



Key reminders

for heads of centre and senior leaders responsible for exams

Bulletin no. 1 - November 2024

Heads of centre and senior leaders responsible for exams play a vital role in a school or college. We would like to thank you for your work supporting your students and your exams officer and for helping to protect the integrity of examinations and assessments.

Key reminders

JCQ inspections



JCQ inspects schools and colleges to ensure JCQ guidance is understood and implemented correctly. These inspections are designed to be supportive.



To support your exams officer:

- Ensure your exams officer has a copy of the report from your last inspection.**
- If the inspector raised any issues, work with your exams officer to ensure these have now been addressed.**

Policies



The policies required for inspection purposes can be found on page 15 of the JCQ document **General Regulations for Approved Centres**. These will need to be reviewed and updated, if necessary, for the 2024/25 academic year.

JCQ documentation



We update our documentation on an annual basis, with new versions published in September.

The documents which are relevant to senior leaders are:



- A guide to the special consideration process**
- Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments**
- AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications**
- General Regulations for Approved Centres**
- Instructions for conducting coursework**
- Instructions for conducting examinations**
- Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments**
- Suspected Malpractice – Policies and Procedures**

The changes are highlighted in yellow in each document so you can quickly see what has changed from year to year.

Cyber security



Schools and colleges are particularly vulnerable to cyber attacks and it is vital that your cyber security is up to date.

The National Cyber Security Centre has:



- Information for senior leaders in schools and colleges**
- Free training**

January 2025 exams



If your school or college is running exams in January, now is the time to make sure everything is in place.



- ✓ **Check with your exams officer that there are enough trained invigilators in place**
- ✓ **Check that candidates requiring access arrangements have been identified**
- ✓ **Check that readers, scribes and any other adjustments are in place**
- ✓ **Check that there is a written procedure in place which details how the identity of all candidates sitting examinations will be confirmed**

Summer 2025 exams



We know that running exams in the summer involves a lot of preparation and work from senior leaders, exams officers, SENCOs and other staff.



- ✓ **Exam planning**
The autumn term is a good time to start considering invigilator recruitment, the provision of readers, scribes and alternative rooms, and whether there are any candidates sitting exams off-site next summer.

- ✓ **Resilience arrangements**
Collecting evidence of student performance will mean that qualifications could still be awarded should there be a national incident affecting exams. The qualification regulators have published guidance (see below) on ensuring resilience in the qualifications system.

Centres in England should refer to the document published by **Ofqual**.

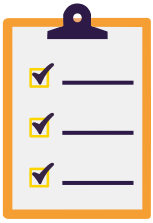
Centres in Wales taking WJEC qualifications should refer to the document published by **Qualifications Wales**.

Centres in Northern Ireland taking CCEA qualifications should refer to the document published by **CCEA Regulation**.

(For other awarding bodies' qualifications taken by Northern Ireland centres, the respective resilience guidance should be followed.)

Students should sit mock exams in exam conditions and their papers collected and stored securely.

Summer 2025 exams (continued)



Internal deadlines for entries and modified paper orders

It is important that your centre has set internal deadlines for subject departments to provide entry data to the exams officer. Heads of Department/Faculty need to be aware of these internal deadlines and do their best to make sure the teachers in their department adhere to them.

Look out for our infographic later this term to help centres get their entries right first time and prevent problems during the summer exam series.

Internal deadlines will also need to be set for identifying those students requiring modified papers. Orders must be submitted to the awarding bodies by no later than **31 January 2025**.



Terminal rule requirements for VTQs known as Tech Awards

If you are a school or college offering Vocational Technical Qualifications, known as Tech Awards, it is vital that you and your staff understand the terminal rule. A student must take at least 40% of the assessment by examination in the series in which they will certificate.

The awarding bodies' websites have more information on the rule and examples.

- [City & Guilds](#)
- [NCFE](#)
- [OCR](#)
- [Pearson](#)
- [WJEC](#)

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