

Exams Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the integrity and security of the examination/assessment system at Inspire Education Group (IEG) is always maintained and is not brought into disrepute.

IEG is committed to having high-quality examinations and assessments, procedures and processes. IEG will:

- Strive to deliver the highest quality of service to all students and staff
- Expect all staff and students to maintain this quality through adherence to the procedures and processes

Scope

This policy applies to all qualifications offered by IEG, other than courses of study at University Centre Peterborough (UCP), which has a separate policy and sets out the responsibilities of relevant staff and students.

The Policy Statement

At all times IEG will seek to ensure:

- Effective planning, administration and management of exams and assessments
- Exams and assessments are conducted efficiently, effectively and in the best interests of candidates
- Effective operation of an efficient exam system with clear procedures and guidelines for all relevant staff involved in the delivery of exams and assessments
- Staff are fully informed of the processes and procedures within the Exams Policy in order to spread the culture of high-quality exams and assessments for all students
- Each staff member and students are informed of the procedures to comply with internal and external regulations, thus ensuring that Inspire Education Group (IEG) is not compromised
- Awarding body procedures are followed
- The procedures meet auditory and regulatory requirements

Responsibilities

The Principal:

- Has overall responsibility as Head of Centre
- Can delegate this responsibility to the Assistant Principal, Quality

Policy Name: EX001 Exams Policy

Policy Author: Exams Manager / Exams Team Leader

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Site: Inspire Insights, IEG Website

Exams Manager / Exams Team Leader:

- Manages the administration of online tests and external exams
- Manages registration processes for vocational qualifications
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for exams/online tests, their security, conduct and dispatch, including coursework
- Prior to the start of the exam series carries out last-minute checks of all GCSE/GCE entries together with the Head of Faculty and makes any necessary changes
- Responsible with Assistant Principal, Quality for contingency planning for exams administration
- Together with the Head of Faculty checks all relevant cash-in codes have been entered
- Receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts and ensures that scripts are dispatched as per the guidelines
- Administers access arrangement approvals and makes applications for special consideration following exam board regulations
- Timetables exams and online tests, identifying and managing exam timetable clashes and access arrangement provision
- Accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges where applicable
- Organises the recruitment, training, and monitoring of a team of casual invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams
- Line manages invigilators
- Responsible for handling late or absent candidates on the day of the exam
- Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to Teaching Staff, managers and candidates
- Ensures candidates' coursework / controlled assessment marks are submitted, and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule
- Tracks, dispatches, and stores returned coursework / controlled assessments
- Reports and manages any reported cases of exam malpractice to the Awarding Organisation, ensuring the Group meet the Awarding Organisation requirements

The Exams Team is responsible for:

- Checking entries/registrations and submitting entries/registrations to the awarding body to meet its deadline
- Booking all exam rooms and arranging seating plans after liaison with other users

The Exam Access Arrangement Team is responsible for:

- Testing candidates' requirements for access arrangements (relating to learning difficulties), approving access arrangements and passing completed evidence portfolios to the Exams Team in line with JCQ requirements

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- Dealing with any aspect of an awarding body inspection which deals with access arrangements. Ensure appropriate paperwork is available for inspection in line with JCQ regulations
- Advising Teaching Staff on appropriate access arrangement provision
- Keep up to date on a yearly basis with any JCQ regulations amendments and share with the Exams Team

Teaching Staff, Assistant Head of Faculty and Curriculum Leaders are responsible for:

- Passing student's information to the Exams Office for the required entry/registration of qualification(s)
- Identifying access arrangements for students and providing evidence to support request
- Ensuring all necessary coursework and/or controlled assessments are completed on time
- Guidance of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exam officer
- Accurate completion of coursework / controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets
- Decisions on post-results procedures

Invigilators are responsible for:

- The efficient running of exams/online tests in accordance with awarding body regulations
- Collection of exam papers/online test information from the Exams Office before the start of the exam
- Return of exam materials to the Exams Office at the end of the exam/online test
- Ensuring the security of exam papers and completed scripts while in their possession
- Reporting any suspected cases of malpractice to the Exams manager

Candidates are responsible for:

- Complying with information on the exam's noticeboard
- Attending exams/online tests booked for them
- Understanding coursework/controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own
- Ensuring they conduct themselves in all exams according to the awarding body's regulations

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Related Documentation

- Appendix 1 – Procedures
- EX005 - Exam Contingency Policy
- JCQ General Regulations for Approved Exams
- JCQ Instructions for Conducting Exams
- JCQ Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration
- JCQ Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments
- JCQ Instructions for Conducting Controlled Assessments

Exams Policy – Procedures

Entries, Entry Details and Late Entries

- The centre does not accept entries from private candidates. The only exception to this is for AAT exams through our APT provision
- The centre does not act as an exam centre for other organisations
- Entry deadlines are circulated to Heads of Faculties/curriculum staff by email
- Heads of Faculty will provide estimated entry information to the Exams Manager to meet Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and awarding organisation deadlines
- Entries and amendments made after an awarding organisation deadline (i.e. late) require the authorisation, in writing, of the Assistant Principal Quality
- Teaching staff to ensure a minimum of 2 weeks' notice is provided for all online exams and 4 weeks' notice for all paper-based exams
- It is the responsibility of the Heads of faculty to ensure registrations are accurate
- If inaccurate registrations are identified, then it is the Exams manager's responsibility to inform the awarding organisations

Exam Fees

For full details on Exam Fees please refer to IEG Fees policy FIN003.

- For all students, the cost of the first two online tests will be met by the centre and recharged to the relevant departmental budget. Any further attempts should be paid by the student, the cost will depend on the qualification taken. (Please see Fees Policy FIN003. Current fees are available on request to the Exams Team
- For all students, the cost of the first written exam will be met by the centre and recharged to the relevant college budget area. Any further attempts will be paid by the student; the cost will depend on the qualification. (Please see Fees Policy FIN003). Current fees are available on request to the Exams Team
- For GCE students, the centre will pay for the first attempt of each unit. Any further attempts will be paid by the student at a cost of £25 per unit
- Late entry or amendment fees will be met by the centre and recharged to the relevant departmental budget
- Costs incurred by the incorrect qualification being on the student's ILR, or where changes to qualifications are actioned mid-course, will be met by the centre and recharged to the relevant faculty budget

Exam Timetables

- Exam timetables are prepared by the exam team
- Individual statements of entry will be sent to all GCE/GCSE students
- Exam timetables will be displayed on the exam's noticeboard

Online Tests

- Requests for online tests will only be accepted through the online exam booking system
- Information for the running of self-invigilated tests will be sent to the teacher requesting the tests no later than one week prior to the test date
- Subject teachers will inform students of the details of the online test they have been entered for, including the date, time and location of the test
- Students enrolled at the centre may only take exams relating to the qualifications on which they are enrolled
- The exam Officer will complete exam details with information on allowable reference materials, produce attendance registers and log-in information ready for invigilators for each online test session
- Invigilators will run online tests according to the regulations stated by the awarding organisation
- Exams Manager / Exams Team Leader will ensure invigilators are aware of any access arrangements which apply to individual students, such as extra time

Internally Invigilated / Underpinning Knowledge Tests

- Curriculum areas are permitted to manage testing (written or online) where awarding organisation rules allow and with the prior agreement of the Exams Manager
- In such instances, curriculum staff are responsible for ensuring that awarding organisation regulations are met with regard to accommodation, security of materials, training and provision of invigilators, access arrangements and malpractice
- Students approved for access arrangements must be provided with these arrangements for every test and the use of these arrangements recorded and notified to the Exams Office
- Exams Office staff will carry out ad hoc checks where internally invigilated sessions take place and report findings to the Assistant Principal, Quality

Coursework

- Teachers will present coursework to the Exams Office by the internal deadline agreed
- Coursework will be stored securely by the Exams Office and sent to moderators by the awarding organisation's deadline

- Returned coursework or that which has not been moderated will be securely stored by the Exams Office until the date the awarding organisation has notified it can be released
- Teachers are responsible for distributing coursework back to students after the release date

Written Exams

- Requests for entries from curriculum staff will only be accepted via the online booking system or the applicable resit forms from candidates
- Students enrolled at the centre may only take exams relating to the qualifications they are enrolled on. Exceptions to this are for university admissions tests, for which the Group will provide exams but levy a charge to the candidate for the entry fee, administration and invigilation costs incurred
- Resits of A-levels and GCSEs have to be supported by Teaching Staff and costs will be payable by students, prior to entries being made
- Late fees will be charged to the student if the resit form is not handed in by the deadline (See Fees Policy FIN003)
- Where students wish to re-sit an exam, already having gained a pass but wishing to improve their mark, the student must pay the cost of the re-sit. (See Fees Policy FIN003)
- Costs for absences from written exams for which there are online alternatives will be re-charged to the curriculum area concerned

Inspections

- Dealing with external inspectors is the responsibility of the Exams Manager, or Assistant Principal Quality in their absence
- Any aspects of inspection referring to access arrangements for candidates with learning difficulties will be referred to the Head of ALS, SEND / ALS, Exams Support Lead

Candidates

- The Exams Manager / Exams Team Leader will provide written information to candidates in advance of each exam series. A formal briefing session for candidates may be given by Exams Office staff
- Candidates' personal belongings remain their responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage
- In an exam room, candidates must not have access to items other than those clearly allowed in the instructions on the question paper, the stationery list, or the specification for that subject. This is particularly true of mobile phones and other electronic communication or storage devices with text or digital facilities. Any precluded items must not be taken into an exam room

- Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines. Candidates are expected to stay for the full exam time at the discretion of the Exams Officer

Candidates should note that:

- If they leave an exam room, temporarily, for illness or a comfort break, they will be accompanied by an appropriate member of staff at all times
- Candidates may not, permanently, leave the exam room for the first hour of the exam
- The Exams Manager / Exams Team Leader is responsible for deciding if candidates arriving late can be admitted to the exam room

Exam Days

- The Exams Officer will book all exam rooms after liaison with other users and make the question papers, other exam stationery and materials available for the invigilator
- Site management staff are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms and will be advised of requirements in advance by the Exams Officer
- The invigilator will start and finish all exams in accordance with JCQ / awarding body guidelines
- Students will be expected to be in possession of a College issued ID Card
- Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with the identification of candidates unable to provide photographic ID. Any staff present during an exam must be in accordance with the rules defined by JCQ concerning who is allowed in the exam room and what they can do
- In practical exams, subject teachers' availability will be in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- Papers will be distributed to Teaching Staff (where allowed) in accordance with JCQ's recommendations and no earlier than 24 hours after candidates have completed them
- Invigilators will stop the examination at the scheduled time and assemble question papers, answer booklets and loose sheets
- Candidates will not be allowed to leave the exam room until their answer book, question paper and any other material relevant to the examination have been collected and checked
- Invigilators will return the examination pack, with completed scripts, documents and any other relevant material to the exam office
- The Exam Officer will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed examination scripts to awarding bodies

Internal assessment

- It is the responsibility of the subject teacher that all internal assessments are ready for dispatch at the correct time. The Exams Officer will assist by keeping a record of each dispatch, including the recipient details and the date sent
- Marks for all internally assessed work are to be provided to the Exams Office by the Teaching Staff. Any appeals regarding internal assessment must be submitted before the marks are provided to the Exams Office in line with the Group's procedure for assessment, internal and external quality assurance

Results

- Results for online tests or on-demand written papers will be passed to the candidate by their teacher. Teachers will be given access to secure awarding organisation websites (where appropriate) to facilitate this
- Results from online tests which have to be generated by the Exams Office will be sent to the teacher who requested the test no later than one working day after the exam
- A-level and GCSE results will be available for candidates to collect on designated Results Days from 9.00 am and the production of relevant photographic ID. Any results not collected will be posted out first class at 4.00 pm on Results Days
- Results information will be provided to Assistant Principals and senior management by the Exams Officer as requested
- Arrangements to allow the collection of results on results days are made by the Assistant Principal Quality
- Results are issued online via ProPortal on the student hub, on the agreed release date by the awarding organisation
- Access to Scripts (ATS) / Enquiries about Results (EARs) may be requested by centre staff or the candidate following the release of results but only with the written consent of the candidate and via completion of the necessary paperwork
- The cost of ATS / EAR requests will normally be paid by the candidate but may be charged to the faculty area concerned if the request originates internally
- All processing of ATS / EAR requests will be completed by the Exams Officer
- Any candidate requesting a re-mark should understand that their unit score and overall grade may go down as well as up and the new mark/grade must be accepted

Claims

- Claims for assessed units are the responsibility of teachers
- For claims processed by the Exams Office: claims must be sent to the Exams Office via the agreed method as soon as possible after all verification processes have taken place. These will be processed by Exams within two

- weeks of receipt
- Problems with claims such as approval issues, issues with units claimed and claims which are indicated as full but do not result in certification, will be referred to the originator