



**Coleg
Gwent**



EXAMINATIONS STAFF POLICY

Examinations Policy

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All of our policies and procedures are available in English and Welsh on the [staff intranet](#).

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Policy Statement

This policy has been written to ensure exams are conducted appropriately within the JCQ regulations and that a consistent and effective approach in the event of major disruption to the exam system is maintained.

The objectives are:

- to ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interest of candidates
- to ensure the operation of an efficient exam system with clear guidance for all relevant staff
- to ensure a consistent and effective response in the event of major disruption to the exam system

- All employment policies and guidelines have been developed in line with Coleg Gwent's vision and mission. Policies, guidelines and procedures have been set out clearly to support all employees to change lives through learning.

- Welsh standards
Please be reminded that you can request to use the Welsh language throughout any aspect of this process. If necessary, a translation service will be provided.

Roles and Responsibilities

Examinations Manager / Coordinator

- Manage the administration of all exams and the analysis of results
- Standardise and monitor adherence to exam procedures
- Develop professional links with Awarding Bodies
- Manage the setup of Awarding Body and exam data in the college MIS system
- Assist in improving the quality of achievement data quality in preparation for the Consistent Performance Measures
- Recruit, monitor and train the Internal and External invigilators

Examinations Officer

- Advise managers, teaching staff and relevant support staff on annual exam timetables, entry and claims procedures set by the various Awarding Bodies.
- Oversee the production and distribution to staff and candidates of an annual calendar for all exams
- Ensure that candidates are informed of, and understand, the aspects of their exam timetable.
- Consult with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidance.
- Receive, check and securely store all exam papers and completed scripts.
- Process access arrangements
- Apply for special consideration, where necessary, using the '*JCQ access arrangements and special considerations regulations*'.
- Maintain processes to support the timely exam entry for candidates
- Identify and manage exam timetable clashes
- Account for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs
- Track the dispatch of coursework and store returned coursework
- Arrange for the dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates
- Invigilate exams when required

Head of School

- Provide guidance and pastoral care to candidates who are unsure about exam entries
- Support the results procedure, including special consideration processes.
- Ensure Subject Lecturers adhere to deadlines as set by the Examinations Officer
- Confirm and sign entries, in the absence of Subject Lecturers.
- Understand coursework regulations and sign a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own, in the absence of Subject Lecturers.
- Understand exam regulations
- Responsibility for reporting all suspicious or actual incidents of malpractice, using the '*JCQ Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments*'.

Subject Lecturers

- Refer exam candidates to ALNCo for access arrangement assessment
- Submit candidates to the Exams team for registration, entry and certification.
- Submit coursework marks to the Awarding Bodies

ALNCo

- Identify and assess candidate requirements for access arrangements
- Prepare and submit assessment evidence to the exams office
- Provide additional invigilation support where required

Invigilators

- Proactively invigilate exams and assessments
- Maintain knowledge of JCQ rules and regulations and attend training as required
- Collect exam papers and materials from the exams office before the start of the exam
- Return all exam papers and materials to the exams office at the end of the exam

Candidates

- Understand coursework regulations and sign a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own
- Understand and adhere to all exam regulations
- Check exam entries via CG Portal and query with Examinations Officer if incorrect

Policy Details

Exam Timetabling

- External (dated) exams are scheduled during January, May, June and November as set by the Awarding Bodies.
- Internal exams, mock exams and assessments are scheduled by the Schools, at relevant times throughout the year.
- HE exams are scheduled by the relevant Higher Education Institution
- Timetables are issued and clashes resolved, on a series by series basis.

Registration Procedures

- **Initial Registration:** All learners must be registered with the relevant Awarding Body within six weeks of enrolment or by the first Awarding Body deadline (whichever comes first).
- **Late Registrations:** These must be approved by the Head of School with a rationale provided.
- **Unit Selection:** Course teams must confirm unit/module choices by the end of October for full-time learners (or within 4 weeks for short programmes).
- **Amendments:** Any amendments to learner registrations must be submitted via the appropriate internal form and approved by the Exams Team.

Exam Entries

- Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Heads of School and Subject Lecturers
- A candidate cannot request an entry or withdrawal without authorisation from their Subject Lecturer
- Candidates will not normally be allowed to sit exams outside of the college curriculum offer
- External candidates are only accepted on a case by case basis. Applications must be made in writing to the Examinations Manager.
- The college does not routinely act as an exam centre for other organisations
- Candidate entries will be available via CG Portal. The Exams team will contact any candidate who has an exam clash and will agree an alternative time.
- The Exams team will accept entry withdrawals and amendments up to the specific deadline set by the exams office
- Late entries must be authorised by the Subject Lecturer
- Candidates may resit units on payment of the relevant fee as detailed in the College Fee Policy, and by submitting the resit form before the agreed deadline.
- Resit decisions must be made in consultation with Subject Lecturers and Heads of School
- The college reserves the right not to enter candidates for exams due to poor attendance or other relevant reason.

Exam Fees

- Registration and exam fees are usually paid by the college
- Fees for exams for University entrance are paid by the candidate
- Late entry or amendment fees are paid by either the candidate or the department depending on whoever is responsible for the need to make a change
- Resit fees are paid by the candidates except in exceptional circumstances

Equality Legislation

- Candidates may require alternative exam arrangements for equality reasons as defined by the Equality Act 2010. These include:
 - Candidates with a specific learning difficulty, physical disability, mental health or other medical condition that is likely to affect performance in an exam.
 - Candidates with a temporary condition or illness which may be of a short duration e.g. a sprained wrist of the writing hand, or it may last for much or all of the candidates course e.g. upper limb disorder, pregnant/breastfeeding.
 - Any candidate from a particular religious background that may find there is a clash between a religious festival and an exam date and they may wish to explore whether it is possible to have adjustments made.

Access Arrangements

- Access arrangements allow candidates who are unable to sit exams under usual exam conditions to have the same opportunities as other candidates through adjustments to the exam arrangements. An access arrangement which meets the needs of a candidate with disabilities/learning difficulties constitutes a 'reasonable adjustment'.

- The Equality Act 2010 requires that reasonable adjustments are applied to reduce or remove the effects of any disadvantage for candidates with disabilities/learning difficulties in an exam or assessment.
- An adjustment may not be deemed reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the integrity or security of the assessment.
- Candidates are encouraged to disclose their disability/learning difficulty during application and/or enrolment
- On disclosure candidates are referred to the Learning Support team who will submit the necessary paperwork to the exams office. The exams office will then inform invigilators of access arrangements that individual candidates may be granted in the exam.
- Submitting access arrangement applications to the Awarding Bodies is the responsibility of the exams office.
- The exams office will attempt to meet the need of all candidates with manageable medical conditions.
- For more guidance please see refer to the JCQ access arrangements document [Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration](#)

Invigilators and exam days

- External invigilators are responsible for securing the necessary DBS clearance. DBS paperwork must be submitted to the HR department
- DBS fees are paid by the invigilator
- Invigilators are trained, timetabled and briefed by the exams office.
- The number of invigilators allocated to each exam will be decided by the exams office as per Awarding Body regulations
- The Exams Office provide details of the number of rooms required for each campus, for each day, and liaise with the MIS Co-ordinators to ensure that suitable rooms are booked and teaching is re-arranged and agreed with the Head of School if necessary.
- The Invigilators will conduct all exams in accordance with JCQ guidance and other specific Awarding Body regulations where applicable
- Only senior members of teaching staff may be present at the start of the exam to identify candidates, note absences, and instil discipline. They must not have access to the exam paper or offer any advice to candidates.
- Exam papers may only be collected by teaching staff from the exams office, 24 hours after the end time of the exam.

Internal Assessment Coursework

- Candidates who have to prepare coursework should do so by the required date. The subject teacher will collate and submit the coursework to the exams office by the appropriate deadline.
- In the preparation of coursework, candidates must abide by JCQ guidance. Specifically, they must not:
 - Submit work which is not their own
 - Lend work to other candidates or allow their work to be copied
 - Allow other candidates access to, or the use of, their own source material or assist others in the production of coursework.
 - Include work copied directly from books, the internet or other sources without acknowledgement or attribution.
 - Submit work typed or word-processed by a third person without acknowledgement

- Any incident of malpractice by candidates or members of college staff must be immediately reported to the Assistant Principal. Malpractice will be dealt with under the JCQ guidance '*Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments*'
- The management of Controlled Assessments is covered under a separate policy.

Results

- All candidate results will be available via CG portal. Embargoed results will be available as soon as the embargo is lifted. On results days, any results issued under the embargo will also be emailed to candidates and a paper copy will be available for collection if preferred.
- Results may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so by a signed letter and they carry proof of identification.
- HE Results are agreed at the relevant HEI Exam Board. Candidates are informed of their results following the completion of relevant processes

Enquiries about Results (EARs)

- EARs may be requested by college staff (with the candidates consent) or the candidate if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking.
- If a result is queried, the Examinations Officer in conjunction with the Head of School will investigate the feasibility of requesting a re-mark at the college's expense.
- If a candidate disagrees with the college decision not to request a re-mark, the candidate has the right to appeal to the Exams Officer within five working days of the published deadline. The appeal will be reviewed by the Exams Officer and the Head of School and will be communicated within 24 hours of receipt.
- The candidate/department who has requested the EAR is responsible for any fees incurred

Access to Exam Scripts

- After the release of results, candidates may request the return of their script. The Awarding Body may charge for this service which must be paid for by the candidate/school making the request. College staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained.

Certification Procedures

- **Claiming Certification:** Course teams must confirm learner achievements in line with internal and Awarding Body timelines and results day checkpoints.
- **Internal Verification:** Certification claims must be supported by internal verification documentation and approved by the IV/IQA before submission.
- **Issuing Certificates:** Certificates should be issued to learners within 20 working days of receipt from the Awarding Body.

Certificates

- Certificates are posted directly to candidates
- Certificates may be collected from the exams office with prior arrangement
- Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so by a signed letter and they carry proof of identification.
- The college is not responsible for the loss or misplacement of certificates after they have been dispatched. Any certificates that are returned to the college by Royal Mail will be retained for 12 months and then destroyed. A record of all certificates destroyed will be kept for four years in line with JCQ guidance.
- HE Certificates are posted directly to candidates from the awarding HEI.

Candidates and Clash Candidates

- Candidates are required to provide photographic ID to enable the invigilator to verify their identity. In cases where it is impossible to identify a candidate due to religious clothing, the candidate should be approached by an appropriate member of staff and taken to a private area to establish identity. Once identification has been established, the candidate will replace the religious clothing and be escorted back to the exams room.
- JCQ rules on the use of mobile phones, watches, electronic devices and unauthorised material apply at all times.
- Candidates personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the college accepts no liability for their loss or damage
- Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidance
- Candidates must stay under supervision for the full length of the exam if under one hour. For exams lasting more than one hour, candidates must be supervised until one hour after the start time.
- An attempt will be made to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of the exam. A record will be kept of all candidate absentees.
- The supervision of escorts for clash candidates, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight supervision is the responsibility of the Examinations Manager.

Special Consideration

- Where a candidate is, for reasons outside of their control, unable to sit an assessment or exam, the Head of School should first consider whether it is possible for the candidate to enter for the assessment or exam in a subsequent series. Where this is not possible the candidate may apply for special consideration.
- When submitting the application for special consideration the candidate should explain why they were unable to sit the assessment and the Head of School will need to state why entering for the assessment in a subsequent series would disadvantage the candidate.
- Special consideration can also be applied in cases where a candidate who has taken an assessment has been disadvantaged by the impact of illness, bereavement or other personal circumstances. Where appropriate, the Awarding Body may apply a small percentage uplift to the awarded mark to reflect the potential disadvantage.
- Special consideration applications can only be accepted where sufficient evidence is provided. The application should be supported by medical or other evidence where appropriate. Further information about the special consideration process can be found in the JCQ guidance to the Special Consideration Process.

Exam Contingency Plan

Disruption of teaching time – centre is closed for an extended period

- Where there is disruption to teaching time, the college will ensure candidates are prepared for exams.
- In the case of modular courses, the college may advise candidates to sit exams in the next available series.
- The college will have plans in place to facilitate alternative methods of learning.
- Alternative accommodation options would be explored such as moving provision to other college campuses or an external location
- Appropriate transport arrangements would be put in place
- In such instances, details would be communicated to staff and candidates via the college website, text messaging, email and social media platforms.

Candidates unable to take examinations - college is open

- In the event of candidates being unable to attend the college to take exams as normal, the college will liaise with candidates to identify whether the exam can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with the relevant Awarding Bodies, following the JCQ guidance on alternative site arrangements.
- Exams staff would complete the Alternative Site documentation and submit to the relevant Awarding Body.
- The college will offer candidates an opportunity to sit any exams missed at the next available series
- The college will apply to Awarding Bodies for special consideration for candidates, following the JCQ guidance on special consideration.

Candidates unable to take examinations - college unable to open

- If the college is unable to open for exams, exams staff will inform each Awarding Body with which exams are due to be taken, as soon as possible. Alternative Site documentation will be completed and submitted to the Awarding Bodies.
- The Principal will decide whether it is safe for the college to open. The Director of Estates will take advice and follow instructions from relevant local or national agencies when recommending to the Principal whether the college is able to open. The college will open for exam candidates only, if possible.
- The college will use alternative venues, e.g. other college campuses, local schools, leisure centres, in agreement with relevant Awarding Bodies.
- Details of the alternative venue will be communicated to all staff, invigilators and candidates via the college website, text messaging, email and telephone.
- The college will offer candidates an opportunity to sit any exams missed at the next available series
- The college will apply to Awarding Bodies for special consideration

Disruption to the transportation of completed exam scripts

- If there is a delay in collection arrangements for completed exam scripts the college will seek advice from Awarding Bodies and the collection agency
- The college will seek approval from Awarding Bodies before making their own arrangements for transportation
- The college will ensure secure storage of completed exam scripts until collection

College unable to distribute results as normal

- If the college is unable to access or distribute results to candidates, the Examinations Manager will contact Awarding Bodies regarding alternative options
- The college will make arrangements to access the results at an alternative site
- The college will make arrangements to access post results services from an alternative site

Staff absence at key points during the exam period

- In the event of extended absence of a member of the teaching staff, the Head of School will arrange cover from within the staff team, the wider staffing establishment at the College or through an agency. Staff providing cover would be briefed on arrangements for assessment and exams.
- Their practice in terms of assessments would be monitored by an experienced member of the teaching team or the Head of School.
- In the event of extended absence, the Examinations Coordinator would take responsibility for carrying out the duties of the Examinations Officer, working in consultation with the Examinations Manager. Appropriate support of responsibilities would then be agreed.
- All members of the team regularly receive training from Awarding Bodies and in the administration of key processes, in the event of exams staff absence.
- New invigilators undergo a period of shadowing, following appointment. They are only allowed to work independently once the Exams Officers are happy that processes and procedures are understood and that invigilators are competent.
- Cross College staff are required to assist during main exam sessions (mainly GCSE English and Maths) and are trained by the Examinations Officer with regard to their responsibilities and duties
- Minor absence issues (e.g. an invigilator unable to attend) are covered by a member of the Exams team or attempts are made to contact another invigilator.
- In the event of extended absence of an ALNCo, their Line Manager would assign responsibilities temporarily to members of the wider Support team. A suitably qualified external specialist assessor with an established relationship with the college may also be required to carry out access arrangement assessments.
- In the event of extended absence of the Head of Centre, the Director of Data and Funding will cover the duties and inform the Awarding Bodies accordingly.

Lack of appropriate exam rooms or venues at short notice

- The College is a large organisation with a number of campuses and rooming resources. Large spaces exist within each campus (sports hall and performance areas) where standard teaching can be suspended so that large exams can be held.
- The Exams team will work closely with the MIS team in order to identify and utilise rooms effectively at short notice.
- Local venues can be used if required

Failure of IT systems

- Preventative maintenance is routinely carried out by IT staff
- College IT staff are informed by Examinations Officers when onscreen exams are scheduled and are therefore prioritised if system failure occurs
- Where such failure impacts on scheduled exams, the exams would be rescheduled as soon as possible.