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# Examinations Guidance

## Document Control

Reference: ISSOP0812556

Control: A12

Issue No: 1

Author: Jacky Brown

Approver: Simon Hitches

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## Scope and application

The purpose of this exam guidance is:

- 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 guidelines for all relevant staff
- to ensure that students who are identified as requiring special examination arrangements are accommodated

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the centre's exam processes to read, understand and implement this guidance.

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## 1.0 Exam Responsibilities

Principal/Assistant Principal - Resources

Overall responsibility for the school/college as an exam centre:

- Advises on appeals and re-marks
- The head of centre is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document suspected malpractice in exams and assessments.

MIS Manager / Senior Exams Officer

Manages the administration of public exams and analysis of exam results:

- Advises the SMT, subject and class tutors and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various exam boards
- Oversees the production and distribution to staff and candidates of an annual calendar for all exams in which candidates will be involved and communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events
- Ensures that candidates are informed of and understand those aspects of the exam timetable that will affect them
- Consults with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework/controlled assessment is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- Provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries
- Receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts
- Administers access arrangements in conjunction with the DISABILITIES CO-ORDINATOR and makes applications for special consideration using the JCQ Access arrangements and special considerations regulations and Guidance relating to candidates who are eligible for adjustments in exams
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes
- Accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges
- Organises the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exam invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams
- Updates and maintains the Exam Entries /Exam Day Contingency Plan annually

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- Submits candidates' coursework marks, tracks despatch and stores returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule
- Organises script despatch and tracking
- Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the tutors, any appeals/re-mark requests
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.
  - liaison with the Disabilities Coordinator / ALS manager.
  - communication with the awarding bodies
  - delivering of exam papers to exam rooms and ensuring correct set up
  - posting of exam papers
  - post-results procedures

### MIS team

- Support for the input of data
- Delivering of exam papers to exam rooms and ensuring correct set up
- Managing achievement data/statistics/reporting

### Reception

- Taking fee payments from candidates.

### Deputy Principal - Curriculum

- Organisation of teaching and learning.

### Heads of School/Curriculum Team Leaders

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries
- Involvement in post-results procedures

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- Ensuring coursework/controlled assessment declaration sheets are available for moderation
- Ensuring coursework/controlled assessments are prepared and stored sufficiently and are ready for JCQ inspection
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the Senior Exams Officer

### Director of Human Resources & Learner Services

- Guidance and careers information.

### Course tutors

- Accurate completion of entry sheets and adherence to deadlines
- Accurate completion of coursework mark sheets and declaration sheets
- Changes of course/entry/level

### Head of Learner Services/DISABILITIES CO-ORDINATOR

- Identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements
- Administration of access arrangement
- Provision of additional support — with spelling, reading, mathematics dyslexia or essential skills, hearing impairment, English for speakers of other languages, IT equipment — to help candidates achieve their course aims.

### Invigilators

- Keep up to date with knowledge of JCQ ICE and other awarding body rules and regulations
  - Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the exams office
  - Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the exams office
  - Ensuring all secure documents are returned to the Senior Exams Office after the exam
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## Candidates

- Applying and paying for resits
- Understanding coursework/controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.
- Acting in accordance with these Guidelines and Student Disciplinary Policy at all times
- Understanding exam regulations

## 2.0 The qualifications Offered

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Curriculum.

The qualifications offered are provided in the College Annual Plan.

There are a wide range of qualifications offered including, AS, A2, GCE, GCSE, BTEC Firsts and Nationals, NVQ's, Key Skills, Basic Skills.

The qualifications offered in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus for that year. If there has been a change of syllabus from the previous year, the exams office must be informed at the soonest opportunity.

All candidates will be entitled, and enabled, to achieve an entry for qualifications from an external awarding body.

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## 3.0 Exam seasons, timetables and clashes

### 3.1 Exam seasons

Internal exams are scheduled and held under external exam conditions by teaching staff. External exams are scheduled in agreement with the Senior Exams Officer, namely in November, January, March, May and June.

Exams series used at the centre are decided by the heads of subject.

### 3.2 Timetables

The Senior Exams Officer will circulate a timetable of all external exams. They will add rooms and appoint invigilators.

Teaching staff will circulate information for internal exams.

### 3.3 Statements of Entry

Individual Statements of Entry from each exam board are circulated to students giving details of all exams that they have been entered for in that series, together with a copy of the JCQ Information for Candidates Notice and a letter from the Senior Exams Officer with session start times.

### 3.4 Clash candidates

Clashes will be identified by the Senior Exams Officer and candidates will be notified in writing of amended times of exams.



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## 4.0 Entries, entry details, late entries and resits

### 4.1 Entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the subject tutors.

A candidate can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.

The centre does accept entries from external candidates.

The centre acts as an exam centre for other organisations.

### 4.2 Entry details

All individual candidate statements of entry or individual timetables will be posted to candidates.

The exams office will accept withdrawals (using the appropriate withdrawal forms), amendments and changes of tier up to the date set by the awarding body.

### 4.3 Late entries

Late entries are authorised by the heads of school.

The deadlines for late entries are circulated via email.

The Senior Exams Officer will accept entry amendments and withdrawals up to the dates set by the awarding bodies.

### 4.4 Retakes

Retake decisions are made in consultation with the course tutor, Senior Exams Officer and candidate.



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## 5.0 Exam fees

Initial registration and exam entry fees are paid by the centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by whoever is responsible for the need to make the change.

Candidates who fail to sit an exam or meet the necessary coursework/controlled assessment requirements without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances will have to pay for the next entry as if it is a resit.

Retake fees are paid by the candidates at the current fee or a minimum of £5. (See also section 4.4: Retakes)

Candidates must pay the fee for an enquiry about a result (see also section 12.2: Enquiries about Results [EARS]).

## 6.0 The Equality Act 2010, reasonable adjustments and access arrangements

### 6.1 The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 strengthens the duty to make reasonable adjustments, defies substantial disadvantage and places new duties on the qualifications regulator. All exam centre staff must ensure that access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.

### 6.2 Special requirements

A candidate's special requirements are determined by the DISABILITIES CO-ORDINATOR, doctor, tutor and specialist tutor.

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The Disabilities Coordinator will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs, pupils who are embarking on a course leading to an exam and the date of that exam. The Learning Support team can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates may be granted during the course and in the exam.

## 6.3 Access arrangements

Candidates who may require access arrangements are identified during the admissions/enrolment process. For these candidates the Disabilities Coordinator sends an Access Arrangements Application Form to the Senior Exams Officer.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the Senior Exams Officer.

## 6.4 General Principles

Special examination arrangements may be needed for:

- Candidates with a permanent or long term disability for example:
  - physical disability
  - visual impairment
  - hearing impairment
  - specific learning difficulty (eg Dyslexia)
- Candidates with a temporary indisposition at the time of the examination(s)
- Candidates whose first language is not English
- Candidates whose exam timetable is such that they require additional supervision and/or overnight accommodation

For candidates with temporary disabilities and those with exam timetable “clashes”, the subject tutor should provide a Doctor’s note to the Senior Exams Officer

It is the responsibility of the Disability Co-ordinator to:

- Confirm the candidate’s disability
  - Identify the Special Examination Arrangements required
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- To ensure that all relevant assessments and supporting letters required by the examination boards are in place
- To submit applications to the College's Senior Exams Officer at least one week prior to the Examination Board's final date for Special Examination Arrangements

## 6.5 Implementation of Arrangements

If candidates are given approval for special arrangements involving:

- Extra time
- Readers
- Scribes
- Communicators
- Word Processors
- Alternative accommodation
- Overnight supervision
- Supervised rest breaks

Provided that this is the preferred normal way of working within the centre then it will be the responsibility of the Learning Support and Equality and Diversity

Co-ordinator to arrange for specialist staff and appropriate training and equipment to be provided.

It will be the responsibility of the Senior Exams Officer to arrange rooms and general invigilators.

It will be the responsibility of the Head of Safeguarding and Learner Services to arrange supervision and/or accommodation for students with exam "clashes". Arrangements for overnight supervision will be made in line with the Safeguarding Policy.

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## 7.0 Exam Contingency

The priority when implementing contingencies will be to maintain three principles

- Delivering assessments to published timetables
- Delivering results to published timetables
- Complying with regulatory requirements in relation to assessment, marking and standards

The national examination timetable applies to GCSEs, AS and A2 levels.

7.1 Disruption of teaching time – centre is closed for an extended period where there is disruption to teaching time and students miss teaching and learning

- In the case of modular courses, centres may advise learners to sit exams in the next available series
- Centre will have plans in place to facilitate alternative methods of learning

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7.2 Learners unable to take exams because of a crisis – centre remains open In the event of learners being unable to attend the centre to take exams as normal, the centre will liaise with learners to identify whether the exams can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with the relevant awarding bodies. JCQ guidance on alternative site arrangements can be accessed via their website

Centre will offer candidates to sit any exams missed at the next available series

Centre will apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements. JCQ guidance on special consideration can be accessed via the JCQ website

7.3 Centre unable to open as normal during the examination period

If the centre is unable to open as normal for exams, they will inform each awarding body with which exams are due to be taken as soon as is possible. As part of general planning for emergencies, the centre will cover the impact on exams. The head of centre will decide whether it is safe for the centre to open. The head will take advice, or follow instructions from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether the centre is able to open

- Centre will open for exams and candidates, if possible
- Centres will use alternative venues in agreement with relevant awarding bodies (e.g. share facilities with other centres or use other public buildings, if possible)
- Centres will offer candidates an opportunity to sit any exams missed at the next available series
- Centres will apply to awarding bodies for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements

7.4 Disruption to the transportation of completed exam scripts

If there is a delay in normal collection arrangements for completed exam scripts the centre will seek advice from awarding bodies and collection agency regarding collection

Centres will ensure secure storage of completed exam scripts until collection

7.5 Centre unable to distribute results as normal

If the centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post results services, centres will contact awarding bodies about alternative options

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Centre will make arrangements to access its results at an alternative site

Centres will make arrangements to coordinate access to post results services from an alternative site

Centre will share facilities with other centres if this is possible

7.6 Senior Exams Officer absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle

In the event of the Senior Exams Officer being absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle, in order to minimise risk to exams administration and avoid any adverse impact on students, centre will refer to the Exam Entries/Exam Day Contingency Plan (as maintained by the Senior Exams Officer) and consult with awarding bodies when necessary

## 8.0 Managing invigilators and exam days

### 8.1 Managing invigilators

External invigilators will be used for supervision of all external exams.

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Senior Exams Officer

The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the exams office.

Securing the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of Human Resources. DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by HR and Payroll.

### 8.2 Exam days

The Senior Exams Officer will book all exam rooms in liaison with Registers/Timetabling and make the question papers, other exam stationary and materials available for the invigilator.

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Estates are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

The invigilator will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates but must not advise on which questions are to be attempted.

In practical exams subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.

Exam papers must not be read by tutors or removed from the exam room before the end of a session. Papers will be distributed to subject tutors at the end of the exam session by the Senior Exams Officer only.

## 9.0 Candidates and special consideration

### 9.1 Candidates

JCQ rules on candidates' use of mobile phones and all electronic devices apply at all times.

Normal centre rules on dress and behaviour apply.

Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

For exams longer than one hour, candidates will not be allowed to leave the exam room until at least one hour after the published starting time. Unless they are accompanied by a member of staff, they will not be allowed to return.

Subject teachers may deal with any candidate not present at the start of an exam through their own departmental procedures.

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## 9.2 Special consideration

Should a candidate be too ill to sit an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma or be taken ill during the exam itself, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, or the exam invigilator, to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within five days of the exam, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor.

The Senior Exams Officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within 1 week of the final exam in that series.

## 10.0 Coursework and Controlled assessment

Candidates who have to prepare coursework should do so by the required date.

The Senior Exams Officer in liaison with subject tutors, will ensure all coursework/controlled assessment is marked and/or despatched at the correct time and will maintain a record of what has been sent, when and to whom.

Pembrokeshire College is committed to ensuring that whenever staff assess the work of candidates for external qualifications, this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the specification for the qualification concerned. Assessments are carried out by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills. When an assessment of a piece of work is divided between staff, internal moderation and standardisation will ensure consistency. Pupils work must be authenticated according to the requirements of the relevant Awarding Body.

If a candidate feels that these procedures have not been carried out in relation to his/her work they should first discuss the matter with the subject tutor. If the problem cannot be resolved in this way, the candidate may use the following formal internal appeals procedure. Note that appeals may only be made against the process that led to the assessment and not against the mark or grade submitted by the centre for moderation by the awarding body.



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Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by the course tutors.

BTEC assessors will bring NSS sampling work to be sent to examiners to the Senior Exams Officer. A record of this will be kept and the samples then despatched by Parcelforce.

### 10.2 Controlled assessment

Controlled Assessment is a form of internal assessment which replaces coursework in GCSEs. Control levels are set for each state of the assessment process: task setting, task taking and task marking. It is used for those aspects of a subject which cannot be readily assessed by an external examination and encourages an integrated approach to teaching, learning and assessment. It is intended to enable teachers to authenticate and confirm that students have carried out the assessment tasks set in accordance with their exam specification.

#### 10.2.1 Responsibilities

##### Principal/ Assistant Principal - Resources

Overall responsibility for the College as an exam centre:

- The head of centre is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document suspected malpractice in exams and assessments
- Ensure that there is an Internal Appeals Procedure for controlled assessments

##### Senior Management Team

- Organisation of teaching and learning
  - To approve all policies and risk assessment documents concerning controlled assessments
  - Assign responsibilities to specific members of staff
  - Brief all Heads of Schools, Curriculum Team Leaders and GCSE Course Tutors on controlled assessment guidelines and ensure all GCSE Course Tutors confirm by signature full comprehension of the College guidelines, Risk Management plan and associated explanatory and JCQ documentation.
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### Heads of School/Curriculum Leaders

- Choosing an awarding body specification for each subject offering controlled assessments
- Ensuring that tutors understand roles and responsibilities in controlled assessments and are familiar with the requirements of the GCSE specification
- Involvement in post-results procedures and internal appeals.
- Monitor the operation of controlled assessments and receive reports from course tutors

### MIS Manager / Senior Exams Officer

- Advises the SMT, subject and class tutors and other relevant support staff on procedures as set by the various exam boards
- Oversees the production and distribution to staff and candidates of an annual calendar and communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events
- Ensure confidential material is distributed to tutors in a safe and secure format
- Enters students for all individual units before the entry deadlines
  
- Consults with teaching staff to ensure that necessary controlled assessment is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- Ensure all applications for access arrangements have been made
- Ensure secure storage of controlled assessment material and candidates' work
- Communication with the awarding bodies
- Posting of controlled assessment results

### Course tutors

- Involvement with selecting awarding bodies and GCSE specifications
- Decide how controlled assessments should be incorporated into the scheme of work to ensure coherent sequence of learning
- Ensure students are well-prepared for the controlled assessments
- Provide information as necessary to the exams office on unit codes and planned dates of assessment ensuring that the 40% rule has been adhered to in the final examination series

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- Book facilities and resources
- Obtain confidential materials and tasks set by the awarding bodies
- Supervise assessments ensuring specified levels of control
- Ensuring authentication forms are signed by candidates and the supervising teacher
- Liaison with the Disabilities Coordinator/ALS manager for candidates with access arrangements

### Candidates

Understanding controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.

## 11.0 Appeals against internal assessments

Pembrokeshire College is committed to ensuring that whenever staff assess the work of candidates for external qualifications, this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the specification for the qualification concerned. Assessments are carried out by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills. When an assessment of a piece of work is divided between staff, internal moderation and standardisation will ensure consistency. Pupils work must be authenticated according to the requirements of the relevant awarding body.

candidate feels that these procedures have not been carried out in relation to his/her work they should first discuss the matter with the subject tutor. If the problem cannot be resolved in this way, the candidate may use the following formal internal appeals procedure. Note that appeals may only be made against the process that led to the assessment and not against the mark or grade submitted by the centre for moderation by the awarding body.

Appeals should be made in writing by 30th June to the head of centre (or other nominee) who will decide whether the process used conformed to the necessary requirements.

The head of centre's findings will be notified in writing, copies to the Senior Exams office and recorded for awarding body inspection.

The centre is obliged to publish a separate policy on this subject, this is available upon request from the Head of Safeguarding and Learner Services.

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## 12.0 Results, enquiries about results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS)

### 12.1 Results

The provision of staff on results day is the responsibility of the Senior Exams Officer.

All individual candidate statements of results will be available for collection by the candidates on results day.

A third party can only collect results with written authorisation from the candidate. Those not collected will be posted to candidates' permanent home addresses.

All results will be copied to course tutors for their subject.

### 12.2 EARs

EARs for general qualifications may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking.

When the candidate initiates the enquiry they will be required to pay the appropriate fees. In either case the candidate must sign a consent for the EAR and be aware that marks can go down as well as up.

### 12.3 ATS (applicable to general qualifications only)

After the release of results of general qualifications, candidates may request the return of photocopy of papers within three days' scrutiny of the results.

If a result is queried, the Senior Exams Officer in conjunction with teaching staff or head of centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark.

Candidates may request the return of the original script at their cost for personal use/interest.

Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained or the scripts used anonymously. Any script must be requested by the board deadlines and the fees paid or approved by Heads of School.

Senior Exams Officer will order scripts via the exam board secure website.

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## 13.0 Malpractice

Malpractice means any act, default or practice which is a breach of the regulations or compromises the integrity of any qualification.

Various types of malpractice include centre staff malpractice, candidate malpractice and failure by a centre to investigate allegations of suspected malpractice in accordance with the requirements of the JCQ also constitute malpractice.

In the first instance the head of centre must report to the appropriate awarding body at the earliest opportunity all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. The only exception to this is malpractice discovered in coursework before the authentication forms have been by the candidate.

The procedure as set out in the JCQ Suspected Malpractice in Exams and Assessments Policies and Procedures document for the relative academic year should be followed.

## 14.0 Certificates

Certificates are posted to candidate's away address (second class).

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so.

Certificates are not withheld from candidates who owe fees.

The centre retains certificates for a minimum of 12 months from the date of issue up to a maximum of three years.

Replacement certificates can be ordered but if the college has not been informed of a candidate's change of address, then the candidate must will have to pay.



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## 15.0 The Welsh Language

Certificates are posted to candidate's away address (second class).

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so.

Certificates are not withheld from candidates who owe fees.

The centre retains certificates for a minimum of 12 months from the date of issue up to a maximum of three years.

Replacement certificates can be ordered but if the college has not been informed of a candidate's change of address, then the candidate must will have to pay.