Joint Council for Qualifications CIC

General Regulations for Approved Centres

General and Vocational qualifications

Effective from 1 September 2026

For the attention of heads of centre,
senior leaders and examinations officers

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Contents

Key changes for 2026 – 27 1

1 About these regulations 2

2 Who must read these regulations? 5

3 The agreement between centres and awarding bodies 6

- Prospective centres 7
- Centre status 8
- Confidentiality 8
- Retention of candidates' work 9
- Resilience and contingency arrangements 10
- Cyber security 11
- Communication 12

4 The responsibilities of awarding bodies 13

- Administrative support for centres 13
- Issuing results and certificates 13
- Feedback from centres 14
- Subject-specific support for centres 14

5 The responsibilities of centres 15

- Centre management 15
- Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments 19
- Entries and registrations 20
- Centre-assessed work 21
- Candidate information 22
- Conducting examinations and assessments 23
- Malpractice 23
- Results 24
- Post-results services and appeals 24
- Certificates 24

6 Personal data, freedom of information and copyright 26

- Personal data 26
- Freedom of information 27
- Copyright 27
- Student Materials 27
- Use of Student Materials for essential awarding body activities 28
- Additional permitted uses of Student Materials 28
- Candidate notice and opt-out 28

7 Contacts 29

Key changes for 2026 – 27

Page number	Section	Paragraph	Summary of change
2 and 3	1	1.6	This document now covers Cambridge OCR Level 3 Award qualifications, WJEC General Foundation qualifications and WJEC VCSE qualifications.
3	1	1.10	Where an action letter is issued by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service, the head of centre must ensure that arrangements are put in place within the centre, in accordance with the timeframes and process set out in the action letter, to prevent any reoccurrence of the issue(s).
4 and 20	1 and 5	1.10 and 5.5	Failure to comply with awarding body requirements, including JCQ regulations, may be treated as malpractice and could ultimately lead to the withdrawal of qualification or centre approval.
11	3	3.38 (a)	A record of completed cyber security training must be held on file for inspection. The record could take the form of a certificate, a paper checklist, a spreadsheet-based checklist or a Learning Management System (LMS) report.
11	3	3.38 (c)	Where MFA is not available on the centre's systems, an equivalent multilayered security approach must be in place. For example, strong login controls, access and monitoring controls and secure storage so that exam-related data is protected in line with cyber security best practice.
15	5	5.3 (b)	Teachers must review all the candidate's work in its entirety and determine the mark it warrants, regardless of the outcomes of an AI tool. The teacher remains responsible for the mark/grade awarded. This is subject to any further guidance published by the regulators.
16	5	5.3 (j)	The requirement to manage conflicts of interest and inform awarding bodies also extends to centre staff conducting internally assessed or externally assessed Speaking, Listening or Oracy components/units.
18	5	5.3 (x)	A centre must have in place a written cyber security policy which is available for inspection.
22	5	5.7 (g)	In relation to controlled assessment, coursework and non-examination assessment components/units, the centre must declare any possible conflict of interest to the relevant awarding body before the published deadline for entries for each examination series, i.e. where a member of staff assesses a candidate with whom they have a close personal relationship.
27 and 28	6	6.15 to 6.24	New wording relating to student materials, use of student materials for essential awarding body activities, additional permitted uses of student materials, candidate notice and opt-out.

1 About these regulations

1.1 These regulations have been produced to ensure that the integrity and security of the examination/assessment system is always maintained and is not brought into disrepute. The regulations adhere to the requirements of the qualification regulators in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland.

1.2 Centres should note that any reference to 'JCQ' or 'Joint Council for Qualifications' within this document should be read as JCQ[CIC] or the Joint Council for Qualifications[CIC].

1.3 Heads of centre **must** familiarise themselves with the entire contents of this document along with senior leadership teams and exams office personnel.

1.4 Changes made to the contents of this document since the previous version (1 September 2025 to 31 August 2026) are highlighted in yellow for easy identification and the principal changes have been listed on page 1.

1.5 The *General Regulations* cover:

a) the agreement between centres and awarding bodies (Section 3);

b) the responsibilities of awarding bodies in providing administrative, subject-specific assessment and quality assurance support for centres (Section 4);

c) the responsibilities of centres during preparations for examinations/assessments and post-examination/assessment activities (Section 5);

d) obligations arising from current data protection, equality and freedom of information legislation. (Centres should not just rely on the *General Regulations* to ensure compliance with the legislation.) (Section 6).

A centre is required to have confirmed its readiness to adhere to these regulations when first approved as a centre (see paragraphs 3.8 – 3.12).

1.6 These regulations apply to the following qualifications:

- AEA
- AQA Applied General qualifications
- AQA Level 2 Certificate in Further Maths
- AQA Level 3 Certificate in Mathematical Studies
- BTEC qualifications (BTEC Firsts, BTEC Technicals, BTEC Nationals, BTEC Tech Awards)
- Cambridge Advanced Nationals
- Cambridge Nationals
- Cambridge OCR Level 3 Award
- Cambridge Technicals
- CCEA Level 1, 2 and 3 non-general qualifications
- CCEA Level 3 Awards
- City & Guilds Level 2 and Level 3 Technical qualifications
- Edexcel Awards
- Edexcel International GCSE
- ELC
- FSMQ
- GCE (AS, A level)
- GCSE
- NCFE AIQ Level 1/2 Technical Awards (from November 2026)
- NCFE CACHE Level 1/2 Technical Awards
- NCFE CACHE Level 3 Applied General Awards, Certificates, Diplomas and Extended Diplomas

- NCFE CACHE Level 3 Technical Diplomas and Technical Extended Diplomas
- NCFE V-Cert Level 1/2 Technical Awards
- OCR Level 3 Certificates
- Projects (including the Extended Project)
- T Level Technical Qualifications
- TQUK Design, Engineer and Construct! qualifications
- WJEC General Foundation qualifications
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 General qualifications
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational Awards
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational Awards (Technical Awards)
- WJEC Level 3 Applied Certificates, Diplomas and Extended Diplomas (including Alternative Academic Qualifications)
- WJEC VCSE qualifications

1.7 Centres **must** conduct examinations and assessments in accordance with the *General Regulations* and, where relevant, the following JCQ documents:

a) *A guide to the special consideration process;*

b) *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments;*

c) *AI Use in Assessments: Your role in protecting the integrity of qualifications;*

d) *Guidance for centres on cyber security;*

e) *Instructions for conducting coursework;*

f) *Instructions for conducting examinations;*

g) *Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (GCE and GCSE specifications);*

h) *Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (Vocational and Technical Qualifications);*

i) *Notice to Centres – Informing candidates of their centre-assessed marks;*

j) *Plagiarism in Assessments – Guidance for Teachers/Assessors;*

k) *Suspected Malpractice – Policies and Procedures.*

JCQ documents may be supplemented from time to time by separate subject-specific instructions from the awarding bodies.

1.8 For the purposes of this document, an examination or assessment centre (the centre) is approved by one or more of the awarding bodies for the delivery of their qualifications.

1.9 All heads of centres will be required to confirm, on an annual basis, that they are both aware of and adhering to the latest version of these regulations. This confirmation is managed as part of the National Centre Number Register (NCNR) Head of Centre declaration survey (see paragraph 5.3).

A head of centre **must not** delegate this responsibility to a member of the senior leadership team or the examinations officer.

1.10 Heads of centres **must** ensure that relevant members of staff respond promptly to requests and/or actions raised by the JCQ Centre 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.

Where an action letter is issued by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service, the head of centre **must** ensure that arrangements are put in place within the centre, in accordance with the timeframes and process set out in the action letter, to prevent any recurrence of the issue(s).

Failure to respond to the NCNR annual update, the head of centre declaration and/or requests or actions raised by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service will result in:

- your centre status being suspended;
- your centre not being able to submit examination entries; and
- not receiving or being able to access question papers.

Failure to comply with awarding body requirements, including JCQ regulations, may be treated as malpractice and could ultimately lead to the withdrawal of qualification or centre approval.

1.11 Heads of centres **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.

1.12 Centres **must** promptly report any incidents to the relevant awarding body/bodies which might compromise any aspect of assessment delivery, such as a cyber attack.

2 Who must read these regulations?

2.1 These regulations apply to centres that have been approved by at least one of the JCQ awarding bodies **and** will be entering candidates for any of the qualifications, as defined in **paragraph 1.6.**

Prospective centres **must** familiarise themselves with this document.

2.2 They **must** be read, and referred to, by:

a) the head of centre;

b) members of the senior leadership team;

c) the examinations officer.

2.3 **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 security and integrity of the examinations/ assessments. This individual **must** have the authority to deploy the necessary resources to ensure that the centre is always compliant with published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements.

2.4 **The examinations 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.

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

2.6 **The head of centre and/or examinations 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 (see paragraph 5.3a). The head of centre **must** ensure that these arrangements are covered by their examination contingency plan (see paragraph 5.3x).

3 The agreement between centres and awarding bodies

3.1 The approval of a centre by an awarding body signals the start of a contractual relationship which is governed by the contract between the awarding body and the centre and these regulations and any other documents published by the JCQ, the awarding bodies or the regulators.

Approval with one awarding body does not imply, and will not necessarily lead to, approval with another.

3.2 Approved centres **must** be able to meet the conditions set out in these regulations and any specific qualification criteria.

3.3 Where a centre uses a third party to deliver any part of a qualification (including the assessments or the administration), it **must** maintain oversight of, and responsibility for, the delivery and administration of the qualification in accordance with these regulations, awarding body requirements and the regulator's Conditions of Recognition.

3.4 The centre **must** monitor that the third party has appropriate capacity and capabilities to comply with its arrangements for the delivery of all qualifications.

3.5 The centre **must** have in place a **robust** written agreement with the third party that includes provisions which ensure that qualifications are delivered in a way that complies with their agreement with the awarding body. This will ensure the third party is aware of what is required of them and there is a shared understanding of the arrangement. This will manage the risk of failure by the third party to deliver the expected service. The centre **must** ensure that a copy of the written agreement is available for inspection if requested by the awarding body.

3.6 The centre **must** monitor 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. Sufficient managerial and other resources must be in place to resolve any issues.

3.7 The table below identifies examples of the key third party arrangements that **must** be covered under paragraphs 3.3 to 3.6 above, along with acceptable exclusions. This is not an exhaustive list.

A third party arrangement is where a centre or awarding body arranges for a third party to undertake on its behalf any part of the development, delivery or award of qualifications, which the awarding body makes available, or proposes to make available.

Third party arrangements	Exclusions from third party arrangements
Teaching and learning conducted by a third party.	Arrangements with another centre on the NCNR standard register, e.g. consortium arrangements; teachers employed through an agency as a temporary arrangement to cover staff absence. A teacher examiner conducting an MFL Speaking assessment contracted directly by the centre.
Marking/grading and authentication of candidates' work which will be submitted to awarding bodies and will contribute to the awarding of a component/unit or overall qualification.	Arrangements with another centre on the NCNR standard register, e.g. consortium arrangements.
Support services provided by third parties for the administration of examinations and assessments.	Administrative staff contracted directly by the centre.
Support services provided by third parties – invigilation, facilitation of access arrangements, e.g. readers and scribes.	Invigilators and those facilitating access arrangements, e.g. readers and scribes, contracted directly by the centre.
Assessors for candidates with learning difficulties requiring access arrangements/reasonable adjustments.	An access arrangements assessor who has been contracted directly by the centre to assess candidates with learning difficulties.

Third Party arrangements **do not** include:

- arrangements that are not for the purposes of delivering, assessing or supporting examinations/assessments as detailed above;
- arrangements between candidates and third parties, e.g. tutors;
- an approved centre which has multiple sites, such as college campuses.

Prospective centres

3.8 Prospective centres **must** contact each awarding body whose qualifications they wish to offer in order to gain centre approval. Details of an awarding body's centre approval process will be found on their website.

3.9 Approval **must** be in place before enrolling students on a course. Until approval has been granted, the prospective centre cannot make registrations or candidate entries or be given access to an awarding body's assessment and support material.

3.10 The centre approval process is a robust and rigorous one. Applicants should not assume they will be successful.

3.11 A checklist for prospective centres can be found on the JCQ website: **https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Are-you-ready-Checklist-CoA_CoSS.pdf**

The prospective centre **must** ensure that it meets all the requirements before seeking centre approval.

3.12 As part of the centre approval process, an awarding body may undertake additional checks of the prospective centre.

3.13 Once a centre has been approved it will be subject to a probationary period of two years, which may be extended. The centre will receive a variety of centre inspections during the probationary period.

3.14 If a centre **does not** meet the requirements during the two-year probationary period, its approval will be reviewed by the awarding bodies, who will take appropriate action to secure compliance, including, where necessary, applying sanctions. Where a centre remains non-compliant even after intervention, approval may be withdrawn.

Centre status

3.15 A centre **must** have:

a) clear and permanent signage outside the main building, including the name of the centre as registered with the awarding bodies. This must be visible from the road for visitors, including JCQ Centre Inspectors, and to facilitate the delivery and collection of assessment materials;

b) a reception where appropriate centre staff are available Monday to Friday between 8.30 am and 3.30 pm during term time;

c) designated members of centre staff, available Monday to Friday, 8.30 am to 3.30 pm, to receive deliveries of confidential examination/assessment material and/or accompany a JCQ Centre Inspector or awarding body representative. AQA, Cambridge OCR, CCEA, NCFE, Pearson and WJEC will reject any application for centre approval where it is intended to operate a centre from a private residential address;

d) a secure storage facility in a room solely assigned to examinations, as described in section 3 of the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations;*

e) appropriate accommodation at the registered address to support the size of the cohorts being taught, including appropriate accommodation for candidates requiring access arrangements and/or practical assessments.

Where a centre is located in a shared building, all of the centre (including the areas referred to in the above points) **must** be located in a self-contained area of the building.

3.16 It is **not** permissible for a centre to be approved purely for administrative purposes in order to take question papers to an alternative site.

3.17 An awarding body reserves the right to withdraw centre approval, either for the delivery of a specific qualification or for all qualifications, at any time, if the centre has not complied with any part of the awarding body's requirements in force at that time. An awarding body additionally reserves the right to withdraw centre approval where continued approval would bring the examination/assessment system into disrepute. The awarding body reserves the right to notify other awarding bodies and the regulator of such actions.

3.18 The awarding bodies reserve the right to withdraw approval of those centres which do not meet the awarding body's current approval criteria, fail to address issues raised during an inspection or who fail to respond to the National Centre Number Register annual update.

3.19 The awarding bodies will review the approval of centres that have not submitted candidate registrations or entries for two consecutive years.

3.20 If the centre is at risk of closing or is intending to close, it **must** take all reasonable steps to protect the interests of the candidates. The centre **must** also notify **each** of the awarding bodies it is approved with. The awarding body will take all reasonable steps to protect the interests of the candidates.

3.21 Centre approval does not automatically allow a centre to state or imply awarding body approval in published material or online. Permission **must** be sought from the relevant awarding body/bodies. This also extends to the use of an awarding body's logo.

Confidentiality

3.22 The centre will:

a) keep confidential the names, addresses and contact details of examiners, moderators, external verifiers and any other awarding body examining/assessment personnel. This also extends to email addresses of awarding body/JCQ personnel;

b) **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);

c) keep confidential the centre's employment of, in any capacity, any current or former JCQ Centre Inspectors, awarding body examiners, moderators, awarders, external verifiers or other examining personnel, and not mention them in any form of literature issued in connection with the centre's programmes of assessment.

3.23 The centre may share information and data with other centres which are members of the same consortium or academy trust provided it complies with these confidentiality obligations and data protection legislation. All centres which are part of the consortium or academy trust **must** be aware of these obligations.

The centres in the consortium or academy trust **must** satisfy themselves that any sharing of personal data is lawful and carried out in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council, i.e. UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

Retention of candidates' work

3.24 The awarding bodies will:

a) unless otherwise stated, return hard copy centre-assessed work to centres after the publication of results;

b) reserve the right to retain samples of centre-assessed work for archive purposes, even where hard copy candidate work is normally returned to centres, and to retain all centre-assessed work, scripts and associated materials which have been the subject of a malpractice investigation or appeal;

c) assume ownership of all written scripts, candidates' work submitted electronically, recordings of speaking tests and recordings of performances carried out under formal examination conditions and will not return externally-assessed non-examination assessments (including controlled assessments and coursework) or examination scripts to centres, except where requested under access to scripts arrangements;

d) retain examples of scripts and associated materials to demonstrate standards and for reference by awarders in future years;

e) allow centres to return to candidates their portfolios of evidence of achievement following verification, subject to any retention periods set by the awarding body;

f) dispose of all remaining candidates' work in a confidential manner.

3.25 It is the responsibility of centres to:

a) keep live non-examination assessments, including controlled assessments, coursework and portfolios, secure and confidential at all times whilst in their possession. It is **not** acceptable for teaching staff to share the live work of candidates with other candidates. Live non-examination assessment, including controlled assessments and coursework, is defined as any work on a topic which has been set either by an awarding body or the centre for a current or future examination series even if the work was completed in a previous year;

b) store safely and securely all non-examination assessments, including controlled assessments, coursework or portfolios, retained in or returned to the centre until the deadline for a review of moderation has passed or until a review of moderation, an appeal or a malpractice investigation has been completed, whichever is later. This includes materials stored electronically. See paragraph 4.8 of the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments*: **https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/non-examination-assessments**

c) 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.

Resilience and contingency arrangements

3.26 Centres **must** ensure they are familiar with the relevant regulator's 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.

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

3.28 Centres in England should refer to the document published by Ofqual:
***Guidance on collecting evidence of student performance to ensure resilience in the qualifications system* - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)**

3.29 Centres in Wales should refer to the document published by Qualifications Wales:
contingency-assessment-arrangements-guidance-nov-22-final-eng.pdf

3.30 Centres in Northern Ireland should refer to the document published by CCEA Regulation:
https://ccea.org.uk/downloads/docs/regulation-asset/Information%20for%20Awarding%20Organisations/Resilience%20Guidance%20for%20General%20Qualifications%20-%20June%202024.pdf

3.31 All centres **must** have in place, and at all times comply with, 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.

3.32 The plan must cover the following scenarios:

a) the head of centre, relevant senior leader(s) with oversight of examination and assessment administration, SENCo/ALNCo, examinations officer or any other key staff essential to the examination process being absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle;

b) the potential impact of other events, such as flooding, which could lead to all or parts of the centre becoming unavailable;

c) potential issues with the centre's IT systems.

3.33 As part of their contingency plan centres **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.

3.34 The following guidance will provide a framework for senior leaders to build and shape a plan/policy in light of their local circumstances:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland

Preparing for disruption to examinations - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications

3.35 Each 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.

3.36 Centres **must** ensure where candidates' work is produced electronically it is backed up.

They should consider the contingency of candidates' work being backed up on two separate devices, including one off-site back-up via the Cloud. A reputable Cloud provider should be appointed who implements robust security measures. Centres must implement appropriate security arrangements which protect candidates' work in the event of IT system corruption and cyber attacks.

Cyber security

3.37 The awarding bodies will maintain high standards of cyber security to:

a) safeguard sensitive information provided by centres, including personal candidate data;

b) protect the integrity of secure electronic assessment materials.

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

a) ensuring that all members of centre staff who access awarding bodies' online systems undertake annual cyber security training. Suitable training resources can be found on the website of the National Cyber Security Centre:
Cyber security training for school staff - NCSC.GOV.UK

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; **https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/blog-post/ncsc-cyber-security-training-for-staff-now-available**
- the importance of staff quickly reporting any suspicious activity, events, incidents and encouraging a safe and supportive reporting culture.

A record of completed cyber security training must be held on file for inspection. This record could take the form of a certificate, a paper checklist, a spreadsheet-based checklist or a Learning Management System (LMS) report.

b) 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;

c) implementing and enforcing robust security measures, including:

- where available, MFA must be used 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. Where MFA is not available on the centre's systems, an equivalent multi-layered security approach must be in place. For example, strong log-in controls, access and monitoring controls and secure storage so that exam-related data is protected in line with cyber security best practice;
- regularly reviewing and updating security settings to align with current best practices;

d) updating any passwords that may have been exposed;

e) setting up secure account recovery options;

f) reviewing and managing connected applications;

g) monitoring accounts and regularly reviewing account access, including removing access when no longer required;

h) 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*: **https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations**

Authorised staff will have access, where necessary, to a device which complies with awarding bodies' MFA requirements;

i) reporting any actual or suspected compromise of an awarding body's online systems **immediately** to the relevant awarding body.

Communication

3.39 Centres **must** provide appropriate support and information to parents and candidates, including private candidates, where required. This would include, for example, information about access arrangements, special consideration and post-results services.

3.40 Centres should not advise parents/candidates to contact awarding bodies/JCQ directly. If contacted, the awarding body/JCQ will normally direct the parent/candidate back to the centre.

3.41 Correspondence on any aspect of a candidate's examination or assessment will be conducted between the awarding body and the appropriate member of centre staff.

3.42 In **exceptional circumstances** an awarding body may communicate directly with a parent or candidate. For example, where the parent wishes to make a formal complaint and has exhausted the centre's own complaints process.

3.43 Private candidates may approach an awarding body regarding the availability of past papers, post-results services and appeals.

4 The responsibilities of awarding bodies

4.1 The awarding bodies will make their processes with centres clear and streamlined, as required by the qualification regulators.

Administrative support for centres

4.2 The awarding bodies will:

a) provide documentation and effective guidance on a centre's responsibilities when managing, administering and assuring the quality of an examination or qualification;

b) issue moderation or verification procedures that they will undertake (or that will be undertaken on their behalf) which allow for the marking of assessments by centres to be monitored, ensure assessments meet the required standards and allow for any adjustments to marks/grades to be made;

c) provide dates of examinations, key dates for examination administration, administrative guides, question papers and examination materials;

d) inform centres how to submit registrations and entries, and process centres' registrations and entries;

(Centres should note that the acceptance of candidate entries and/or registrations by an awarding body, including private candidates, **does not** mean that a legal relationship has been entered into between the awarding body and those candidates.)

e) provide general procedures and documentation relating to the administration and conduct of controlled assessments, coursework, non-examination assessments and portfolios;

f) provide, where relevant, subject-specific instructions and documentation;

g) provide, through the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations*, instructions for the conduct of written and on-screen examinations;

h) process applications for access arrangements and reasonable adjustments, as referred by centres, in line with the JCQ document *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*. Applications will be processed efficiently and within the relevant timescales;

i) ensure that nothing in the instructions that they may issue shall in any way affect the responsibility of the centre for health, safety and safe working under current legislation and local government by-laws. Any local requirements **must** be followed by the centre;

j) publish customer service statements and monitor their performance;

k) assist centres to carry out their procedures correctly and ensure that awarding body instructions are followed.

Issuing results and certificates

4.3 The awarding bodies will:

a) issue results to centres via A2C and/or awarding body secure extranet sites on the published dates;

b) issue certificates which are presented clearly and reflect the full name of the candidate entered with the awarding body at the time of the examination series;

c) issue certificates in a new name following individual exceptional circumstances, such as gender reassignment, or a released prisoner being given a new identity, or a witness protection case, upon receipt of appropriate documentation. The documentation will be treated in the strictest of confidence;

d) report the outcome of reviews of results and appeals;

e) hold an archive of candidates' results.

Feedback from centres

4.4 The awarding bodies will provide a mechanism for receiving and responding to comments from centres and others about their examinations and assessments.

Subject-specific support for centres

4.5 The awarding bodies will:

a) provide advance notice of the withdrawal of qualifications, subjects or units;

b) provide detailed specifications for each qualification offered;

c) provide access to specialist advice and guidance;

d) provide appropriate support materials;

e) offer a programme of training for specifications;

f) respond to requests for information or advice about any aspect of specification delivery.

4.6 All specifications and related services are provided in accordance with the requirements of the appropriate regulators.

5 The responsibilities of centres

Centre management

5.1 The head of centre must ensure:

a) compliance with the published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements to deliver the qualification(s);

b) 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;

c) all reasonable steps are taken to respond promptly to requests for information or documentation made by an awarding body or regulatory authority.

5.2 Centres **must** have internet access to enable them to make full use of the awarding bodies' extranet sites.

5.3 It is the responsibility of the **head of centre** to ensure that their centre:

Recruitment, selection, training and support

a) 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.

b) provides fully qualified teachers/assessors for the verification and marking of centre-assessed components;

The head of centre must also ensure teaching staff do not use AI tools as the sole or primary means of marking candidates' work. Teachers must review all the work in its entirety and determine the mark it warrants using their own professional judgement regardless of the outcomes of an AI tool. The teacher remains responsible for the mark/grade awarded. This is subject to any further guidance published by the regulators.

c) enables the relevant senior leader(s), teachers, the examinations officer and the SENCo (or an equivalent member of staff, such as an ALNCo) 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;

The SENCo, the centre's appointed access arrangements assessor and the examinations officer **must** all undertake regular CPD, such as attending an annual update course.

The head of centre **must** ensure 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;
- the examinations officer understands relevant awarding body and JCQ documentation and has sufficient time to perform their role;
- 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;
- 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.

External and internal governance arrangements

d) 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;

e) 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 of the examinations officer to ensure that the integrity and security of examinations and assessments are maintained throughout an examination series;

f) can confirm to an awarding body their 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

g) 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;

h) enables candidates to receive sufficient and up-to-date practical experience or relevant training where required by the subject;

Public liability

i) complies with local health and safety rules which are in place and that the centre is adequately covered for public liability claims;

Conflicts of interest

j) manages conflicts of interest **by informing the awarding bodies**, before the published deadline for entries for each examination series, of:

- any members of centre staff who are taking qualifications at their own centre which include 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. This requirement also extends to centre staff conducting internally assessed or externally assessed Speaking, Listening or Oracy components/units.

maintains internal records 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 the centre itself or other centres;
- centre staff are taking qualifications at their own centre which **do not** include internally-assessed components/units;
- centre staff are taking qualifications at other centres.

The head of centre **must** retain up-to-date 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.

Heads of centres should note 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.

The head of centre is responsible for ensuring that 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.

The head of centre **must** ensure that 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.

Controlled assessments, coursework and non-examination assessments

k) 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;**

l) 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

m) takes all reasonable steps to maintain the integrity of the examinations/ assessments, including:

- ensuring the security of all assessment materials;
- 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 of the centre;
- reporting **immediately** to the awarding body/bodies any potential or actual breach of examination or assessment materials.

n) 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 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 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;
- give 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

o) 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.

p) completes the National Centre Number Register annual update **by the end of October** every year even if there are no changes to centre details (the Register is administered by Cambridge OCR on behalf of the JCQ awarding bodies AQA, Cambridge OCR, CCEA, City & Guilds, NCFE, Pearson and WJEC);

q) 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;

r) informs the National Centre Number Register Team (email address – **ncn@ocr.org.uk**) **no later than 6 weeks prior to moving to a new address or relocation of the secure storage facility**. This **must** be on centre headed stationery which can be sent as an email attachment; (As a result of this notification a centre inspection will take place.)

s) informs the National Centre Number Register Team **immediately** of any other changes in circumstances that could affect their centre status;

t) completes 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;

u) responds to any other reasonable requests made by the National Centre Number Register Team;

Centre inspections

v) 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 timeframe;

w) allows all venues used for examinations and assessments, paperwork and secure storage facilities to be open to inspection. 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

x) has in place the following 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 conflicts of interest policy;
- a contingency plan which covers all aspects of examination/assessment administration and delivery;
- a cyber security policy;
- a data protection policy;
- an equalities policy;
- 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 with reference to the JCQ document *A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes*;

- a malpractice policy which covers all qualifications delivered by the centre with reference to the JCQ document S*uspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures.* 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, which includes details on how candidates' work will be authenticated with reference to the JCQ documents *Instructions for conducting coursework and Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments*. (For CCEA GCSE centres this would be a written controlled assessments policy.)
- a whistleblowing policy;
- a policy on the use of word processors in examinations.

Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments

5.4 The head of centre/senior leadership team will:

a) appoint a SENCo, or equivalent member of staff, to coordinate the access arrangements process within the centre and determine and implement appropriate arrangements for candidates with learning difficulties or disabilities, those for whom English is an additional language and those with a temporary illness or injury;

b) 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;

c) recognise their 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;

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

d) 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;

e) 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;

f) 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;*

g) 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;

h) ensure any applications for access arrangements or reasonable adjustments are submitted **by the published deadline** as listed in the JCQ document *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*. 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;

i) ensure a file is presented **by the SENCo,** 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);

j) ensure requests for modified papers are submitted **by the published deadline** as listed in the JCQ document *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments;*

k) ensure there are appropriate resources in place at the time of examinations/ assessments to meet candidates' needs, e.g. sufficient readers and scribes.

5.5 The arrangements **must** be carried out in accordance with the JCQ document *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.*

If a JCQ centre inspection reveals deficient performance by a centre in respect of its role in requesting and/or implementing access arrangements, an awarding body will take decisive action. Failure to comply with awarding body requirements, including JCQ regulations, may be treated as malpractice and could ultimately lead to the withdrawal of qualification or centre approval.

Entries and registrations

5.6 The centre will:

a) follow each awarding body's terms and conditions for the registration, entry and timely withdrawal of candidates for their examinations and assessments. The centre **must** observe any regulatory requirements for the qualification;

b) accurately register or enter candidates for an examination or assessment in accordance with the awarding body's published procedures for that qualification;

c) submit registrations, examination entries and certification claims by the deadline(s) and comply with the requirements of the specification, including any terminal rules which must be met at the point of certification;

d) maintain a Unique Candidate Identifier (UCI) or Unique Learner Number (ULN) for each candidate entered for an examination or assessment and to ensure that the same UCI or ULN is used consistently for the candidate over time to enable aggregation of units and qualifications;
(see **https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/entries/unique-candidate-identifiers-uci/**)

e) enter candidates who are receiving tuition at the centre as internal candidates;

f) enter candidates who are **not** receiving any tuition at the centre as private candidates. A candidate who is resitting a qualification should be entered as a private candidate if they are not receiving any tuition at the time entries are submitted;

(A private candidate is responsible for their own entry, which **must** be made through an approved centre in the United Kingdom. A candidate **must not** be entered as both an internal and a private candidate at the same centre in the same examination series.)

Awarding bodies **do not** accept entries directly from private candidates; they will only accept entries made through an approved centre in the United Kingdom. A list of centres willing to accept entries from private candidates can be found on the JCQ website:
https://www.jcq.org.uk/private-candidates/

g) **not enter** candidates for a qualification at the same level and in the same subject multiple times in the same series (e.g. by entering a candidate for the same subject qualification with different awarding bodies). This includes Extended Project and Project qualifications. For example, a candidate **must not** be entered for AQA GCSE Mathematics and Cambridge OCR GCSE Mathematics in the same series. This is to manage the increased risk of security breaches due to inappropriate timetable variations and is also generally in the interests of candidates to avoid detrimental effects;

Multiple entries of Art and Design would be an allowed entry combination, even though all of the Art and Design specifications (except Photography) have the same QAN code at both GCSE, GCE AS and A level. Candidates are allowed to enter for all specifications (different types of Art and Design with different specification names) if they so wish.

Candidates may be entered for more than one WJEC Design and Technology entry combination, even though the Qualifications Wales Approval Number (QiW) is the same for all endorsed titles at GCSE and GCE;

h) pay fees as instructed and at the time specified by the awarding bodies;

i) submit any applications for transferred candidate arrangements in accordance with the JCQ document *Guidance notes concerning transferred candidates;*

j) verify the identity of all students that they enter for examinations or assessments. The centre **must** be satisfied that all candidate identities have been checked, whether as part of the initial registration process or, in the case of private candidates, through a verification process which involves photo-ID;

Candidates should be entered under names that can be verified against suitable identification, such as a birth certificate, a driver's licence or a passport, to prevent problems in the future. For example, if a candidate needs to confirm their results to a third party or obtain a replacement certificate. Whilst the centre is best placed to understand the candidate's circumstances and make an informed decision, a candidate should only be entered under alternative names in exceptional circumstances.

Centre-assessed work

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

5.7 The centre will:

a) ensure that where candidates are taking non-examination assessments, teaching staff check that the tasks being set and approach being taken are appropriate and in line with the awarding body's specification as well as ethical standards and the centre's safeguarding responsibilities;

b) notify awarding bodies 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;

c) use only **current** assessment materials/tasks to assess candidates' knowledge and skills (in cases where the awarding body provides such material);

d) 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;
(see **https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/non-examination-assessments/**)

e) ensure 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;

f) submit centre-assessed marks and moderation/verification 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;

g) declare any possible conflict of interest to the relevant awarding body before the published deadline for entries for each examination series, i.e. where a member of staff assesses a candidate with whom they have a close personal relationship. 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 or daughter). The candidate's work will be submitted for moderation whether or not it is part of the moderation sample;

h) have in place and be available for inspection 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;

i) have in place and be available for inspection purposes 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. (For CCEA GCSE centres, this would be a **written** controlled assessments policy.)

j) ensure that where candidates' work is produced electronically it is backed up. They should consider the contingency of candidates' work being backed up on two separate devices, including one off-site back-up via the Cloud. A reputable Cloud provider should be appointed who implements robust security measures. Centres must implement appropriate security arrangements which protect candidates' work in the event of IT system corruption and cyber attacks.

Candidate information

5.8 The centre will:

a) notify candidates, including any private candidates entered through the centre, of their examination entries and the dates and times of their examinations/ assessments;

b) ensure when conducting examinations that the JCQ *Unauthorised items* and *Warning to candidates* posters are displayed in a prominent place for all candidates to see prior to entering the examination room;

c) ensure that the JCQ *Information for candidates* documents AI (Artificial Intelligence and assessments), coursework, non-examination assessments, on-screen examinations, social media and written examinations and awarding body privacy notices are distributed to all candidates, whether electronically or in hard copy format, **prior** to assessments and/or examinations taking place.

These documents may be found at:
http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/information-for-candidates-documents

Candidates **must** also be made aware of the content of the JCQ *Unauthorised items* and *Warning to candidates* posters.

The JCQ *Information for candidates* documents can be placed on the centre's website and the respective link emailed to candidates, with an appropriately worded message. The centre should follow this up with a briefing session or a special assembly led by a senior member of staff. The briefing session would reinforce what candidates **must** and **must not** do when sitting written examinations and/or on-screen examinations, and when producing coursework and/or non-examination assessments.

Candidates may be provided with a copy of the *JCQ Information for candidates* documents in their first language.

d) ensure that all candidate data, where required by the awarding body, has been supplied within the terms of the General Data Protection Regulation, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and that candidates have been properly informed that this data has been transferred to the awarding bodies (see section 6 for more information);

e) draw to the attention of candidates and their parents/carers:

their **written** complaints policy, which will cover general complaints regarding the centre's delivery or administration of a qualification; **and**

their **written** internal appeals procedure which will cover appeals regarding internal assessment decisions, access to post-results services and appeals, and centre decisions relating to access arrangements and special consideration.

Conducting examinations and assessments

5.9 The centre will:

a) provide suitable accommodation and facilities for all examinations and assessments, including centre-assessed work, on-screen examinations, ensuring that the work submitted is that of the candidate alone using only the items/materials allowed;

b) provide fully trained invigilators for examinations, including on-screen examinations;

(When contracting supply staff to act as invigilators, the head of centre **must** ensure they are competent and fully trained, understanding what is and what is not permissible.)

c) provide fully trained Communication Professionals, Language Modifiers, practical assistants, prompters, readers and scribes for examinations, where permitted, in accordance with the JCQ document *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments;*

d) have in place **written** procedures to verify the identity of **all** candidates at the time of the examination or assessment;

e) conduct all examinations/assessments governed by these regulations in accordance with the following JCQ documents:

Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments, Instructions for conducting coursework, Instructions for conducting examinations, Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments;

f) inform the JCQ Centre Inspection Service, using the JCQ *Alternative Site form,* of any alternative sites, in accordance with the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations,* that will be used to conduct **timetabled** examination components/units in the qualifications listed in paragraph 1.6;

g) keep records for inspection purposes of all cases where overnight supervision is required, in accordance with the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations;*

h) submit declarations for very late arrival of candidates for examinations, in accordance with the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations;*

i) submit any applications for special consideration where candidates meet the published criteria in accordance with the JCQ document *A guide to the special consideration process.*

5.10 In relation to timetabled examinations and the handling of scripts, the centre **must** refer to the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations*:
https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations

Malpractice

5.11 The centre will:

a) take all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any malpractice (which includes maladministration) before, during and after assessments have taken place;

b) 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;

c) 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,* and provide such information and advice as the awarding body may reasonably require.

Results

5.12 The centre will:

a) keep results and grade boundaries entirely confidential and restricted to the head of centre, examinations office staff and, at the discretion of the head of centre, key members of teaching staff within the centre, the consortium or Multi Academy Trust, until the official dates and times of release of results to candidates. The centre should refer to the JCQ document *Notice to Centres – release of results*: **https://www.jcq.org.uk/exam-results-data**

b) report **immediately** to the awarding body/bodies any potential or actual breach of the results and/or grade boundaries;

c) distribute provisional statements of results to **all** candidates without delay and regardless of any disputes (such as non-payment of fees).

Centres are not permitted to withhold provisional results from candidates under any circumstances.

Post-results services and appeals

5.13 The centre will:

a) have in place **written** procedures for how it will deal with candidates' requests for access to scripts, clerical re-checks, reviews of marking, reviews of moderation and appeals to the awarding bodies. Details of these procedures **must** be made widely available and accessible to **all** candidates. Candidates **must** be made aware of the arrangements for post-results services prior to the issue of results;

b) ensure that senior members of centre staff are available immediately after the publication of results;

c) ensure that all internal candidates are made aware that all post-results service requests must be made through the centre;

d) ensure that all private candidates are made aware that requests for access to scripts, clerical re-checks and reviews of marking can be made directly through the relevant awarding body;

e) ensure that candidates have provided their **written consent** for clerical re-checks, reviews of marking, and any subsequent appeal, and access to scripts services offered by the awarding bodies **after** the publication of examination results;

f) submit requests electronically for clerical re-checks, reviews of marking and reviews of moderation **by the published deadline(s),** in accordance with the JCQ document *Post-results services*;

g) submit requests for appeals in accordance with the JCQ document *A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes;*

h) ensure outcomes of clerical re-checks, reviews of marking, reviews of moderation and appeals are made known to candidates as soon as possible;

i) **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;

(A centre may place their internal appeals procedure on their website, or alternatively, the document may be made available to candidates upon request.)

j) submit late subject awards for unitised qualifications **by the published deadline**.

Certificates

5.14 The centre will:

a) obtain and maintain accurate candidate contact information to ensure the correct and secure despatch of certificates;

b) distribute certificates to **all** candidates without delay and regardless of any disputes (such as non-payment of fees). **Certificates must not be withheld without prior permission from an awarding body, which will only be given in very exceptional circumstances.** A record should be kept of the certificates that are issued;

c) retain securely all unclaimed certificates for a minimum of 12 months from the date of issue;

d) destroy any unclaimed certificates after retaining them for a minimum of 12 months. They must be destroyed in a confidential manner. Centres that do not have a means of destroying certificates confidentially may return them to the respective awarding body. A record of certificates that have been destroyed should be retained for four years from their date of destruction. This record should list the candidate number, the awarding body, the qualification(s) and the examination series;

Candidates should be informed that some awarding bodies do not offer a replacement certificate service. In such circumstances the awarding body will issue a Certifying Statement of Results;

Where an awarding body issues a replacement certificate or a Certifying Statement of Results, this will provide an accurate and complete record of results for all qualifications covered by the original certificate.

e) return any certificates requested by the awarding bodies. Certificates always remain the property of the awarding bodies.

6 Personal data, freedom of information and copyright

Personal data

6.1 The delivery of examinations and assessments involves 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 GDPR 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 these *General Regulations* 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's Office in relation to such legislation.

6.2 The head of centre or a member of the senior leadership team **must** advise any person involved in administering, teaching or completing examinations/assessments 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*. Centres are required to identify and have in place a lawful basis for sharing such information and maintain relevant privacy notices as required by data protection legislation.

6.3 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). Additionally, candidates' personal data may be provided to a central record of qualifications approved by the awarding bodies for statistical and policy development purposes. Awarding bodies maintain a comprehensive archive record of candidates' examination results. The purpose is to provide an audit trail of the results certificated and to maintain an accurate record of an individual's achievements. It is the responsibility of centres to ensure that candidates are made aware of this and consent sought, where required.

6.4 The Learning Records Service (LRS) will provide learners aged 14 and over with a Unique Learner Number (ULN). An internet facility will provide and hold a ULN for every person in education and training aged 14 and over.

The ULN will remain with the learner for life, supporting the learner in building a record of their participation and achievements. Learners will be able to manage access to their own learning and achievement data, whilst awarding bodies will be able to publish and maintain a learner's achievement data.

6.5 Awarding bodies **must** make a copy of the personal data they hold on an individual available to them when requested, subject to the application of any relevant exemptions. Candidates and other individuals may obtain access to their personal data, such as examination results (see paragraph 5.12), by applying to the appropriate awarding body's data protection officer (see section 7 for contact details for each awarding body).

6.6 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 and gender, to the awarding bodies for the purpose of examining and awarding qualifications. Relevant privacy notices should be provided to candidates.

6.7 Data protection laws acknowledge that an examination certificate is a contemporaneous record of achievement. The fact that an individual's name might have changed since the date of issue of the certificate does not render it inaccurate for the purposes of the data protection legislation.

6.8 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.

Freedom of information

6.9 Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act), the general public is allowed access to any recorded information held by public authorities, unless such information is exempted in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

6.10 This means centres or awarding bodies that are public authorities within the meaning of the Act **must** consider requests for information in accordance with the provisions of the Act. Centres that are public authorities **must** consult with the relevant awarding bodies before disclosing, pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, any information received from an awarding body.

6.11 Centres and awarding bodies that are not public authorities (as defined by the Act) are not subject to the requirements of the Act. However, information held on behalf of other public authorities, such as DfE or Ofqual, will also fall within the scope of the Act. Centres and awarding bodies should co-operate with the relevant authority in respect of any request for such information.

Copyright

6.12 The copyright in all question papers, on-screen examinations, awarding body set assignments and pre-release materials as well as answer sheets, mark schemes, model answers and specifications created by an awarding body, belongs to that awarding body (save as otherwise specified by the awarding body). These comprise an awarding body's 'Assessment Materials'. Permission for a centre to use the awarding body's Assessment Materials are governed by the terms of the awarding body's agreement with the centre as referred to in paragraph 3.1.

6.13 For confidentiality purposes, unused question papers **must not** be released to any individual for use in accordance with paragraph 6.12 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 with an overnight supervision arrangement, unused question papers for that examination **must not** be released to any individual until the candidate has completed that examination.

This **does not** restrict access to question papers by authorised centre personnel for the purpose of conducting examinations.

6.14 Candidates should be informed that they may access Student Materials (including examination scripts) through the access to scripts arrangements set out in paragraph 5.13.

Student Materials

6.15 Materials that are submitted by candidates for assessment may include any form of written work, audio and visual materials, computer programs and data ('Student Materials'). The copyright in any Assessment Materials created by a candidate belongs to the candidate.

6.16 Each centre must ensure that candidates are informed that, by submitting Student Materials for assessment, the awarding body is entitled to use those Student Materials to the extent necessary to give effect to the assessment, qualification and regulatory framework, as set out below.

Use of student materials for essential awarding body activities

6.17 The awarding body is entitled to use Student Materials for the purpose of assessment and their Assessment Materials, including all activities that are essential to the operation of regulated qualifications.

6.18 This includes, without limitation, use of Student Materials (including by automated or AI-enabled tools and systems) for the purpose of improving, maintaining and assuring the quality, consistency and effectiveness of essential awarding body activities, such as:

a) marking and moderation;

b) standardisation;

c) grading and awarding; and

d) quality assurance and malpractice detection.

6.19 Use of Student Materials for the purposes set out in this section is mandatory and forms an integral part of the assessment and qualification process. **Candidates are not entitled to opt out of these uses.**

Additional permitted uses of Student Materials

6.20 In addition to the uses set out in paragraphs 6.17 to 6.18, the awarding body may also use Student Materials for the following purposes:

a) teacher and examiner training;

b) inclusion in examiner reports and similar assessment-related publications; and

c) research directly related to the awarding body's assessment, qualification and regulatory activities.

6.21 Before using Student Materials for the purposes set out in paragraph 6.20, the awarding body will ensure that such materials are anonymised so that candidates cannot be identified.

Candidate notice and opt-out

6.22 A candidate may notify the awarding body, by giving notice to their centre, that they wish to opt out of the awarding body's use of their Student Materials for the purposes set out in paragraph 6.20.

6.23 An opt-out under paragraph 6.22 does not apply to, and does not affect, the awarding body's rights to use Student Materials for the purposes set out in paragraphs 6.17 to 6.18.

6.24 Each centre must submit promptly to the relevant awarding body any opt-out notice received from a candidate.

7 Contacts

AQA
Devas Street
Manchester
M15 6EX

www.aqa.org.uk

Cambridge OCR
The Triangle Building
Shaftesbury Road
Cambridge
CB2 8EA

www.ocr.org.uk

City & Guilds
Giltspur House
5 – 6 Giltspur Street
London
EC1A 9DE

www.cityandguilds.com

CCEA
29 Clarendon Road
Clarendon Dock
Belfast
BT1 3BG

www.ccea.org.uk

NCFE
Q6 Quorum Business Park
Benton Lane
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE12 8BT

www.ncfe.org.uk

Pearson
80 Strand
London
WC2R 0RL

www.qualifications.pearson.com

TQUK
Crossgate House
Cross Street
Sale
M33 7FT

www.tquk.org

WJEC
245 Western Avenue
Cardiff
CF5 2YX

www.wjec.co.uk