| **Title** | **Examination Policy** |
| --- | --- |
| **Summary** | This policy explains the operation of our exam system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff. |
| **Purpose** | To ensure that the planning and management of external exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interest of our students |
| **Operational Date** | September 2024 |
| **Frequency of Review** | Every year |
| **Date last Reviewed and Approved by Board of Governors** | December 2021 |



**Examination Policy**

**Contents:**

1. Introduction

2. Exam cycle and roles & responsibilities

3. Managing invigilators and exam days

4. Access Arrangement

5. Special Consideration

6. Malpractice / maladministration

7. Additional information

**Appendices:**

One: Conflict of interest

Two: The Management of GCSE Controlled Assessments

Three: Word Processing Policy

Four: Contingency plan / emergencies

Five: Exam entry policy

Six: Exam disability policy

**1. Introduction**

**Rationale**

Newry High Schools committed to providing a just and caring community where all are treated equally. Our core principle is to improve the attainment and experiences of all students by a commitment to high quality learning and teaching. The key objective of Nery High School is to invest in quality and to support everyone in our learning community to achieve the highest possible standards.

**Aims**

The purpose of this examinations policy is to ensure that the planning and management of external exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interest of our students and to ensure the operation of an efficient exam system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.

This policy is written in accordance with the following Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ)

Guidance documents:

* Instructions for Conducting Examinations
* Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments
* Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments

The following School policies are also relevant:

* Controlled Assessment policy
* Examination entry policy
* SEN policy
* Curriculum policy
* Charging policy
* BTEC procedures and policies document

**2. The exam cycle and role & responsibilities**

The exams management and administration process that needs to be undertaken for each **exam series** is often referred to as the **exam cycle** and relevant tasks required within this grouped into the following stages:

* planning
* entries
* pre-exams
* exam time
* results and post-results

This policy identifies roles and responsibilities of centre staff within this cycle.

**Responsibilities of the Principal and SLT**

Overall responsibility for the School as an Examinations Centre lies with the principal. The principal is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice further to full investigation by the Senior Leader responsible for examinations.

**Responsibilities of the Examinations Officer**

Assisted by the Examinations Assistant, the Examinations Officer will:

* Manage the administration of public examination.
* Advise the Leadership Team, Heads of Department, Subject Teachers and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables as set by the various Awarding Organisations (AO).
* Contribute to the production of the annual calendar regarding exam dates and communicate regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events.
* Maintain systems and processes to support the timely and accurate entry of candidates for exams.
* Advise Caretaking staff of the timetable to ensure rooms are prepared.
* Provide candidates with their exam timetable.
* identifying and resolving any examination clashes and, if necessary, providing escorts, identifying a secure venue and where required arranging overnight stays.
* Distribute the JCQ “Information for Candidates” to students
* Consult with teaching staff to advise of relevant deadlines to ensure that necessary coursework/controlled assessment is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
* Provide data on estimated entries where relevant.
* Receive, check and store securely all exam papers and completed scripts.
* In conjunction with the SENCo, administer access arrangements.
* Identify and manage exam timetable clashes including arranging for the supervision of candidates between exams.
* Arrange to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of an exam and manage this in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
* Account for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs.
* Line manage the invigilation team: responsible for their recruitment, training and monitoring. Ensure that invigilators are provided with examination timetables.
* Oversee submission of candidates’ coursework/controlled assessment marks and any other material required by the appropriate AOs.
* Arrange for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates.
* Oversee the submission of applications for enquiries about results and dissemination of the outcomes.
* Disseminate information received from AOs to relevant HODs.
* Submission of special consideration applications to the relevant AOs within the relevant deadlines.
* Submit application for Centre approval to the appropriate AOs in order to offer additional qualifications/courses.
* Oversee submission of outcomes for BTEC/CTEC/OCN and other relevant courses.
* Submit qualification approval applications to DE as required.

**Heads of Departments**

* Decide, in discussion with their team, on the AO specification to be taught.
* Inform the Exams Office of changes to course/entry/levels well in advance of entry deadlines.
* Provide guidance to candidates about exam entries or amendments to entries.
* Submit entry details to the Exams Office including course names, course codes and candidate names by the deadlines advised.
* Circulate printouts of entries for final checking. These must be checked, signed and returned before the given cut-off dates.
* Comply with AO and specification requirements.
* Where a candidate is to be withdrawn from entry the school’s exam entry policy must be followed. Withdrawal from all exams for a course is discouraged unless exceptional circumstances apply. Any department wishing to make such a request must do so in writing to the Vice-Principal. Requests must be supported with written evidence of the support and interventions that have been put in place to avoid withdrawal.
* Provide direction to candidates on post-results procedures.
* Accurately complete all exams documentation/coursework/mark-sheets/declaration sheets and adhere to deadlines to avoid AO penalty fees.
* Advise the Exams Office of amendments required for teacher access to e-moderation.
* Ensure that information from AOs is disseminated to their team.
* Provide the Exams Office with full registration information for BTEC/CTEC/OCN and other relevant courses prior to the appropriate deadlines.
* Controlled Assessment replaces the largely discontinued term coursework. It is the duty of Heads of Department to ensure that all internal assessments are ready for dispatch at the correct time. The Examinations Officer and Assistant Examinations Officer will assist by keeping a record of each dispatch, including the recipient details and the date and time sent.
* Submit BTEC/OCN/CTEC/ and other relevant outcomes to the Vocational Coordinator/BTEC Coordinator/Exams Office for timely submission to the relevant AO.
* Participate fully in internal moderation of controlled assessment/coursework.

**Subject Teachers**

* Provide details of entries (course name, code and candidate names) to Heads of Departments in order to meet the internal deadlines.
* In practical exams, Subject Teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.
* Exam papers must not be read by Subject Teachers or removed from the exam room before the end of a session. Papers will be distributed to Heads of Department by Exams Office staff after all students have completed the exam and in accordance with AO regulations.
* Participate fully in internal moderation of controlled assessment/coursework.

**Special educational needs coordinator (SENCO)**

* identification and testing of candidate’s requirements for access arrangements
* the 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.

**Lead invigilator/invigilators**

* collection of examination papers and other material from the Examinations officer or Assistant Examinations Officer before the start of the examination
* collection of all examination papers in the correct order at the end of the examination and their return to the Examinations officer or Assistant Examinations Officer.

**Candidates**

* understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own
* ensuring prompt arrival for all examinations.
* ensuring that they are fully equipped to complete the examination (pens/pencils/calculators etc)
* attending examinations and assessments in full school uniform at all times
* following all school and examination body rules for behaviour and conduct.

**3. Managing invigilators and exam days**

**Managing Invigilators**

* Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer and Assistant Examinations Officer.
* Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Examinations Officer and Assistant Examinations Officer.
* Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the Head of Centre or awarding body.
* All invigilators are provided with training by the SENCO, Examinations Officer and Assistant Examinations Officer at the beginning of each academic year.
* Each invigilator is supplied with a handbook containing all the up-to-date JCQ regulations on conducting and supervising exams.

**Examination days**

* The Examinations Officer and Assistant Examinations Officer will book all examination rooms after liaison with other users and make the question papers, other examination stationery and materials available for the invigilator.
* The Examinations Officer and Assistant Examinations Officer are responsible for setting up the allocated exam rooms in line with JCQ guidance.
* The lead invigilator will start all examinations in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

**The people present in the examination room**

Vice-Principals and senior leaders are approved by the Head of Centre to be present at the start of the examination(s). Where specifically approved by the Head of Centre and agreed with the Exams Officer, senior members of centre staff have a very clear role. Principally:

* to assist with the identification of candidates.
* to deal with any disciplinary matters.

**In accordance with JCQ Guidelines, under no circumstances may members of centre staff:**

* be present at the start of the examination and then sit and read the examination question paper before leaving the examination room.
* enter the examination room, uninvited, with the sole intention of accessing the examination question paper.
* have access to the examination question paper **unless** this is specifically requested by either the Exams Officer or an invigilator. For example, a possible printing error has been identified and, in the absence of an erratum notice, the Exams Officer needs this verified by the relevant subject teacher before escalating the issue to the AO.
* give any indication of their opinion of a question paper to candidates, verbally or otherwise, having been asked to inspect the content.
* communicate with candidates, except in Art timed tests and Science Practical Examinations, or were maintaining discipline in the examination room. This constraint extends to coaching candidates, reminding candidates which section(s) of the question paper to answer or which questions they should answer.
* enter the examination room and approach candidates, either to prompt them to make an attempt at the examination or to provide support and encouragement.
* enter the examination room and read candidates’ scripts.

**4. Access Arrangement**

The purpose of an access arrangement (reasonable adjustment) is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing him/her from being placed at a substantial disadvantage due to persistent and significant difficulties. The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate. Access arrangements allow learners with additional educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to:

* access the assessment
* show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment.

“Access Arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for candidates based on evidence of need and normal way of working.” ([[Joint Council for Q](https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/)](https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration)[ualifications](https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/))

There are two types of Access Arrangements

* arrangements put in place by schools (delegated to centres); and
* arrangements that require prior JCQ awarding body approval.

Pupils with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries may need Access Arrangements to allow them to access the assessment. These arrangements are put in place without changing the demands of the assessment. For example, readers, scribes and Braille question papers.

* Mrs H. Shields is the in-house designated assessor and will assess candidates, process applications online and hold the evidence for inspection purposes for GCSE and/or GCE qualifications.
* Access Arrangements will be provided in accordance with the JCQ Guidance document
* The SENCo, fully supported by teaching staff and members of the senior leadership team, must lead on the access arrangements/reasonable adjustments process within his/her school (centre).
* The SENCo must work with teaching staff, support staff (such as Adult Assistants) and exams office personnel to ensure that approved access arrangements/ reasonable adjustments are put in place for internal school tests, mock examinations and examinations.

A reasonable adjustment for a particular pupil may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available Access Arrangements. How reasonable the adjustment is will depend on a number of factors including the needs of the disabled candidate/learner. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

For learners with additional educational needs and/or disabilities access arrangements can only be granted if they are the student’s ‘normal way of working’ and they have a history of need. Any arrangements made must be approved on the basis of the support that the candidate has had in the preceding years and the results of specialist testing.

For example, a candidate who is eligible for extra time would need to have scores that are below average in speed of writing, reading, reading comprehension or cognitive process, demonstrating they work much more slowly than others.

The provision of an alternative room rather than the exam hall for written exams for students with severe anxiety and/or a mental health issue which precludes them sitting their exams in the exam hall will only be provided on supporting evidence from a Medical Consultant or Educational Psychologist or CAMHS**5.**

**5. Special consideration**

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

Any special consideration claim must be supported by appropriate evidence within five days of the exam, for example a letter from the candidate’s doctor.

The Examinations Officer or Assistant Examinations Officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the end of the examination session.

**6. Malpractice / maladministration**

‘Malpractice’ and ‘maladministration’ are related concepts, the common theme of which is that they involve a failure to follow the rules of an examination or assessment. This policy and procedure uses the word ‘malpractice’ to cover both ‘malpractice’ and ‘maladministration’ and it means any act, default or practice which is:

* a breach of the Regulations; and/or
* a breach of awarding body requirements regarding how a qualification should be delivered; and/or
* a failure to follow established procedures in relation to a qualification; which:
* gives rise to prejudice to candidates; and/or
* compromises public confidence in qualifications; and/or
* compromises, attempts to compromise or may compromise the process of assessment, the integrity of any qualification or the validity of a result or certificate; and/or
* damages the authority, reputation or credibility of any awarding body or centre or any officer, employee or agent of any awarding body or centre

Malpractice may or may not relate directly to sitting an examination. Awarding bodies are aware of the possibility of novel or unexpected forms of malpractice emerging as technologies and the nature and organisation of examination centres change.

Failure by a centre to notify, investigate and report to an awarding body all allegations of malpractice or suspected malpractice constitutes malpractice in itself. Also, failure to take action as required by an awarding body, as detailed in this document, or to co-operate with an awarding body’s investigation, constitutes malpractice.

Instances of malpractice arise for a variety of reasons:

* some incidents are intentional and aim to give an unfair advantage in an examination or assessment
* some incidents arise due to a lack of awareness of the regulations, carelessness, or forgetfulness in applying the regulations
* some occur as a result of the force of circumstances which are beyond the control of those involved (e.g. a fire alarm sounds and the supervision of candidates is disrupted).

The individuals involved in malpractice also vary. They may be:

* candidates
* teachers, lecturers, tutors, trainers, assessors or others responsible for the conduct, administration or quality assurance of examinations and assessments including examination officers, invigilators and those facilitating Access Arrangements (e.g. readers, scribes and practical assistants);
* assessment personnel such as examiners, assessors, moderators or internal and external verifiers
* other third parties, e.g. parents/carers, siblings or friends of the candidate.

Irrespective of the underlying cause or the people involved, all allegations of malpractice in relation to examinations and assessments need to be investigated. This is to protect the integrity of the qualification and to be fair to the centre and all candidates.

Newry High School is committed to ensuring that malpractice does not occur in any examination situation. Candidates will be warned of the consequences of malpractice in advance of each examination series. All candidates receive a copy of the Awarding Bodies’ regulations regarding coursework and examinations. During the course of the examination period, notices are displayed both in the area immediately outside the examination room and on display in the examination area. Before the beginning of every examination, candidates are given a verbal reinforcement of the Awarding Body’s regulations. In addition, candidates are given the opportunity to hand in mobile phones that are kept securely outside of the examination room until the end of the examination.

**Definitions of Malpractice: Centre Staff Malpractice**

The following are examples of malpractice by Centre staff. The list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered and acted upon.

* Moving the time or date of a fixed examination (beyond that permitted) without notifying the relevant Awarding Body.
* Failing to keep examination papers secure prior to the examination.
* Obtaining unauthorised access to examination material prior to an examination.
* Assisting candidates in the production of coursework, beyond that permitted by the regulations.
* Allowing candidates unsupervised access to coursework exemplar material, whether this is the work of former students or that provided by the Awarding Body.
* Failing to keep student computer files secure.
* Assisting or prompting candidates with the production of answers.

**Candidate Malpractice**

The following are examples of malpractice by candidates. The list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered and acted upon.

* Misuse of examination material.
* Behaving in such a way as to undermine the integrity of the examination.
* Failing to abide by the instructions or advice of an invigilator, supervisor or the Awarding Body in relation to the examination rules and regulations.
* Failing to abide by the conditions of supervision designed to maintain the security of the examinations.
* Disruptive behaviour in the examination room (including the use of offensive language).
* Introduction of unauthorised material into the examination room e.g. notes, study guides and personal organisers, own blank paper, calculators, dictionaries (when prohibited), personal stereos, mobile phones or other similar devices and watches.
* Introducing into the examination room notes in the wrong format (when notes are permitted) or incorrectly annotated texts (in open book examinations).
* Obtaining, receiving, exchanging or passing on information which could be examination related (or the attempt to) by means of talking or written paper/notes.
* Personation: pretending to be someone else, arranging for another to take one’s place in an examination.
* The inclusion of inappropriate, offensive or obscene material in scripts or coursework.
* Copying from another candidate (including the misuse of ICT to do so).
* Collusion: working collaboratively with other candidates.
* Plagiarism: the failure to acknowledge sources properly and/or the submission of another person’s work as if it were the candidate’s own.
* Theft of another’s work.
* The deliberate destruction of another’s work.
* The alteration of any results documents, including certificates.

**Procedure**

* If a candidate is suspected of malpractice, the invigilator must warn the candidate that he /she may be removed from the examination room. The candidate should also be warned that the awarding body will be informed and may decide to disqualify the candidate.
* The invigilator must record what has happened and wherever possible, the invigilator should remove and keep any unauthorised material that a candidate may have in the examination room. If necessary, the invigilator should summon assistance from the Head of Centre or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
* The Head of Centre must report any instance of suspected or actual malpractice in connection with the examination to the awarding body immediately. Form JCQ/M1 – Report of Suspected Malpractice (http://www.jcq.org.uk/examinations\_office/malpractice/) must be completed.
* The Head of Centre has the authority to remove a candidate from the examination room but should only do so if the candidate would disrupt others by remaining in the room.
* The examination script of a candidate suspected of malpractice should be packed for transport to the awarding body and form JCQ/M1 should be submitted separately to the relevant awarding body
* The Head of Centre also has a duty to monitor and report any potential malpractice by invigilators (see Appendix One – Conflict of Interest Statement).

**Activities carried out by the head of centre/appointed information gatherer**

* The head of centre will gather evidence into allegations of malpractice. The head of centre will deal with the investigation in accordance with the deadlines and requirements set by the awarding body.
* Those responsible for gathering evidence for an investigation will obtain the evidence specified by the awarding body, in the formats required. Individuals will always gather the evidence specified by the awarding body, regardless of their assessment of the matter. Equally, it will not be assumed that because an allegation has been made, it is true.
* The head of centre will consider that both staff and candidates can be responsible for malpractice.

If the gathering of evidence is delegated to another senior member of centre staff, the head of centre will retain overall responsibility. In selecting a suitable senior member of centre staff, the head of centre will take all reasonable steps to avoid a conflict of interest.

Where a conflict of interest may be seen to arise, investigation activities into suspected malpractice will not be delegated to the manager of the section, team or department involved in the suspected malpractice. In the event of any concerns regarding conflicts of interest, or the suitability of the potential investigator, the head of centre will contact the awarding body as soon as possible to discuss the matter.

* Newry High School will provide the accused individual(s) with a completed copy of the form or letter used to notify the awarding body of the malpractice.
* Where the person gathering the evidence for the investigation deems it necessary to interview a candidate or member of staff in connection with alleged malpractice, the interviews will be conducted in accordance with the centre’s own policy for conducting enquiries. A full note of the interview will be made and kept. The interviewee will be asked to confirm the accuracy of the note.
* If any party wishes to be accompanied, for example by a solicitor or trade union official, the other parties will be informed beforehand to give them the opportunity to be similarly supported. The person accompanying the interviewee will not take an active part in the interview, in particular he/she will not be able to answer questions on the interviewee’s behalf. The head of centre will make available an appropriate venue for such interviews. Interviews may also be conducted over the telephone. Individuals involved will be asked to provide a written statement.
* The head of centre will communicate the decision of the awarding bodies to the individuals concerned and pass on details of any sanctions and action in cases where this is indicated

Where a member of staff or contractor has been found guilty of malpractice, an awarding body may impose one or more of the following sanctions or penalties:

* Written warning
* Training
* Special conditions
* Suspension

Awarding bodies may, at their discretion, impose the following sanctions against centres:

* Written warning
* Review and report procedures/action plans
* Approval of specific assessment tasks
* Additional monitoring or inspection
* Removal of Direct Claims
* Restrictions on examination and assessment materials.
* Independent invigilators
* Suspension of candidate registration or entries
* Suspension of certification
* Withdrawal of approval for a specific qualification
* Withdrawal of centre recognition

The awarding bodies will determine the application of a sanction according to the evidence presented, the nature and circumstances of the malpractice, and the type of qualification involved. Not all the sanctions are appropriate to every type of qualification or circumstance.

**7. Additional information / procedures**

**Results**

* Candidates will receive individual result slips on results days in person at the centre.
* Arrangements for the centre to be open on results days are made by the Head of Centre.
* The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team.

**Enquires about results (EARs)**

* EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking.
* The candidate's consent is required before any EAR is requested.
* If a result is queried, the Examinations Officer, Head of Department and Head of Centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark at the centre's expense.

**Access to scripts (ATS)**

* After the release of results, candidates may ask the Head of Department to request the return of papers within three days' scrutiny of the results.
* The Head of Department may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained.
* Re-marks cannot be applied for once an original script has been returned.

**Certificates**

* Certificates are presented in person or collected from the school office.
* Certificates cannot be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, unless they have been authorised to do so.
* The centre retains certificates in a secure filing cabinet

**Appendix One: Conflict of Interest Statement**

What is a ‘conflict of interest’ in terms of examinations and assessment?

1. When a teacher is teaching, and thus assessing, the work of a candidate who is a family member or family friend
2. Where an invigilator is invigilating an examination in which a candidate is a family member or family friend.

Newry High School is committed to ensuring its decisions and actions in relation to the assessment process are, and are seen to be, free from personal bias and do not unfairly favour any candidate prior to or during the assessment process.

To that end, it is the policy of the school to:

* ensure that every teacher / invigilator understands what constitutes a conflict of interest and that they have a responsibility to declare any conflicts that might arise for them
* document the conflict and the action(s) taken to ensure that the conflict does not affect /impinge upon the decision-making involved in the assessment process or the actual assessment process itself.

**Procedure**

When a teacher / invigilator identifies that they have a potential conflict of interest they must:

* declare it as soon as they become aware of it
* ensure it is recorded in the Conflict of Interest Log held by the Head of Centre
* remove themselves from any discussions / decisions about the same

Appropriate arrangements will be made within the centre for:

* the candidate’s work to be assessed by another professional in the Department or
* another invigilator to supervise the examination which the affected candidate is sitting
* the candidate’s coursework or examination paper to be handled by another member of staff or
* an invigilator not affected by any conflict of interest prior to its transfer for marking to the examination board.

**Appendix Two: The Management of GCSE Controlled Assessments**

Guidelines / instructions from the particular examination boards re the completion of the controlled Assessment tasks should be strictly adhered to. The completion of Controlled Assessment Tasks is considered to be a formal examination and should be treated as such.

If a student does not report for a formal Controlled Assessment Task, this matter should be reported to the appropriate Head of Department by the class teacher. The student should complete the Controlled Assessment Task as soon as possible, if this is feasible.

If the controlled assessment is to be marked by the teacher, due rigor and attention should be paid to the specified mark scheme.

All completed controlled assessment tasks should be stored in a locked cabinet until sent to the appropriate examination board for marking / moderation. Newry High School Examinations policy

The uploading of scores to e-portfolios is now common practice and instructions are duly issued to staff by the relevant examination boards and the school Examinations Officer and Assistant Examinations Officer each year.

**Appendix Three: Word Processing Policy**

This policy on the use of word processors in examinations and assessments is reviewed and updated annually, on the publication of updated JCQ regulations and guidance contained in the publications:

* Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments and

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/Download/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance/access-arrangements-and-reasonable-adjustments-booklet>

* Instructions for conducting examinations.

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/Download/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations/instructions-for-conducting-examinations-2018-2019>

**Purpose of the policy**

This policy details how Newry High School manages and administers the use of word processors (including laptops and tablets) in examinations and assessments.

Principles for using a word processor

Newry High School complies with AA chapter 4 Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties regulations and guidance as follows:

**(AA 4.2.1)**

* Candidates with access to word processors are allowed to do so in order to remove barriers for disabled candidates which prevent them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties.
* The use of word processors is only permitted whilst ensuring that the integrity of the assessment is maintained, at the same time as providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate

**(AA 4.2.2)**

* The use of a word processor is not granted where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question

**(AA 4.2.3)**

* Candidates may not require the use of a word processor in each specification. As subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of our candidates, the need for the use of a word processor is considered on a subject-by-subject basis

**(AA 4.2.4)**

* The use of a word processor is normally considered and agreed where appropriate at the start of the course providing the centre has firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working for a candidate
* Candidates are made aware when they will have the use of a word processor for timetabled examinations and non-examination assessments

**(AA 4.2.5)**

* The use of a word processor for candidates is only granted if it reflects the support given to the candidate as their 'normal way of working', which is defined as support:
* in the classroom (where appropriate) or
* working in small groups for reading and/or writing
* literacy support lessons or
* literacy intervention strategies and/or
* in internal school tests/examinations
* mock examinations

**The only exceptions to the above would be a temporary injury or impairment, or a diagnosis of a disability or manifestation of an impairment relating to an existing disability arising after the start of the course.**

**The use of a word processor**

Newry High School complies with AA chapter 5 Access arrangements available as follows:

**(AA 5.8.1)**

* Provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off)
* Only grants the use of a word processor to a candidate where it is their normal way of working (see 4.2.5 above) within Newry High School.
* Only grants the use of a word processor to a candidate if it is appropriate to their needs (for example, the quality of language significantly improves as a result of using a word processor due to problems with planning and organisation when writing by hand) (The above also extends to the use of electronic braillers and tablets)

**(AA 5.8.2)**

* Provides access to word processors to candidates in non-examination assessment components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification

**(AA 5.8.3)**

* Allows candidates to use a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and handwrite shorter answers
* Are also aware that examinations which have a significant amount of writing, as well as those that place a greater demand on the need to organise thought and plan extended answers, are those where candidates will frequently need to type. Examinations which require more simplistic answers are often easier to handwrite within the answer booklet. The candidate
* avoids the difficulty of visually tracking between the question paper and screen

**(AA 5.8.4)**

* In all cases, ensures that a word processor cover sheet (Form 4) is completed and included with each candidate's typed script (according to the instructions issued by the individual awarding body).
* Does not simply grant the use of a word processor to a candidate because he/she prefers to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home.

**Centre specific processes**

A word processor cannot be granted just because a candidate prefers to use one (see AA publication page 54)

**Word processors and their programmes**

Newry High School complies with ICE 8.8 Word processors instructions by ensuring:

* word processors are used as a typewriter, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable.
* word processors have been cleared of any previously stored data, as must any portable storage medium used.
* an unauthorised memory stick is not permitted for use by a candidate.
* where required, candidates are provided with a memory stick, which has been cleared of any previously stored data, by a nominated member of centre staff
* word processors are in good working order at the time of the examination.
* word processors are accommodated in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen.
* where a candidate using a word processor is accommodated separately, a separate invigilator is used.
* word processors are either connected to a printer so that a script can be printed off, or have the facility to print from a portable storage medium
* documents are printed after the examination is over.
* candidates are present to verify that the work printed is their own.
* word processed scripts are inserted in/attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers (and according to instructions issued by the individual awarding body).
* word processors are used to produce scripts under secure conditions, and if they are not then the centre is aware that they may be refused by the awarding body.
* word processors are not used to perform skills which are being assessed
* word processors are not connected to an intranet or any other means of communication.
* candidates are not given access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), spreadsheets etc when using a word processor.
* graphic packages or computer aided design software is not included on a word processor unless permission has been given to use these.
* predictive text software or an automatic spelling and grammar check is disabled unless the candidate has been permitted a scribe or is using voice recognition technology (the script must have a completed scribe cover sheet included), or the awarding body's specification permits the use of automatic spell checking.
* voice recognition technology is not included on word processors unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe or relevant software.
* word processors are not used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe.

**Laptops and tablets**

Newry High School further complies with ICE 8.8 instructions by ensuring:

* tablets used during examinations/assessments are designed to run for a long period of time once fully charged and are 'free-standing' .
* the battery capacity of all laptops and/or tablets is checked before the candidate's examination(s) with the battery sufficiently charged for the entire duration of the examination.
* candidates with fully charged laptops or tablets are given the opportunity to be seated within the main examination hall without the need for separate invigilation and power points.
* candidates are reminded that their centre number, candidate number and the unit/component code must appear on each page as a header or footer
* candidates using Notepad or Wordpad software (which do not allow for the insertion of a header or footer) are instructed to handwrite their details as a header or footer once they have finished the examination and printed off their typed script; candidates are also supervised to ensure that they are solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way.
* candidates are instructed to appropriately number each page.
* candidates are instructed to use a minimum 12pt font and double spacing
* invigilators remind candidates to save their work at regular intervals.
* where it is possible 'autosave' is set up on each laptop/tablet.
* candidates are present at the end of the examination when their script is printed off so they can verify that the work printed is their own

**Accommodating word processors in examinations**

* Candidates using word processors (including laptops or tablets) are internally accommodated in the following manner:
* Seated appropriately within the exam room with access to mains electricity
* Invigilation arrangements relating to the use of word processors include the following:
* All invigilators are trained in over-seeing the printing and signing of candidate’s own work and the completion of the relevant cover sheet to accompany scripts.

**The criteria Newry High School uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations.**

* The ‘normal way of working’ for exam candidates, as directed by the head of centre, is that candidates handwrite their exams.
* An exception to this is where a candidate may have an approved access arrangement in place, for example the use of a scribe/speech recognition technology.

**Awarding word processors**

* There are also exceptions where a candidate may be awarded the use of a word processor in exams where he/she has a firmly established need, it reflects the candidate’s normal way of working and by not being awarded a word processor would be at a substantial disadvantage to other candidates.
* Exceptions might include where a candidate has, for example:
* a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly
* a medical condition
* a physical disability
* a sensory impairment
* planning and organisational problems when writing by hand
* poor handwriting

**Allocating word processors**

Appropriate exam-compliant word processors will be allocated by the IT department in liaison with the SENCO and the exams officer. In exceptional circumstances where the number of appropriate word processors may be insufficient for the cohort of candidates approved to use them in an exam session, the cohort will be split into two groups. One group will sit the exam earlier than or later than the published start time.

The security of the exam will be maintained at all times and candidates will be supervised in line with section 2.11 of ICE.

**Appendix Four: Contingency Plan**

**Contents**

Purpose of the plan

Causes of potential disruption to the exam process

1. Exam officer extended absence at key points in the exam process cycle.
2. SENCo extended absence at key points in the exam cycle.
3. Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle.
4. Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence.
5. Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice.
6. Failure of IT systems.
7. Disruption of teaching time - centre closed for an extended period.
8. Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open.
9. Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period.
10. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts.
11. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked.
12. Centre unable to distribute results as normal.

Further guidance to inform and implement contingency planning.

**Purpose of the plan**

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the management and administration of the exam process at Newry High School. By outlining actions/procedures to be followed in case of disruption it is intended to mitigate the impact these disruptions have on our exam process.

At all times, the Examinations Officer, Lead Invigilator and Senior Leadership Team will liaise with the relevant Awarding Body to ensure any contingency plans meet with its requirements and that JCQ regulations are adhered to where possible.

Alongside internal processes, this plan is informed by the Ofqual Exam system contingency plan, England, Wales and Northern Ireland which provides guidance in the publication What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted and the JCQ Joint Contingency Plan in the event of widespread disruption to the Examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

This plan also confirms Newry High School is compliant with the JCQ regulation (section 5.3, General Regulations for Approved Centres that the centre has in place a written examination contingency plan which covers all aspects of examination administration. This will allow members of the senior leadership team to act immediately in the event of an emergency or staff absence. This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

**Causes of potential disruption to the exam process:**

**1. Exam officer extended absence at key points in the exam process (cycle)**

Criteria for implementation of the plan:

Key tasks required in the management and administration of the exam cycle not undertaken including:

*Planning*

* annual data collection exercise not undertaken to collate information on qualifications and awarding body specifications being delivered
* annual exams plan not produced identifying essential key tasks, key dates and deadlines
* sufficient invigilators not recruited and trained

*Entries*

* awarding bodies not being informed of early/estimated entries which prompts release of early information required by teaching staff
* candidates not being entered with awarding bodies for external exams/assessment
* awarding body entry deadlines missed or late or other penalty fees being incurred

*Pre-exams*

* exam timetabling, rooming allocation; and invigilation schedules not prepared
* candidates not briefed on exam timetables and awarding body information for candidates
* exam/assessment materials and candidates' work not stored under required secure conditions
* internal assessment marks and samples of candidates' work not submitted to awarding bodies/external moderators

*Exam time*

* exams/assessments not taken under the conditions prescribed by awarding bodies
* required reports/requests not submitted to awarding bodies during exam/assessment periods e.g. very late arrival, suspected
* malpractice, special consideration
* candidates' scripts not dispatched as required to awarding bodies

*Results and post-results*

* access to examination results affecting the distribution of results to candidates
* the facilitation of the post-results services

Centre actions:

* Assistant exam officer to assume responsibility for the above tasks with the support of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

**2. SENCo extended absence at key points in the exam cycle**

Criteria for implementation of the plan:

Key tasks required in the management and administration of the access arrangements process within the exam cycle not undertaken including:

*Planning*

* candidates not tested/assessed to identify potential access arrangement requirements
* evidence of need and evidence to support normal way of working not collated

*Pre-exams*

* approval for access arrangements not applied for to the awarding body
* modified paper requirements not identified in a timely manner to enable ordering to meet external deadline
* staff providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained

*Exam time*

* access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms

Centre actions:

* Member of SLT assume responsibility for the above tasks with the help of the Exams Officer / assistant exam officer and SENCO admin support.

**3. Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle**

Criteria for implementation of the plan:

Key tasks not undertaken including:

* Early/estimated entry information not provided to the exams officer on time; resulting in pre-release information not being received
* Final entry information not provided to the exams officer on time; resulting in: candidates not being entered for exams/assessments or being entered late
* Late or other penalty fees being charged by awarding bodies
* Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet submission deadlines

Centre actions:

* The Examinations Officer to liaise with acting Head of Department and/or SLT, if necessary, to ensure all necessary deadlines are adhered to. Where this is not possible, the EO will liaise with the relevant Awarding Body and act upon the advice received.

**4. Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence**

Criteria for implementation of the plan:

* Failure to recruit and train sufficient invigilators to conduct exams
* Invigilator shortage on peak exam days
* Invigilator absence on the day of an exam

Centre actions:

* The Examinations Officer and Lead Invigilator will review the invigilation staffing at the start of each academic year to ensure sufficient staff are recruited and trained in a timely fashion.
* The Examinations Office and Lead Invigilator will be aware of the school staff available for invigilation duties at short notice and for peak exam days.
* If a member of the external examination invigilation team is absent due to illness or becomes ill during an invigilation session, he/she is replaced by the examinations officer or the assistant examinations officer.
* Should the chief invigilator be absent then invigilator number 2 would step up following training from the examinations officer. Invigilator number 3 would replace number 2 when needed.
* If the absence is long term, then one of our previous examination invigilators would be contacted. If they are not available, then CCEA would be contacted for a list of emergency replacement staff.

**5. Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice**

Criteria for implementation of the plan:

* Exams officer unable to identify sufficient/appropriate rooms during exams timetable planning
* Insufficient rooms available on peak exam days
* Main exam venues unavailable due to an unexpected incident at exam time

Centre actions:

* The Examinations Officer will organise rooming for summer examinations before the Easter holidays ensuring sufficient time is available to identify appropriate rooms.
* In the event of a room not being available at very short notice, sufficient staff will be made available to ensure the security of the examination is not compromised whilst alternative rooming is sourced. The SLT will work with the EO at all times during such emergencies.

**6. Failure of IT systems**

Criteria for implementation of the plan:

* MIS system failure at final entry deadline
* MIS system failure during exams preparation
* MIS system failure at results release time

Centre actions:

* The EO, in consultation with the SLT, will make entries from another venue direct to the Awarding Bodies. Results may also be accessed directly from the AB. At all times during the system failure the EO will liaise with the AB to minimise disruption and costs incurred.

**7. Disruption of teaching time - centre closed for an extended period**

Criteria for implementation of the plan:

* Centre closed or candidates are unable to attend for an extended period during normal teaching or study supported time, interrupting the provision of normal teaching and learning

Centre actions:

* SLT to manage all such incidents.

**8. Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis - centre remains open**

Criteria for implementation of the plan:

* Candidates are unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal

Centre actions:

* The EO will contact the relevant AB to discuss alternative arrangements and liaise with the SLT to take appropriate action.

**9. Newry High School unable to open as normal during the exams period**

Criteria for implementation of the plan:

* Newry High School unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations

\*In the event that the head of centre decides the centre cannot be opened for scheduled examinations, the relevant awarding body must be informed as soon as possible. Awarding bodies will be able to offer advice regarding the alternative arrangements for conducting examinations that may be available and the options for candidates who have not been able to take scheduled examinations.

Centre actions:

* The EO will contact the relevant AB to discuss alternative arrangements and liaise with the SLT to take appropriate action.

**10. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts**

Criteria for implementation of the plan:

* Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts

Centre actions:

* The EO will contact the AB to notify them of such difficulties and put in place suitable alternative arrangements.

**11. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked**

Criteria for implementation of the plan:

* Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked

Centre actions:

* The EO will contact the AB to notify them of any such incidents and act upon advice given.

**12. Newry High School unable to distribute results as normal**

Criteria for implementation of the plan:

* Centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post-results services

Centre actions:

* The EO will contact the AB to notify them of any such incidents and act upon advice given

**General advice / procedures for invigilator in case of emergencies**

The invigilator must take the following action in an emergency such as a fire alarm or a bomb alert:

* Stop the candidates from writing
* Collect the attendance register (in order to ensure all candidates are present) and evacuate the examination room in line with the instructions specified
* Advise candidates to leave all question papers and scripts in the examination room. Candidates should leave the room in silence
* Ensure candidates are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room to minimise any discussion about the examination.
* Make a note of the time of the interruption and for how long it lasted
* Providing candidates can be returned to the examination room within a short space of time, allow them the full working time set for the examination
* If there are only a few candidates involved, the invigilator might consider the possibility of taking the candidates (with question papers and scripts) to another place to finish the examination
* If the evacuation becomes protracted, the Head of Centre and Examinations Officer will make a decision about which point to abandon the examination and send the candidates home
* If re-entry to the premises cannot be secured and candidates have had to be dismissed without the examination being fully completed, the Examinations Officer will contact the relevant examination board and take advice on how to proceed
* Depending on the circumstances, the Examination Officer may be able to apply for special consideration for the candidates involved
* Details of the incident and the action taken should be fully recorded and details sent to the relevant awarding body
* Partially completed papers should be submitted to the awarding body following the normal protocols

**Criteria\* for the Head of Centre (or Examinations Officer in his absence) to consider in assessing whether an examination can be continued.**

* The length of time that has passed since the official start time
* Whether the minimum time for remaining in the examination room has passed to maintain the integrity of the examination
* The amount of time left to complete the examination(s)
* Whether there is sufficient time to complete the examination(s) before another session starts
* Whether continuing the examination will take candidates over the session limit of 3 hours (taking particular care in relation to candidates with access arrangements in place which may include extra time)

**Further guidance to inform and implement contingency planning**

**Ofqual**

*Joint contingency plan in the event of widespread disruption to the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland/joint-contingency-plan-in-the-event-of-widespread-disruption-to-the-examination-system-in-england-wales-and-northern-ireland>

**JCQ**

*General regulations* http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations

Guidance on *alternative site arrangements* http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/forms

*Instructions for conducting examinations* <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>

*A guide to the special consideration process*

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance>

**GOV.UK**

*Emergencies and severe weather: schools and early years settings*

<https://www.gov.uk/emergencies-and-severe-weather-schools-and-early-years-settings>

*Teaching time lost due to severe weather conditions* https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-time-lost-due-tosevere-

weather-conditions/teaching-time-lost-due-to-severe-weather-conditions

*Dispatch of exam scripts guide: Ensuring the service runs smoothly; Contingency planning*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-yellow-label-service/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-guide>

\*Hyperlinks provided in this document were correct as of September 2022

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**Appendix Five: Examination Entry Policy**

**Guidelines for staff re:**

**SAER returns and non-entry / withdrawal / movement of a pupil**

Staff should be aware that it is the school’s examination policy to enter all pupils for all their examinations even if this has an adverse effect on overall pass rates. Pupils engaged in education other than at school will be entered for exams by those centres (excluding the SRC). The school also follows the DENI SAER guidance (Summary of Annual Examination Results) and will omit pupils from the overall cohort under the following circumstances only:

1. A pupil has died;
2. A pupil, either through serious illness (including mental health issues) or pregnancy, was unable to sit any public examinations;
3. A pupil has transferred to another school or has emigrated;
4. A pupil is in a special unit approved by the Department;
5. A pupil has a statement of special educational needs;
6. A pupil has been placed on an EOTAS scheme;
7. A pupil has serious welfare issues that have culminated in the inability to sit any examinations; or
8. A pupil has been withdrawn from the school with the consent of their parent / guardian;
9. A pupil does not meet the criteria to be included in the SAER return, they will be / have been included in a different academic year.

**Strictly under no circumstances will any of our pupils on roll be entered as external candidates.** Special consideration may be given to students who are not on our school role and require support. They must meet with the Principal, who, in consultation with the VP and the exams officer will make a decision on external entry.

Staff are advised that to justify the non-entry / withdrawal of a pupil from their subject area, the pupil must demonstrate most of the following characteristics despite a variety of support strategies having been put in place at the teacher, department and potentially whole school level:

* Non-completion of controlled assessment
* Very low attendance rate with EWO involvement
* Very poor attitude and behaviour despite strategies to support being implemented
* Non-completion of homework
* Very poor reports / tracking grades
* Very poor report comments & marks
* Extremely low quality/standard of work

All departments must, without exception, monitor the progress of their pupils via the use of SIMS tracking and remedial action (support strategies, mentoring, communication with home: phone, email, letter, meeting in school etc.) will have taken place prior to considering non-entry. If a member of staff is considering the non-entry / withdrawal of a pupil, they must provide sufficient evidence of unsatisfactory progress and the following steps must be taken:

1. If there is any **risk** that a pupil may not achieve the standard justifying entry, the HOD must consult with the HOY. Then a warning letter MUST be sent home as soon as possible. The HOY should send this letter after consultation with Vice Principal. There must be sufficient evidence & previous communication provided by the member of staff / HOD to warrant the warning letter being sent. The letter must also be followed up by a meeting with the pupil and parents / guardian.
2. Copies of this letter must be kept by the Head of Year in the pupil’s file. A further copy should be forwarded to the HOD & Vice Principal.
3. If the situation does not improve then the HOD must again inform the HOY who in turn must discuss with Vice Principal. Following approval from Principal a letter will be sent home informing parents that their son/daughter is to be withdrawn / not entered from the subject/exam.

**Appendix Six: Examinations Disability Policy**

**INTRODUCTION**

This policy aims to ensure that every student who has additional needs will be supported through every examination series, this ensures that there is equality of opportunity.

**OVERVIEW**

The Equality Act 2010 extends the application of the Equality Act to general qualifications. All examination centre staff must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.

**PROCEDURES**

* All exam rooms are accessible, chairs are available when queuing outside if required.
* There is an appropriate toilet near all of the examination rooms used if required.
* Emergency evacuation procedures are appropriate for all candidates and risk assessments are carried out as appropriate prior to the examination series.
* All areas have had internal risk assessments carried out.
* If any candidate needs to take regular medication, invigilators will make this possible.
* The Exams Officer should be notified if there are any exceptional health issues.
* Any specialised equipment will be provided and an appropriate examination area selected.
* Invigilators will be briefed of any exceptional issues concerning communication or other factors which may affect the candidate.
* All invigilators will either receive appropriate training including disability issues if required or will work alongside an experienced invigilator.
* The SENCO will make the Exams Officer aware of any issues concerning individuals in all exam rooms.
* The SENCO/Exams Officer will take the lead in making access applications based on their close knowledge of the needs of students under their care.
* The SENCO/Exams Officer will produce a list of the students involved together with their concessions and this list will be available in all relevant exam rooms in the files.
* Any complaints made by candidates with disabilities should be directed in the first instance to the Examinations Officer who will initiate an enquiry.

**REVIEW**

The Reviewing of this policy will take place at the start of each academic year. The schools reaction response to any policy will be evaluated and any amendments to this policy made as appropriate.

**APPENDIX**

* Refer to any examination board inspectors report to inform future practice
* Refer to JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres booklet
* The Equality Act 2010