacts any learner data, assessment records or learner work

IT Manager/Team

- To implement technical controls, monitor systems, respond to incidents, manage access and updates

Data Protection Officer

- To ensure compliance with data protection law, advise on data handling, and oversee data breaches

All staff

- To follow this policy, complete annual training, report incidents or concerns promptly within the centre

Exams officer

- To ensure that they follow best practice in relation to the management of individual/personal data/accounts
- To provide evidence of an awareness of best practice in relation to cyber security as defined by JCQ regulations/guidance, including the completion of certificated, annual, up-to-date cyber security awareness training
- To undertake training on:

- the importance of creating strong, unique passwords
- keeping all account details secret
- enabling additional security settings wherever possible
- updating any passwords which may have been exposed
- setting up/an awareness of secure account recovery options
- reviewing and managing connected applications
- awareness of all types of social engineering/phishing attempts
- reviewing and monitoring account access on a regular basis

All users

- To follow this policy, complete annual training, report incidents or concerns promptly within the centre

2. Complying with JCQ regulations

The head of centre/senior leadership team at SAST Schools ensure that there are procedures in place to maintain the security of user accounts in line with JCQ regulations (sections 3.20 and 3.21 of the *General Regulations for Approved Centres* document) by:

- Developing and maintaining this cyber security policy
- Ensuring that all members of centre staff who access awarding bodies' online systems undertake annual, certificated cyber security training which includes:
 - the importance of creating strong, unique passwords
 - keeping all account details strictly confidential
 - the critical role of Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) in protecting against unauthorised access
 - how to properly set up and use MFA for both centre and awarding bodies' systems
 - an awareness of all types of social engineering/phishing attempts
 - the importance of staff quickly reporting suspicious activity, events and incidents
- Downloading and retaining certificates of completed staff cyber training on file
- Implementing and enforcing robust security measures, including:
 - mandatory Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) for all accounts and systems containing exam-related information, including those that interface between awarding body and centre systems, to enhance security and protect sensitive data
 - regularly reviewing and updating security settings to align with current best practices
- Enabling additional security settings wherever possible
- Updating any passwords that may have been exposed
- Setting up secure account recovery options
- Reviewing and managing connected applications
- Monitoring accounts and regularly reviewing account access, including removing access when no longer required
- Ensuring authorised members of staff securely access awarding bodies' online systems in line with awarding body regulations regarding cyber security and the JCQ document *Guidance for centres on cyber security* (www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations), and that where necessary, they have access to a device which complies with awarding bodies' multi-factor authentication (MFA) requirements
- Reporting any actual or suspected compromise of an awarding body's online systems immediately to the relevant awarding body

3. Cyber security best practice

The head of centre/senior leadership team at SAST Schools ensure that:

- Security measures are in place including:

- Firewalls and network security controls
- Anti-virus and anti-malware software on all devices
- Regular software updates and patch management
- Secure data backup and tested recovery procedures
- Encryption for sensitive and personal data
- Multi-factor authentication (MFA) for critical systems and remote access
- Secure configuration and monitoring of cloud services (e.g., Office 365, Google Workspace).
- Prompt removal of access for leavers
- They and all staff involved in the management, administration and conducting of examinations/assessments stay informed about the latest security threats and trends in account security.
- Staff within the exams team are educated on how to identify phishing attempts, use secure devices and how to protect systems and data by online training.

Best practice, advice and guidance from National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) is observed for all IT systems, particularly those where learner information, learner work or assessment records are held.

National College Cyber Security training and guidance for all staff is followed at SAST Schools which includes:

- Establishing a robust password policy
- Enabling multi-factor authentication (MFA)
- Keeping software and systems up to date
- Implementing network security measures
- Conducting regular data backups
- Educating employees on security awareness
- Developing and testing an incident response plan
- Regularly assessing and auditing security controls

The Exams Office training and guidance for Exams Officers is followed at SAST Schools which includes:

- Good practice in creating strong and unique passwords
- Account security: Keeping account details secret (including sharing passwords, remembering passwords and monitoring account access)
- Additional security settings (including, multi-factor/two-step/two-factor authentication, the security of confidential examination materials)
- Updating expired or exposed passwords
- Account recovery (including recovery options)
- Reviewing and managing connected applications (including reviewing and removing access, using a third-party or a cloud service, granting permissions, saving passwords, saving details on local web browsers, using a shared browser)
- Social engineering/phishing attempts (including suspicious emails and phone calls, sharing information, QR codes, phishing attempts, recovery plan)
- Monitoring and reviewing access (including suspicious, unusual or unauthorised activity, departing staff, levels of access, reviewing user accounts)

Exam specific guidance is also provided on each of the areas listed above

By adopting industry standard cyber security best practices, the head of centre/senior leadership team are significantly reducing the risk of cyber-attacks and protecting valuable data and assets within the centre.

If a cyber-attack which impacts any learner data, assessment records or learner work is experienced, the senior leadership team/exams officer will contact the relevant awarding body/bodies immediately for advice and support.

4. Account management best practice

Creating strong unique passwords

- Password governance follows National Cyber Security Centre guidance
- Exams office staff are informed that password length is a more valuable defence than complexity and instructed to use a password creation approach such as three random words to generate suitably secure passwords
- Exams office staff will not use easily guessable information such as birthdays, singular names or common words for a password
- For every account, users are instructed to use a strong unique password and that the same password is not used across any other account(s)

Keeping all account details secret

- Exams office staff are instructed never to share login/password details or additional factor/authentication codes with anyone else
- Staff who require access to a system will request their own user account and never share an account assigned for their use with anyone else. Staff are reminded that anything done with an account assigned to someone will be attributed to that person in the first instance

Enabling additional security settings wherever possible

- All staff will follow awarding body two-step verification (2SV)/two-factor verification (2FA) or multi-factor authentication (MFA) wherever available/requested. Staff are made aware of the purpose of 2SV/2FA /MFA, which includes:
 - adding a layer of account security
 - helps to protect users if the extra steps/factors are protected

Updating any passwords that may have been exposed

- If it is believed that a password may have been exposed/become known to others, staff will inform their senior leader/line manager immediately
- Any exposed passwords will be changed as soon as possible, and the new passwords should not be shared with anyone except their senior leader/line manager
- Staff are instructed to use strong unique passwords (e.g. three random words) when changing passwords and that old passwords should not be reused nor should cycling through a small set of passwords across multiple accounts be used

Setting up secure account recovery options

- Staff are instructed to follow centre account recovery options which include: [Detail centre account recovery options, which may include alternate email accounts or phone numbers protected by 2SV/2FA/MFA security measures]

Reviewing and managing connected applications

- Staff within the exams team will regularly review and remove access for third-party applications or services that no longer require access to accounts
- Staff will be informed that access should only be provided to trusted services
- Staff will be asked to be particularly cautious when interacting with content and services (e.g. quizzes, prize draws, surveys etc.)
- Staff will only grant permissions to required applications or the necessary access to allow them to function
- Staff will only download and install applications with established reputations from trusted sources
- Staff will not save passwords to local web browsers unless a secure password manager extension is used in a browser that requires unlocking (e.g. with another password) before the saved account details can be retrieved, however care will be taken to ensure that this is locked/signed out of after use
- When using a shared browser, staff will clear browser history and caches after use

Staying alert for all types of social engineering/phishing attempts

- Staff must take care if unsolicited or unexpected emails, instant messages, or phone calls are received asking for account credentials or personal or confidential information. Passwords and 2FA/MFA authentication codes should not be given out to anyone
- Staff are instructed that they should have a wariness of anyone or anything that seems to want to gain their trust, rush them into doing something or that just seems off, they should hang up/not reply and not click on links or take any action and check with a trusted party via a secure channel (i.e. call awarding body customer services via a known support number)
- Staff will never approve or authenticate a login request that they did not initiate
- Staff will not share codes/approve logins. Requests to share codes/approve logins should be treated with a high degree of suspicion
- Staff will not click on suspicious links, download attachments or scan QR codes from unknown sources
- The centre will provide exams team staff with a secure QR code scanner with a good reputation to help gauge whether a QR code is suspicious or malicious
- Staff will verify the authenticity of any communication by contacting the organisation directly through official known channels
- Staff will report any phishing attempts which reference awarding bodies/their systems to the awarding body concerned immediately

Monitoring accounts and reviewing account access

- Centre staff accounts will be routinely reviewed for any suspicious, unusual or unauthorised activity
- If any suspicious, unusual or potentially unauthorised activity on awarding body systems is observed this will be immediately reported to the relevant awarding body, particularly if it is believed that user account security may have been compromised
- Access control and permissions are based on job roles and reviewed regularly
- Levels of access for all exams team staff are reviewed regularly to ensure accounts have the minimum level of access required for their current role
- Accounts are promptly disabled when users leave
- Account activity is monitored and audited

5. Training

The head of centre/senior leadership team ensure that there are procedures in place to maintain the security of user accounts by ensuring that all staff who have responsibility for the administration or delivery of examinations complete annual cyber security training and annual refresher training, with practical advice on protecting assessment systems and recognising attacks such as phishing or social engineering.

Records of cyber training are retained for all staff and are available for inspection

- All Exams Officers will complete The Exams Office annual on-line training on Cyber Security
- All staff will complete The National College annual on-line training on Cyber Security
- Certificates will be kept on file for inspection purposes

Data Protection Policy (Exams)

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how SAST Schools, in relation to exams management and administration, ensures compliance with the regulations as set out by the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) and UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

The delivery of examinations and assessments involve centres and awarding bodies processing a significant amount of personal data (i.e. information from which a living individual might be identified). It is important that both centres and awarding bodies comply with the requirements of the UK General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018 or law relating to personal data in any jurisdiction in which the awarding body or centre are operating.

In JCQ's General regulations for Approved Centres (section 6) reference is made to 'data protection legislation'. This is intended to refer to UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and any statutory codes of practice issued by the Information Commissioner in relation to such legislation.

It is the responsibility of the centre to inform candidate of the processing that the centre undertakes. For example, that the centre will provide relevant personal data, including name, date of birth and gender to the awarding bodies for the purpose of examining and awarding qualifications.

All exams office staff responsible for collecting and sharing candidates' data are required to follow strict rules called 'data protection principles' ensuring the information is:

- used fairly and lawfully
- used for limited, specifically stated purposes
- used in a way that is adequate, relevant and not excessive
- accurate
- kept for no longer than is absolutely necessary
- handled according to people's data protection rights
- kept safe and secure

To ensure that the centre meets the requirements of the DPA 2018 and UK GDPR, all candidates' exam information – even that which is not classified as personal or sensitive – is covered under this policy.

Section 1 – Exams-related information

There is a requirement for the exams office(r) to hold exams-related information on candidates taking external examinations. For further details on the type of information held please refer to Section 5 below.

Candidates' exams-related data may be shared with the following organisations:

- Awarding bodies
- Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ)
- Department for Education
- Sherborne Area Schools Trust (SAST)
- Local Authority
- The Press concerning exceptional grades

This data may be shared via one or more of the following methods:

- hard copy
- email
- secure extranet site(s) – e.g. AQA Centre Services; Cambridge OCR Interchange; Pearson Edexcel Online; WJEC Secure Website

- Management Information System (MIS) provided by Arbor or Capita SIMS sending/receiving information via electronic data interchange (EDI) using A2C to/from awarding body processing systems

This data may relate to exam entries, access arrangements, the conduct of exams and non-examination assessments including controlled assessments and coursework, special consideration requests and exam results/post-results/certificate information.

Section 2 – Informing candidates of the information held

SAST Schools will ensure that candidates are fully aware of the information and data held.

All candidates are:

- informed via centre newsletter, electronic communication, centre website, exams handbook and assemblies.
- given access to this policy via centre website, written request

Candidates are made aware of the above at the start of a course or when the registrations or entries are submitted to awarding bodies for processing.

Materials which are submitted by candidates for assessment may include any form of written work, audio and visual materials, computer programs and data (“Student Materials”). Candidates will be directed to the relevant awarding body’s privacy notice if they require further information about how their Student Materials may be used by the awarding body.

Candidates eligible for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments which require awarding body approval will be informed that an application for access arrangements will be processed using Access arrangements online, complying with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018

Candidates involved in suspected or alleged malpractice will be informed that their personal data will be provided to the awarding body (or bodies) whose examinations/assessments are involved, and that personal data about them may also be shared with other awarding bodies, the qualifications regulator or professional bodies, in accordance with the JCQ document *Suspected Malpractice – Policies and Procedures*.

Candidates will be informed:

- that awarding bodies may be required to provide a candidate’s personal data to educational agencies, such as DfE, Welsh Government, Department of Education (Northern Ireland), ESFA, regulators, HESA, UCAS, Local Authorities and the Learning Records Service (LRS)
- that their personal data may be provided to a central record of qualifications approved by the awarding bodies for statistical and policy development purposes
- of the processing that the centre undertakes, for example, that the centre will provide relevant personal data, including name, date of birth and gender, to the awarding bodies for the purpose of examining and awarding qualifications

Candidates may obtain access to their personal data, such as examination results by applying to the appropriate awarding body’s data protection officer.

Candidates are also referred to the centre’s privacy notice which explains:

- why SAST Schools needs to collect personal data
- what it plans to do with it
- how long it will keep it
- whether it will be sharing it with any other organisation

Section 3 – Hardware and software

The table below confirms how IT hardware, software and access to online systems is protected in line with DPA & GDPR requirements.

Hardware	Protection measures
Desktop Computer, Chrome Books	Taken care of by Trust IT support. Security updates automatically deployed. User profiles created for role specific requirements.

Software/online system	Protection measure(s)
Advanced Learning or Capita SIMS	Access controlled by username and passwords. Accounts have specified access rights.
Staff / Student / Parent Intranet	Access controlled by username and passwords. Accounts have specified access rights
Awarding body secure extranet sites	Access controlled by username and password. Accounts have specified access rights. Centre administrator has to approve the creation of new user accounts and determine access rights
A2C	Installed only of Exam Managers computer and access controlled by username and password for computer log in.
Internet browser	All internet browsing takes place on a controlled connection, based on rules set for education.

Section 4 – Dealing with data breaches

Although data is handled in line with DPA/GDPR regulations, a data breach may occur for any of the following reasons:

- loss or theft of data or equipment on which data is stored
- inappropriate access controls allowing unauthorised use
- equipment failure
- human error
- unforeseen circumstances such as a fire or flood
- hacking attack
- ‘blagging’ offences where information is obtained by deceiving the organisation who holds it
- cyber-attacks involving ransomware infections

If a data protection breach is identified, the following steps will be taken:

1. Containment and recovery

The SAST Data Protection Officer will lead on investigating the breach.

They will be established:

- who needs to be made aware of the breach and inform them of what they are expected to do to assist in the containment exercise. This may include isolating or closing a compromised section of the network, finding a lost piece of equipment and/or changing the access codes
- whether there is anything that can be done to recover any losses and limit the damage the breach can cause. As well as the physical recovery of equipment, this could involve the use of back-up hardware to restore lost or damaged data or ensuring that staff recognise when someone tries to use stolen data to access accounts
- which authorities, if relevant, need to be informed

2. Assessment of ongoing risk

The following points will be considered in assessing the ongoing risk of the data breach:

- what type of data is involved?
- how sensitive is it?
- if data has been lost or stolen, are there any protections in place such as encryption?
- what has happened to the data? If data has been stolen, it could be used for purposes which are harmful to the individuals to whom the data relates; if it has been damaged, this poses a different type and level of risk
- regardless of what has happened to the data, what could the data tell a third party about the individual?
- how many individuals' personal data are affected by the breach?
- who are the individuals whose data has been breached?
- what harm can come to those individuals?
- are there wider consequences to consider such as a loss of public confidence in an important service we provide?

3. Notification of breach

Notification will take place to enable individuals who may have been affected to take steps to protect themselves or to allow the appropriate regulatory bodies to perform their functions, provide advice and deal with complaints.

4. Evaluation and response

Once a data breach has been resolved, a full investigation of the incident will take place. This will include:

- reviewing what data is held and where and how it is stored
- identifying where risks and weak points in security measures lie (for example, use of portable storage devices or access to public networks)
- reviewing methods of data sharing and transmission
- increasing staff awareness of data security and filling gaps through training or tailored advice
- reviewing contingency plans

Section 5 – Candidate information, audit and protection measures

For the purposes of this policy, all candidates' exam-related information – even that not considered personal or sensitive under the DPA/GDPR – will be handled in line with DPA/GDPR guidelines.

An information audit is conducted yearly

The table below details the type of candidate exams-related information held, and how it is managed, stored and protected

Protection measures may include:

- password protected area on the centre's intranet
- secure drive accessible only to selected staff
- information held in secure area
- updates undertaken every 12 months or when released (this may include updating antivirus software, firewalls, internet browsers etc.)

Section 6 – Data retention periods

Details of retention periods, the actions taken at the end of the retention period and method of disposal are contained in the centre's Exams Archiving Policy which is included in this handbook

Section 7 – Access to information

(With reference to ICO information <https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/schools/exam-results/>)

The UK GDPR gives individuals the right to see information held about them. This means individuals can request information about them and their exam performance, including:

- their mark
- comments written by the examiner
- minutes of any examination appeals panels

This does not however give individuals the right to copies of their answers to exam questions.

Requesting exam information

Requests for exam information can be made to the Data Protection Officer in writing/email, ID will need to be confirmed if a former candidate is unknown to current staff.

The GDPR does not specify an age when a child can request their exam results or request that they aren't published. When a child makes a request, those responsible for responding should take into account whether:

- the child wants their parent (or someone with parental responsibility for them) to be involved; and
- the child properly understands what is involved.

The ability of young people to understand and exercise their rights is likely to develop or become more sophisticated as they get older. As a general guide, a child of 12 or older is expected to be mature enough to understand the request they are making. A child may, of course, be mature enough at an earlier age or may lack sufficient maturity until a later age, and so requests should be considered on a case by case basis.

A decision will be made by the head of centre as to whether the student is mature enough to understand the request they are making, with requests considered on a case by case basis.

Responding to requests

If a request is made for exam information before exam results have been published, a request will be responded to:

- within five months of the date of the request, or
- within 40 days from when the results are published (whichever is earlier).

If a request is made once exam results have been published, the individual will receive a response within one month of their request.

Third party access

Permission should be obtained before requesting personal information on another individual from a third-party organisation.

Candidates' personal data will not be shared with a third party unless a request is accompanied with permission from the candidate and appropriate evidence (where relevant), to verify the ID of both parties, provided.

In the case of looked-after children or those in care, agreements may already be in place for information to be shared with the relevant authorities (for example, the Local Authority). The centre's Data Protection Officer will confirm the status of these agreements and approve/reject any requests.

Sharing information with parents

The centre will take into account any other legislation and guidance regarding sharing information with parents (including non-resident parents and a local authority the 'corporate parent'), as example guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) regarding parental responsibility and school reports on pupil performance:

- Understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility. Updated 24 Aug 23 to include guidance on the role of the corporate parent, releasing GCSE results to a parent and notifying separated parents about a child moving school
www.gov.uk/government/publications/dealing-with-issues-relating-to-parental-responsibility/understanding-and-dealing-with-issues-relating-to-parental-responsibility

- School reports on pupil performance

www.gov.uk/guidance/school-reports-on-pupil-performance-guide-for-headteachers

Publishing exam results

When considering publishing exam results, SAST Schools will make reference to the ICO (Information Commissioner's Office) <https://ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/schools/exam-results/> Can schools give my exam results to the media for publication?

As SAST Schools will have a legitimate reason for publishing examination results, consent is not required from students or their parents/carers for publication. However, if a student or their parents/carers have a specific concern about publication of their results, they have the right to object. This objection must be made in writing to the head of centre, who will consider the objection before making a decision to publish and reply with a good reason to reject the objection to publish the exam results.

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (Exams)

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how SAST Schools, ensures that the moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is met in relation to the management, administration and conducting of examinations and assessments.

The policy also details how staff are trained and supported to be alert to, and report, the signs of abuse and neglect and how they will follow centre procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection, and justice.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff associated with the management, administration and conducting of examinations and assessments.

SAST schools ensure compliance with the statutory guidance for schools and colleges as set out in the Department for Education's Keeping children safe in education 2025 publication.

Introduction

All staff involved in the management, administration and conducting of examinations at SAST Schools are made aware of their safeguarding responsibilities. This includes raising awareness and understanding of the role played by these staff members in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children whilst they are undertaking their examinations/assessments.

As part of the training given to staff involved in the management, administration and conducting of examinations/assessments, the following are highlighted as part of an induction/training programme:

- child protection policy (which should amongst other things also include the policy and procedures to deal with child-on-child abuse)
- behaviour policy (which should include measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct) should amongst other things, include low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistleblowing
- safeguarding response to children who are absent from examinations, particularly on repeat occasions and/or prolonged periods
- the role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies)

Policy aims

- To provide all exams-related staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their safeguarding and child protection responsibilities
- To ensure consistent good practice
- To demonstrate the commitment with regard to safeguarding and child protection to students, parents/carers and other partners when taking examinations and assessments
- To contribute to the wider centre Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Section 1 – Roles and Responsibilities

Designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies

Will take lead responsibility for child protection and safeguarding in relation to examinations and assessments. The DSL will offer advice, support and expertise in all matters relating to child protection and safeguarding in relation to examinations and assessments.

Exams officer

Will support the DSL as directed, and also undertake all relevant training.

Other exams staff e.g., exams assistants, invigilators, facilitators of access arrangements

Will undertake training as directed by the DSL, report child protection and safeguarding issues/concerns in line with centre processes/policy.

Teaching staff

Will ensure that where candidates are taking non-examination assessments, they will check that the tasks and approach being taken are appropriate and in line with ethical standards and the centre's safeguarding responsibilities.

Section 2 – Staff

Recruitment

SAST Schools ensure that only 'suitably qualified and experienced adults' are employed in the management, administration and conducting of examinations and assessments. This is supported by the safer recruitment process which includes:

- completing an application form which includes their employment history and explains any gaps in that history
- providing two referees, including at least one who can comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children
- providing evidence of identity and qualifications
- verifying their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- verifying their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- carrying out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK, including (where relevant) any teacher sanctions or restrictions imposed by a European Economic Area professional regulating authority, and criminal records checks or their equivalent
- asking for written information about previous employment history and check that information is not contradictory or incomplete. We will seek references on all short-listed candidates, including internal candidates, before interview. We will scrutinise these and resolve any concerns before confirming appointments.
- if offered employment, be checked in accordance with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) regulations as appropriate to their role. This will include:
 - an enhanced DBS check and a barred list check for those including unsupervised volunteers engaged in Regulated Activity
 - an enhanced DBS check without a barred list check for all volunteers not involved in Regulated Activity but who have the opportunity of regular contact with children
 - ensuring that this member of staff has a subscription to the DBS Update Service (where relevant)
- if offered employment, provide evidence of their right to work in the UK
- be interviewed by a panel of at least two school leaders/governors, if shortlisted]

DBS check information

All information on the checks carried out on those who are employed solely for the purpose of periodic exams-related activity, such as external invigilators/facilitators, will be recorded in the centre's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files.

Existing staff

Although there is no statutory requirement to update DBS checks for existing staff, all SAST School staff undertake an Annual Criminal Record Declaration check.

If there are concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children, all relevant checks will be carried out as if the individual was a new member of staff. This action will also be taken if an individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is.

Anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult will be referred to the DBS:

- Where the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e., that no action or inaction occurred but the present risk that it could was significant)
- Where the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence
- If there is reason to believe that the individual has committed a listed relevant offence, under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009
- If the individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

Break in service

To comply with 'break in service' regulations, all external invigilators/facilitators will be asked to register with the DBS Update Service on an annual basis and provide consent for the designated senior member of staff in charge of safeguarding arrangements to carry out an online check to view the status of their existing enhanced DBS certificate.

This will not apply to any invigilators who meet the 'frequency test' at SAST schools – eg working 3 or more times in a 30-day period, or attending the centre at least every 6 months for training, updates etc

Section 3 – Supporting staff

All exams' staff at SAST Schools

- are made aware of the good practice guidelines and staff code of conduct in relation to child protection and safeguarding.
- receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction/the centre's annual exam update training session. This training is regularly updated to include the most up-to-date guidance from the relevant authorities
- receive safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates as required, and at least annually, to continue to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. This includes updates on the centre's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Section 4 – Areas covered

All exams' staff will be trained/updated by the DSL on all areas to ensure that they are complying with the centre policy on child protection and safeguarding:

This will include information on how to deal with exams-related scenarios in line with child protection and safeguarding requirements/protocols, including

- Invigilation/facilitation and/or centre supervision with a candidate on a one-to-one basis
- Escorting a candidate to the toilet
- Dealing with a candidate who refuses to come out of the toilet
- Dealing with a candidate who has been taken out of the exam room due to illness
- Dealing with a candidate who has fallen asleep in the exam room

Section 5 – Reporting

The process for staff to report issues/concerns relating to child protection and safeguarding is:

They would take their concerns to either the DSL or their deputy. If they are not available they will take it to the EO who will then note the concern on My Concern.

If a member of staff needs to make a complaint/report a colleague or other adult who works with children (whistleblowing), they should go to either the DSL or the Head of Centre.

Section 6 - Protocols for one-to one support/supervision

Where staff are engaged in invigilation/facilitation and/or centre supervision on a one-to one basis with a candidate the following protocols should be followed.

Summoning immediate assistance in case of any concern

All lone invigilators have their mobile phone (on silent) if they need to summon assistance.

Leaving the examination room temporarily

Where a member of staff may accompany a candidate requiring a toilet break the invigilator is required to first check that the facilities are unoccupied, at what point the candidate is left unaccompanied at the entrance to the facility.

Where a member of staff may accompany a candidate who is feeling unwell the invigilator will escort the student to sick bay for assessment where they will be kept under exam conditions until it is decided if they are well enough to return to the exam or not. The EO to be informed as soon as possible.

References

Keeping children safe in education www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2

Check someone's criminal record as an employer www.gov.uk/dbs-check-applicant-criminal-record

DBS Update Service www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service

DBS Checks for schools www.onlinedbschecks.co.uk/job-sectors/dbs-checks-for-schools/

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

(Exams)

Introduction

Whistleblowing at SAST Schools is encouraged, not penalised, and staff are made aware that they have a duty to report any concerns they have about the conduct of examinations and assessments.

The head of centre and academy committee at SAST Schools aim to create and maintain an approach to examinations and assessments that reflects an ethical culture, and encourages staff and students to be aware of and report practices that could compromise the integrity and security of examinations and assessments.

In compliance with section 5.11 of the JCQ's **General Regulations for Approved Centres**¹, SAST Schools will:

- take all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any malpractice (which includes maladministration) before, during and after assessments have taken place
- inform the awarding body **immediately** of any alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice or maladministration, involving a candidate or a member of staff, by completing the appropriate documentation
- as required by an awarding body, gather evidence of any instances of alleged or suspected malpractice (which includes maladministration) in accordance with the JCQ document **Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures**² and provide such information and advice as the awarding body may reasonably require

This policy requirement added within **General Regulations for Approved Centres** in response to the recommendations within the report of the *Independent Commission on Examination Malpractice*³.

This policy sets out the whistleblowing procedures at SAST Schools. It has been produced and reviewed by the Head of Centre who is also a member of the senior leadership team and responsible for handling any cases of whistleblowing. They are fully aware of the contents of this policy and will escalate any instances of malpractice to the relevant awarding body/bodies.

This policy also sets out the principles which allow members of centre staff and students to feel confident in reporting instances of actual, alleged or suspected malpractice to relevant members of senior leadership. And the steps which should be taken if suspected malpractice is not reported in line with JCQ requirements.

Purpose of the policy

This policy:

- encourages individuals to raise concerns, which will be fully investigated by appropriately trained and experienced individuals
- identifies how to report concerns
- explains how such concerns will be investigated and sets expectations regarding the reporting of outcomes
- provides details of relevant bodies to whom concerns about wrongdoing can be reported, including awarding organisations and regulators
- includes a commitment to do everything reasonable to protect the reporter's identity, if requested
- sets out how those raising concerns will be supported.

¹ Reference www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/

² Reference www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/

³ Reference www.jcq.org.uk/examination-system/imc-home/

This policy also details the steps that could be taken by an individual involved in the management, administration and/or conducting of examinations and assessments if the centre fails to comply with its obligation to report any alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice or maladministration.

The Whistleblower

A whistleblower is defined as a person who reports an actual or potential wrongdoing and is protected by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, providing they are acting in the public interest.

If the person raising the issue is a worker, this will be considered as whistleblowing. This includes agency staff and contractors.

Reporting

If a member of centre staff involved in the management, administration and/or conducting of examinations and assessments (such as exams officer, exams assistant or invigilator), a student or a member of the public (such as a parent/carers) has a concern or reason to believe that malpractice has or will occur in an examination or assessment, concerns should normally be raised initially with the Head of Centre.

However, there may be times when it may be more appropriate to refer the issue direct to the Academy Committee, most often when the allegation is against the head of centre.

Examples of malpractice

In addition to the centre wide Whistleblowing Policy, this exams-specific policy, includes reference to exams-related breaches including, but not limited to, the following:

- Failure to comply with exam regulations as set out by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and its awarding bodies
- A security breach of the examination paper
- Conduct of centre staff which undermines the integrity of the examination or assessment
- Unfair treatment of candidates by either giving an advantage to a candidate/group of candidates (e.g. by permitting a candidate an access arrangement which is not supported by appropriate evidence), or disadvantaging candidates by not providing access to the appropriate conditions (providing a 'level playing field')
- Possible fraud and corruption (e.g. accessing the exam paper prior to the exam to aid teaching and learning)
- Abuse of authority (e.g. the head of centre/members of the senior leadership team overriding JCQ and awarding body regulations)

Whistleblowing procedure

If the individual does not feel safe raising the issue/reporting malpractice within the centre, or they have done so and are concerned that no action has been taken, that individual could consider making their disclosure⁴ to a malpractice expert at the awarding body for the qualification where malpractice is suspected.

For members of centre staff, it is likely that the Public Interest Disclosure Act (PIDA)⁵ offers you legal protection from being dismissed or penalised for raising certain serious concerns ('blowing the whistle'). Whistleblowing rights under PIDA are day one rights⁶. This means that the worker does not need the same two years' service that is needed for other employment rights.

In order to investigate concerns effectively, the awarding body should be provided with as much information as possible/is relevant, which may include:

⁴ Reference www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/public-interest-disclosure-act/

⁵ Reference **Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998** www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/23/contents

⁶ Reference <https://protect-advice.org.uk/pida/>

- The qualifications and subjects involved
- The centre involved
- The names of staff/candidates involved
- The regulations breached/specific nature of suspected malpractice
- When and where the suspected malpractice occurred
- Whether multiple examination series are affected
- If the issue has been reported to the centre and what the outcome was
- How the issue became apparent

Members of the public are not protected by PIDA, but the awarding body will make every effort to protect their identity if that is what they wish, unless the awarding body is legally obliged to release it⁷.

Alternatively a disclosure may be made to Ofqual⁸ as a prescribed body for whistleblowing to raise a concern about wrongdoing, risk or malpractice.

Exams Officer Professional Standards

If an exams officer is completing the Exams Officer Professional Standards (see the National Association of Exams Officers website for more information), as part of their annual professional development, they and their line manager, will be required to sign a Values and Attributes statement.

By signing this statement, the exams officer, and their SLT line manager, are identifying a set of common values and attributes. These include support for as exams officer when they are faced with a situation where they may be compromised by, or put under pressure to accept, a centre decision which may not align with JCQ and awarding organisations regulations (for example being asked not to report an instance of suspected/actual malpractice). In such circumstances, the exams officer must act in line with the procedures set out in this policy.

Anonymity

In some circumstances, the whistleblower might find it difficult to raise concerns with the nominated member of the senior leadership team. If a concern is raised anonymously, the issue may not be able to be taken further if insufficient information has been provided. In such instances, and if appropriate, the allegation may be disclosed to a union representative, who could then be required to report the concern without disclosing its source. Alternatively, whistleblowers or others with concerns about potential malpractice can report the matter direct to Ofqual, who is identified as a 'prescribed body'⁹. Awarding organisations are not prescribed bodies under whistleblowing legislation; however, awarding organisation investigation teams do give those reporting concerns the opportunity for anonymity.

A whistleblower can give their name but may also request confidentiality; the person receiving the information should make every effort to protect the identity of the whistleblower.

Students

Students at SAST Schools are made to feel comfortable discussing/reporting malpractice issues of which they are aware. The regulations surrounding their assessments, and wider academic integrity, will be reiterated to students who are undertaking, or who are about to undertake, their courses of study.

⁷ Reference www.ocr.org.uk/administration/general-qualifications/assessment/malpractice/whistleblowing/

⁸ Reference www.gov.uk/guidance/ofqual-whistleblowing-policy

⁹ Reference www.gov.uk/government/publications/blowing-the-whistle-list-of-prescribed-people-and-bodies-2/whistleblowing-list-of-prescribed-people-and-bodies

Exams Archiving Policy

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- identify exams-related information/records held by the exams office
- identify the retention period
- determine the action required at the end of the retention period and method of disposal
- inform or supplement the centre-wide records management policy/data retention policy

The policy is annually reviewed to ensure that records are archived/retained in accordance with current requirements.

Record type	Record(s) description (where required)	Retention information/period	Action at end of retention period (method of disposal)
Access arrangements information	Any hard copy information kept by the EM relating to an access arrangement candidate.	To be returned to SENCo as records owner at end of the candidate's final exam series.	Until the student is 25yrs old
Alternative site arrangements	Any hard copy information generated on an alternative site arrangement. Notifications submitted online via CAP	To be retained until the deadline for RORs or the resolution of any outstanding enquiries/appeals for the relevant exams series.	Confidential disposal
Attendance register copies		keep signed records of the seating plan, the invigilation arrangements and the centre's copies of the attendance registers for each examination. The awarding bodies may need to refer to these records. The Centre must keep them until the deadline for reviews of marking has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later... [Reference ICE 12, 22]	Confidential waste/shredding
Awarding body exams administration information	Any hard copy publications provided by awarding bodies.	To be retained until the current academic year update is provided.	Recycle
Candidates scripts	Any unwanted copies of scripts returned to the centre through the Access to Scripts (ATS) service.	To be retained securely until the awarding body's earliest date for confidential disposal of unwanted scripts. Where teachers have used copies of candidates' scripts for teaching and learning purposes but no longer wish to retain them, they must ensure that the scripts are disposed of in a confidential manner. [Reference PRS 6] ... ensure that when scripts that have been accessed using the awarding body's access to scripts service are no longer required, they are disposed of in a confidential manner, but no earlier than the dates specified by the awarding bodies... [Reference GR 3.15]	Confidential disposal

Record type	Record(s) description (where required)	Retention information/period	Action at end of retention period (method of disposal)
Candidates' work	Non-examination assessment work (inc. controlled assessment/coursework) returned to the centre after awarding body moderation.	To be immediately returned to subject staff as records owner. To be stored safely and securely along with work that did not form part of the moderation sample (including materials stored electronically) until after the deadline for EARs or the resolution of any outstanding enquiries/appeals or malpractice investigations for the exam series. [Reference GR 3.15]	Returned to candidates or safe disposal
Centre consortium arrangements for centre assessed work	Any hard copy information generated or relating to consortium arrangements for centre assessed work. Applications submitted online via CAP.	To be retained until the deadline for RORs or the resolution of any outstanding enquiries/appeals for the relevant exams series.	Confidential disposal
Certificates		Unclaimed/uncollected certificates to be retained securely for 5 years from date of issue. [Reference GR 5.14]	Confidential destruction
Certificate issue information	A record of certificates that have been issued to candidates.	 [Reference GR 5.14]	Confidential disposal
Confidential materials : initial point of delivery logs	Logs recording awarding body confidential exam materials received by an authorised member of staff at the initial point of delivery and the secure movement of packages by an authorised member of staff to the secure room for transferal to the centre's secure storage facility.	To be retained until the deadline for RORs or the resolution of any outstanding enquiries/appeals for the relevant exams series.	Confidential destruction
Confidential materials: receipt, secure movement, checking and secure storage logs, tracking logs	Logs recording confidential exam materials received, securely moved, checked and placed in the secure storage facility by the exams officer (or other authorised member of centre staff) throughout the period the materials are confidential. Including for example, the handling of confidential MFL listening materials	To be retained until the deadline for EARs or the resolution of any outstanding enquiries/appeals for the relevant exams series.	Confidential destruction

Record type	Record(s) description (where required)	Retention information/period	Action at end of retention period (method of disposal)
Conflicts of Interest records	Records demonstrating the management of Conflicts of Interest	...The records may be inspected by a JCQ Centre Inspector and/or awarding body staff. They might be requested in the event of concerns being reported to an awarding body. The records must be retained until the deadline for reviews of marking has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later. [Reference GR 5.3]	Confidential destruction
Dispatch logs	Proof of dispatch of exam script packages to awarding body examiners covered by the DfE (Standards & Testing Agency) yellow label service	To be retained until the deadline for RORs or the resolution of any outstanding enquiries/appeals for the relevant exams series.	Confidential destruction
Entry information	Any hard copy information relating to candidates' entries.	To be retained until the deadline for RORs or the resolution of any outstanding enquiries/appeals for the relevant exams series.	Confidential destruction
Exam question papers	Question papers for timetabled written exams.	Issued to teaching staff 24 hours after the published finishing time of the exam and only when all candidates in the centre have completed the exam. Instructions issued by an individual awarding body relating to the use of question papers for vocational qualifications after the examination has taken place are followed. [Reference ICE 31 and GR 6,13]	
Exam room checklists	Checklists confirming room conditions and invigilation arrangements for each exam room.	To be retained until the deadline for RORs or the resolution of any outstanding enquiries/appeals for the relevant exams series. [Reference ICE 6]	Confidential disposal
Exam room incident logs	Logs recording any incidents or irregularities in exam rooms.	To be retained until the deadline for RORs or the resolution of any outstanding enquiries/appeals for the relevant exams series.	Confidential disposal

Record type	Record(s) description (where required)	Retention information/period	Action at end of retention period (method of disposal)
Exam stationery		return unused stationery to the secure storage facility or secure room until needed for a future examination. Surplus stationery must not be used for internal school tests, mock examinations and non-examination assessments... confidentially destroy any out-of-date stationery. [Reference ICE 30]	Confidential disposal
Examiner reports		To be immediately provided to head of department as records owner.	
Handling secure electronic materials log	Logs recording the arrangements applied when handling secure electronic materials provided to the centre and accessed by the EO and/or other authorised member of centre staff	To be retained until the deadline for RORs or the resolution of any outstanding enquiries/appeals for the relevant exams series.	Confidential disposal
Invigilation arrangements	<i>See Exam room checklists</i>		
Invigilator and facilitator training records		A record of the content of the training given to invigilators and those facilitating an access arrangement for a candidate under examination conditions must be available for inspection and retained on file until the deadline for reviews of marking has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later. [Reference ICE 12,]	Confidential disposal
JCQ publications	Any hard copy publications.	To be retained until the current academic year update is provided.	Recycle
Moderator reports		To be immediately provided to head of department as records owner and Assistant Head (Curriculum and standards)	
Moderation returns logs	Logs recording the return of candidates' work to the centre by the awarding body at the end of the moderation period	To be retained until the deadline for RORs or the resolution of any outstanding enquiries/appeals for the relevant exams series	Confidential disposal

Record type	Record(s) description (where required)	Retention information/period	Action at end of retention period (method of disposal)
Overnight supervision information	The JCQ Overnight supervision form is completed online using CAP. The JCQ Overnight Supervision Declaration form is downloaded for signing by the candidate, supervisor and the HOC	To be retained for JCQ inspection purposes for the relevant exam series	Confidential disposal
Post-results services: confirmation of candidate consent information	Hard copy or email record of candidate consent for an EAR or ATS request to be submitted to an awarding body	EAR consent to be retained for at least six months following the outcome of the enquiry or any subsequent appeal. ATS consent to be retained for at least six months from the date consent given. [Reference PRS 4, plus appendix A and B]	Confidential disposal
Post-results services: requests/outcome information	Any hard copy information relating to a post-results service request (EARs, appeals, ATS) submitted to an awarding body for a candidate and outcome information from the awarding body.	To be kept until the deadline for EARs and the resolution of any outstanding enquiries/appeals for the relevant exams series.	Confidential disposal
Post-results services: scripts returned from ATS service	Copy or original exam scripts returned to the centre by the awarding body.	Where scripts are retained by the centre, they must be securely stored (including any electronic versions) and not edited in any way or disposed of until after the awarding body deadline. [Reference PRS 8]	Confidential disposal
Post-results services: tracking logs	A log tracking to resolution all post-results service requests submitted to awarding bodies.	To be kept until the deadline for EARs and the resolution of any outstanding enquiries/appeals for the relevant exams series.	Confidential disposal
Private candidate information	Any hard copy information relating to private candidates' entries.	To be kept until the deadline for EARs and the resolution of any outstanding enquiries/appeals for the relevant exams series.	Confidential disposal
Proof of postage – candidate work	Proof of postage of sample of candidates' work to awarding body moderators.	To be kept until the deadline for EARs and the resolution of any outstanding enquiries/appeals for the relevant exams series.	Confidential disposal

Record type	Record(s) description (where required)	Retention information/period	Action at end of retention period (method of disposal)
Resilience arrangements: Evidence of candidate performance	The collection of evidence of student performance to ensure resilience in the qualification system	Student work, either the original or a copy, must always be retained by the centre. Student work can be retained digitally or physically. Students may be given copies, or the original work, where this would support their study. To be kept until the deadline for EARs and the resolution of any outstanding enquiries/appeals for the relevant exams series.	Confidential disposal
Resolving clashes information	Any hard copy information relating to the resolution of a candidate's clash of exam papers or a timetable variation.	To be kept until the deadline for EARs and the resolution of any outstanding enquiries/appeals for the relevant exams series.	Confidential disposal
Results information	Broadsheets of results summarising candidate final grades by subject by exam series.	Records for current year plus previous 6 years to be retained as a minimum. [Reference Records Management Toolkit for Schools]	Confidential disposal
Seating plans	Plans showing the seating arrangements of all candidates for every exam taken.	To be kept until the deadline for EARs and the resolution of any outstanding enquiries/appeals for the relevant exams series. [Reference ICE 12]	Confidential disposal
Second pair of eyes check records/form	Records of the check that must take place by a second person (additional to the person removing question paper packets from secure storage) immediately before a question paper packet is opened	To be kept until the deadline for EARs and the resolution of any outstanding enquiries/appeals for the relevant exams series.	Confidential disposal
Special consideration information	Any hard copy information relating to a special consideration request and supporting evidence submitted to an awarding body for a candidate.	Evidence supporting an on-line special consideration application and evidence supporting a candidate's absence from an exam, signed by a member of SLT must be kept until after the publication of results. We may be asked by an awarding body to provide signed evidence. [Reference SC 6]	Confidential disposal

Record type	Record(s) description (where required)	Retention information/period	Action at end of retention period (method of disposal)
Suspected malpractice reports/outcomes	Any hard copy information relating to a suspected malpractice investigation/report submitted to an awarding body and outcome information from the awarding body.	The awarding bodies will keep a permanent record of the impact of any sanctions on an individual candidates results. All other information relating to specific instances of malpractice or irregularities will be destroyed, following the expiry of the awarding bodies data retention period	Confidential disposal
Transferred candidate information	Any hard copy information relating to an application for a transferred candidate arrangement submitted to an awarding body for a candidate.	To be kept until the deadline for EARs and the resolution of any outstanding enquiries/appeals for the relevant exams series.	Confidential disposal
Very late arrival reports/outcomes	Any hard copy information relating to a very late arrival report submitted to an awarding body for a candidate and outcome information from the awarding body.	To be kept until the deadline for EARs and the resolution of any outstanding enquiries/appeals for the relevant exams series.	Confidential disposal