

Exams Policy

Version 6

This policy includes:

Trust Escalation Process
Refers the Trust Whistleblowing Policy
Recognition of Prior Learning

This policy applies to all New Collaborative Learning Trust Secondary Schools and Colleges.

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HIGH SCHOOL 



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CONTENTS

Paragraph Number	Heading	Page Number
1.0	Purpose of the Policy	3
2.0	Roles and Responsibilities	3
3.0	Examination Processes	5
4.0	Controlled Assessments (including Practical Tasks)	6
5.0	Non-Examination Assessments	9
6.0	Academic Appeals	9
7.0	Access Arrangements (including Word Processor and Separate Room statement)	15
8.0	Verifying Identity	20
9.0	Emergency Evacuation Procedure	20
10.0	Lockdown Procedure (in addition to the general separate policy for each college/school)	22
11.0	Examination Timetables & Clashes	22
12.0	Overnight Supervision	23
13.0	Severe Weather on Exam Days	23
14.0	Exam Equipment & Unauthorised Items	24
15.0	Malpractice	24
16.0	People Present in the Exam Room	27
17.0	Applied General Resits	28
18.0	Claiming Lower Awards	28
19.0	Leavers Exam Resits – (Private/External Candidates)	28
20.0	Re-sitting GCSE Maths/English	29
21.0	NEA/Coursework	30
22.0	Special Consideration	30
23.0	Absence From Exams	31
24.0	Exam Late Arrivals	32
25.0	Procedure Following Examination Absence	33
26.0	Disciplinary Action for Unauthorised Absence	33
27.0	Exam Results	33
28.0	Certificates	33
29.0	Contingency Plans	35
30.0	Resilience Arrangements	35
31.0	Cyber Security	36
32.0	Trust Escalation Process	36
33.0	Whistleblowing	39
34.0	Recognition of Prior Learning	39
35.0	Conflicts of Interest	35

1.0 Purpose of the Policy

The Trust is committed to ensuring that the examinations/assessments management and administration process is run effectively and efficiently and in compliance with the published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements.

This exam policy will ensure that:

- All aspects of the Trusts exam processes are documented, supporting the Trust exams contingency plans (Schools and Colleges), and other relevant exams-related policies and procedures are signposted to.
- The workforce is well informed and supported.
- All centre staff involved in the processes clearly understand their roles and responsibilities.
- All exams and assessments are conducted according to JCQ and awarding body regulations, guidance and instructions, thus maintaining the integrity and security of the exam/assessment system at all times.
- Exam candidates understand the process and what is expected of them.

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure ways of working in the centre are accurately reflected and that exams and assessments are conducted to current JCQ (and awarding body) regulations, instructions and guidance.

2.0 Roles and Responsibilities

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. It is the responsibility of the head of centre to ensure that all staff comply with the instructions in this policy. Failure to do so may constitute malpractice as defined in the JCQ publication *Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures*.

The Trust Examinations Manager is the person appointed by the Trust to support the Head of Centre and the College Examinations Officers in ensuring they can meet their roles and responsibilities.

The Examinations Officer is the person appointed by the Trust 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.

The Head of Centre must not normally appoint themselves as the Examinations Officer. A Head of Centre and an Examinations Officer are two distinct and separate roles.

Head of centre responsibilities

Heads of centre must ensure that senior leadership teams and exam office personnel familiarise themselves with the entire contents of the current General Regulations for

Approved Centres (GR) booklet. In particular, heads of centre must familiarise themselves with paragraphs 5.1, 5.3 and 5.4.

Heads of centre must ensure that relevant members of staff respond promptly to 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.

Heads of centre 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.

It is the responsibility of the head of centre to ensure that all staff comply with the instructions in the Instructions for conducting examinations document. Failure to do so may constitute malpractice as defined in the JCQ document Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures, 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025.

The head of centre must ensure:

- compliance with the published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements to deliver the qualification(s)
- appropriate controls are in place which ensure accurate data is submitted to the awarding bodies by the required deadlines, e.g. entries, internally assessed marks
- all reasonable steps are taken to respond promptly to requests for information or documentation made by an awarding body or regulatory authority

Head of centre

- Understands the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ documents including:
 - General Regulations for Approved Centres (GR)
 - Instructions for conducting examinations (ICE)
 - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (AARA)
 - Suspected Malpractice - Policies and Procedures (SMPP)
 - Instructions for conducting coursework (ICC)
 - Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (NEA)
 - A guide to the special consideration process (SC)
- Ensures the centre has appropriate accommodation to support the size of the cohorts being taught including appropriate accommodation for candidates requiring access arrangements and/or practical assessments
- Where/if using a third party to deliver any part of a qualification (including its assessments) at the centre:
 - maintains oversight of, and responsibility for, the delivery of the qualification in accordance with JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements
 - has in place a written agreement with the third party (unless exclusions apply) to ensure there is a shared understanding of the arrangement and will manage the risk of failure by the third party to deliver the expected service
 - ensures that a copy of the written agreement is available for inspection if requested by the awarding body
- Ensures that relevant members of staff respond promptly to actions raised by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service, understanding that failure to do so could result in penalties

- Ensures that the centre promptly reports any incidents to the relevant awarding body/bodies which might compromise any aspect of assessment delivery, such as a cyber-attack
- Ensures members of centre staff do 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)
- Ensures members of centre staff do not advise parents/candidates to contact awarding bodies/JCQ directly nor provide them with the names, addresses and contact details (including email addresses) of examiners, moderators, external verifiers and any other awarding body examining/assessment personnel/JCQ personnel

3.0 Examination Processes

3.1 Opportunity, Equality and Diversity

3.1.1 We aim to provide a variety of qualifications that provide all students with the opportunity to achieve their full potential by the most appropriate and direct route.

3.1.2 We will endeavour to ensure that the examination processes are implemented in a way which is fair and non-discriminatory informed by the Trust equality and diversity policy.

3.1.3 We will deliver 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.

3.1.4 We will enable candidates to receive sufficient and up to date practical experience, or relevant training where required by the subject concerned

3.2 Access

3.2.1 The policy is accessible on each school/college website for student and public viewing. College students can also access it through the Student Hub on Sharepoint. Teachers will be able to access the policy on SharePoint.

3.3 What Students Can Expect from Us

3.3.1 We aim to ensure that all examination processes are carried out fairly and in keeping with the Awarding Body's requirements.

3.3.2 All centre assessed and non-examined assessments will be assessed fairly against the qualification standards and teachers involved will be fully trained.

3.3.3 Internal assessments will be carried out fairly and conducted in accordance with the Awarding Body's instructions.

3.3.4 Externally marked assessments and exams will be conducted according to the regulations set by the Joint Council for Qualifications and requirements of the Awarding Body.

3.4 What We Expect from Students

3.4.1 Students are expected to meet all deadlines for coursework and assignments.

3.4.2 Students are expected to achieve the assessment criteria within the given timescale.

3.4.3 All work submitted for assessment purposes must be the student's own. Any work submitted that is not completely their own, will be regarded as malpractice.

3.4.4 Submissions must not include any discriminatory or divisive language. Use of such language will result in failure of the assessment and the possibility of disciplinary action.

3.4.5 Submitted assignments remain the property of the Trust and will only be returned to the student at the discretion of the Trust and then only after the Awarding Body Enquiry About Results (EAR) period has ended.

3.4.6 Students are expected to follow all JCQ Regulations when undertaking written / computer based external assessments and conduct themselves in an appropriate manner. Where a candidate is being disruptive, they may be removed from the exam room and the awarding body informed.

3.5 Malpractice and Plagiarism

3.5.1 A fair assessment of student's work can only be made if the work is entirely the student's own. Therefore, students can expect an Awarding Body to be informed if:

- they are found guilty of copying, giving or sharing information or answers, unless part of a joint project
- they use an unauthorised aid during an assessment or examination, including information written on their body
- they copy another student's answers during an assessment or examination
- they talk during an assessment or examination without permission from an invigilator.

3.5.2 All allegations of malpractice and plagiarism will lead to a full investigation which will follow the guidance of the relevant Awarding Body. If a student feels they have been wrongly accused of malpractice or plagiarism, they should be referred to the Complaints Policy. Further information on Malpractice is covered later in the policy.

4.0 Controlled Assessments (including Practical Tasks)

4.1 The aim of this section is to clarify the controlled assessments delivery within specifications to ensure security and uniformity of provision.

NCLT will ensure that:

- those students following courses with controlled assessments as part of their learning will undertake their assessment under the correct rules, with the correct level of supervision and in a timely manner.
- It 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

- It 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

4.2 Exams Senior Leadership Link

- Accountable for the safe and secure conduct of controlled assessments.
- Ensures 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 the centre
- Facilitates the sharing of good practice through the Heads of Faculty/Department/Curriculum Team Leaders.
- Hearing of Appeals related to NEA assessment.

4.3 Trust Director of Quality and Standards (Colleges)/SLT Exams Link (Schools)

- Updates the Internal Appeals Policy for non-examination assessments

4.4 Trust Director of IT

- To ensure an effective Trust Cyber Attack response plan is in place and actioned when required
- Will ensure that timed secure accounts are available for controlled assessment using ICT facilities.
- To provide technical support as and when required.

4.5 SENCo

- Ensures access arrangements have been applied for and processed in line with internal and JCQ deadlines
- The SENCo will inform relevant staff which students require Access Arrangements within specified timeframes.
- Works with relevant staff to ensure requirements for support staff are met.

4.6 Exams Officer

- Enter students for individual units, whether assessed by controlled assessment, external exam or on-screen test, before the deadline for final entries.
- Distribute a copy of the JCQ Notice to Candidates (for controlled assessments) to all students at the start of the academic year.
- Where confidential materials are directly received by the Exams Office, to be responsible for receipt, safe storage and safe transmission, whether in electronic or hard copy format.
- Report immediately to the awarding body/bodies any potential or actual breach of examination or assessment materials
- To operate a signing in/out system for confidential material.
- On the few occasions where controlled assessment cannot be conducted in the classroom arrange suitable accommodation where controlled assessment can be carried out, at the direction of the Exams Senior Leadership Link.

- Dispatch student assessments for moderation to appropriate Awarding Bodies.
- Act upon any recorded malpractice or loss of students work and report this to the Awarding Body without delay.

4.7 Heads of Faculty/Department/Curriculum Team Leaders

- Working with Heads of Faculty/Department/Curriculum Team Leaders within the Trust (where appropriate), collectively decide on the Awarding Body and specification for a particular subject.
- Supply the Trust Exams Manager (Colleges) and Exams Officer (Schools) with details of all unit codes for controlled assessments in June before the next academic year.
- Establishes roles and responsibilities relating to controlled assessment and provides appropriate support and training.
- At the start of the academic year, begins coordinating subject exam entries with the Trust Examinations Manager (Colleges) and Exams Officer (Schools) (Schools) to schedule controlled assessments. Plans ahead to ensure assessments are scheduled appropriately in the academic year considering resources and room availability.
- Ensures assessments comply with the general guidelines, contained in the JCQ publications Instructions for Conducting Controlled Assessments & Non-Exam Assessments and Awarding Bodies' subject-specific instructions, including the appropriate levels of supervision and the differences in the management of these assessments.
- Understands the instructions that may be given to candidates regarding assessed tasks; no other information must be given either directly or indirectly to candidates relating to the content of the assessment or the marking.
- Keep a subject log that supports the organisation of additional sessions to allow students to complete controlled assessment they have missed through absence.
- Obtain confidential materials/tasks set by Awarding Bodies in sufficient time to prepare for the assessment(s) and ensure that such materials are stored securely at all times. A signing in/out system is in operation for all secure materials.
- Submit marks via Awarding Body(s) secure websites or Exams Office by specified deadlines. Keeping a record of the marks awarded.
- Post-completion, retaining candidates work securely until all Enquiries about Results outcomes are complete. Any piece of controlled assessment created by a student remains under the ownership of the Trust. Further to this, subjects must retain work until all resit opportunities have been exhausted.
- Report immediately to their Exams Officer if suspected malpractice or loss of students work occurs.
- Provide requested samples of students work by the Awarding Body deadlines.

4.8 Teaching Staff

- Understand and comply with the general guidelines contained in the JCQ publications Instructions for Conducting Controlled Assessments and Non-Exam Assessments.
- Understand and comply with the Awarding Body specification for conducting controlled assessments, including any subject-specific instructions, teachers' notes or additional information on the Awarding Body's website.
- Supervise assessments (at the specified level of control). Undertake the tasks required under the regulations, only permitting assistance to students as the specification allows.

- Ensure that the proper conditions are in place for the assessment to take place within the facility and all correct signage is displayed.
- Ensure that students and supervising teachers sign authentication or declaration forms on completion of an assessment.
- Must ensure that candidates are clear about the assessment criteria which they are expected to meet in their Controlled Assessments and will provide a thorough explanation or interpretation of such criteria. This explanation or interpretation must be general and not specific to a candidate's work or mark scheme.
- Mark internally assessed components using the mark schemes provided by the Awarding Body.
- Take sensible precautions regarding the security of students' work taken home to mark.
- Report immediately to their Head of Faculty/Department/Curriculum Team Leader if suspected malpractice or loss of students work occurs.
- Liaises with the Exams Officer when special consideration may need to be applied for a candidate taking assessments.

5.0 Non-examination Assessments (including Practical Skills Endorsements and Spoken Language Endorsements)

The Trust has a separate Non-Exam Assessment Policy.

6.0 Academic Appeals

This procedure sets out the Trust's systems for dealing with student appeals against either the outcomes of external assessments by Awarding Bodies (Examination Boards) or academic decisions made internally by Trust staff.

6.1 External Assessments

If there is a concern about a grade/result following the publication of results, the Trust can submit an application for an Enquiry About Results (EARs) to the relevant Awarding Body. The Trust advises students to discuss their concerns with a subject teacher or Head of Faculty/Department/Curriculum Team Leader in the first instance before considering action.

If the student wishes to proceed, the Trust must submit the application for an EAR within the short enquiry period immediately following the publication of results. It is not possible to make an enquiry about a grade/result in a previous series.

Below is a list of the main services offered by the Awarding Bodies:

6.1.1 Access To Scripts (ATS)

Access to marked scripts following examinations. There are two types of services on offer:

- Priority Copy Exam Script (GCE only)
- Non-Priority Exam Script

The Trust advises students to obtain a priority copy of their script. The script can then be viewed and considered and there is time to request a standard review. If a UCAS place is pending, it is advisable to go straight to a Priority Review of Marking.

6.1.2 Review of Marking (RoM)

This service offers a review of the original marking to ensure that the marks have been totalled correctly and the relevant mark scheme has been applied correctly. A priority review of marking can be requested for students whose place in Further/Higher Education depends upon the outcome. There is a short window of opportunity following results day for requests. A photocopy of the reviewed script may also be requested.

A Review of Marking can only be requested for examined/externally assessed units. A coursework unit cannot be reviewed for individual students.

There are three possible outcomes of a RoM:

- The original mark is lowered, so the final grade may be lower than the original grade received
- The original mark is confirmed as correct, and there is no change to the grade
- The original mark is raised, so the final grade may be higher than the original grade received

Even if marks are raised or lowered, this may not affect the overall original grade if it does not move across the grade boundaries.

Each Awarding Body has different costs for these services and information of fees and deadlines will be provided on results day. In certain circumstances the Trust will pay for a review of marking but this will be on a qualification-by-qualification basis supported by historical reviews of marking analysis where available

Written consent from the candidate **MUST** be obtained in all cases before review of marking can be submitted. Consent from the parent cannot be accepted. Purely parental requests for EARs cannot be processed, as the result belongs to the candidate. Individual students or parents cannot deal directly with Awarding Bodies.

For Colleges, the outcome of the review will be emailed to the student on the email address provided and also copied to the Head of Faculty/Department/Curriculum Team Leader.

For Schools, the outcome of the review will be emailed to the student on their school email address or in writing through the post.

In all cases, the result of the Review of Marking will only be communicated with the student, and not any other third party, including parent/carer.

If teaching staff require access to scripts for teaching and learning purposes, they are able to request these before the deadlines. The candidate's written consent must be obtained prior to submitting the request to the Exams Office. The candidate's identity, such as name and candidate number, must be redacted.

6.1.3 Internal Appeals Procedure for Post Results Services

All candidates have the opportunity to apply for a post results service, irrespective of whether or not this is supported by the College/School.

If, following the outcome of a Review of Marking, the candidate wishes to appeal the awarding body decision, they should initially raise any concerns with the Head of Faculty/Department/Curriculum Team Leader within ten calendar days of the awarding body issuing the outcome of the review, giving clear and concise grounds for wishing to appeal.

The Head of Faculty/Department/Curriculum Team Leader will consult with the head of centre and the Exams Officer and a written statement will be obtained from the candidate.

Appeals can only be submitted by the head of centre if they consider that either

- a marking or moderation (or a review of marking/moderation) error has occurred; or
- the awarding body did not apply its procedures consistently, properly or fairly

Appeals to the Awarding Body will be made, by the head of centre, within 30 calendar days of the awarding body issuing the outcome of the review.

When notification of the outcome of appeal is received from the awarding body, this will be communicated to the candidate, in writing, within 7 working days.

6.2 Internal Assessments

6.2.1 Internal Appeals Procedure (including NEA)

A student has the right of appeal to the College/School against the marking/assessment process in the internal assessment, but not against the actual mark or grade submitted by the College/School for moderation by the Awarding Body.

All students are able to gain access to:

- the marks awarded to them by the centre for an internal assessment
- all comments recorded by the centre relating to their internally assessed work
- any correspondence between the centre and the Awarding Body relating to their internally assessed work
- information, if available, as to whether their work was sampled by the Awarding Body
- the moderated mark given to the work by the Awarding Body, if known
- relevant Awarding Body procedures for the conduct of internal assessments.

Stage 1

Students should initially raise any concerns about their internally assessed marks with the subject teacher who has marked the work. The subject teacher can give the student a full explanation of the methods used, the marks awarded and the comments made about his/her work.

Stage 2

Where this does not satisfactorily address the concern (Stage 1), the matter should be drawn to the attention of the Head of Faculty/Department/Curriculum Team Leader, who will consult with the Exams Senior Leadership Link.

If the concern is still not resolved to the satisfaction of the student, a written request can be made (Stage 3) by the student for the matter to move to a formal appeal.

Stage 3 – Written Appeals Procedure

This will be the final stage in the normal process of considering and resolving disputes. It is expected that it will be used only in exceptional circumstances.

An appeal can be made to the College/School concerning an internal assessment.

- Appeals may be made to the College/School regarding the procedures used in internal assessment, rather than the actual marks or grades submitted by the College/ School for moderation by the Awarding Body.
- A student wishing to appeal against the procedures used in the internal assessments, such as coursework, should contact the Exams Senior Leadership Link as soon as possible to discuss the appeal. In addition, a written appeal (stating details of the complaint and reasons for the appeal) must be submitted to the Principal/Secondary Headteacher for the series in which the work is assessed.
- Upon receipt of a written appeal, the Exams Senior Leadership Link, together with another member of the College/School's Senior Management Team, will conduct an enquiry into the internal assessment provided that neither member of staff has played a part in the original assessment process. This enquiry will consider whether the procedures used in the internal assessment conformed to the published requirements of the Awarding Body.
- The appellant will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal, including details of any relevant communication with the Awarding Body and any of the steps taken to protect the interests of the student further.
- If, at any time, the appellant is unhappy about the response in writing, she/he can ask for a personal hearing where a panel will consist of two people not previously involved.

6.2.2 Moderation

After work has been assessed internally, it is moderated by the Awarding Body to ensure consistency in marking between centres. This moderation can change the marks awarded for internally assessed work. Review of moderation cannot be undertaken upon the work of an individual candidate. This process is outside the control of the Trust and is not covered by this procedure.

Note: Each Awarding Body specifies detailed criteria for the internal assessment of work. In addition, the Awarding Body must moderate the assessment and the final judgment on marks awarded is that of the Awarding Body. Appeals against matters outside the Trust's control will not be considered in the Trust's Appeals Procedure.

6.3 Appeals regarding centre decisions relating to access arrangements and special consideration

6.3.1 This procedure confirms NCLTs compliance with JCQ's **General Regulations for Approved Centres** (section 5.3z) that the centre will:

- have in place and available for inspection a written internal appeals procedure which must cover at least appeals regarding centre decisions relating to access arrangements and special consideration

NCLT will:

- comply with the principles and regulations governing access arrangements and special consideration as set out in the JCQ publications **Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments** and **A guide to the special consideration process**
- ensure that all staff who manage and implement access arrangements and special consideration are aware of the requirements and are appropriately supported and resourced

6.3.2 Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments

The head of centre/senior leadership team will:

- appoint a SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff, who will coordinate the access arrangements process within each centre and determine appropriate arrangements for candidates with learning difficulties and disabilities, candidates for whom English is an additional language, as well as those with a temporary illness or temporary injury
- 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 will 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)
- recognise its duties towards disabled candidates, including private candidates, ensuring compliance with all aspects of the Equality Act 2010, particularly Section 20 (7) (This includes a duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, through the access arrangements process submit applications for reasonable adjustments and make reasonable adjustments to the service the centre provides to disabled candidates. Where the centre is under a duty to make a reasonable adjustment, the centre will not charge a disabled candidate any additional fee in relation to the adjustment or aid)
- 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)
- 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 held on file for inspection)
- have a written process in place to not only check the qualification(s) of their assessor(s) but that the correct procedures are followed as in Chapter 7 of the JCQ document *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*

Special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo) or equivalent role

- Understands the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ documents including:
- Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments
- Leads on the access arrangements and reasonable adjustments process (referred to in this policy as 'access arrangements')
- If not the qualified access arrangements assessor, works with the person appointed, on all matters relating to assessing candidates and ensures the correct procedures are followed
- Presents when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor's qualification
- Ensures any applications for access arrangements or reasonable adjustments are submitted by the published deadline (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)
- Ensures a file is presented which must contain for each online application the downloaded approval for the respective arrangement(s), supporting evidence of need and a signed candidate data personal consent form (This information must be readily available for inspection at the venue where the candidate is taking the examination(s))
- Ensures requests for modified papers are submitted by the published deadline
- Ensures there are appropriate resources in place at the time of examinations/
- assessments to meet candidates' needs, e.g. sufficient readers and scribes

In accordance with the regulations, NCLT:

- recognises its duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, through the access arrangements process submit applications for reasonable adjustments and make reasonable adjustments to the service the centre provides to disabled candidates.
- complies with its responsibilities in identifying, determining and implementing appropriate access arrangements and reasonable adjustments

Failure to comply with the regulations have the potential to constitute malpractice which may impact on a candidate's result(s).

Examples of failure to comply include:

- putting in place access arrangements/adjustments that are not approved
- failing to consider putting in place access arrangements (which may be a failure to comply with the duty to make reasonable adjustments)
- permitting access arrangements/adjustments within the centre which are not supported by appropriate evidence
- charging a fee for providing reasonable adjustments to disabled candidates AARA (Importance of these regulations)

6.3.3 Special consideration

Where NCLT can provide **signed** evidence to support an application, it will apply for special consideration at the time of the assessment for a candidate who has temporarily experienced illness, injury or some other event outside of their control when the issue or event has had, or is reasonably likely to have had, a material effect on the candidate's ability to take an assessment or demonstrate his or her normal level of attainment in an assessment.

6.3.4 Centre decisions relating to access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration

This may include NCLT's decision not to make/apply for a specific reasonable adjustment or to apply for special consideration, in circumstances where a candidate does not meet the criteria for, or there is no evidence/insufficient evidence to support the implementation of an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment or the application of special consideration.

Where NCLT makes a decision in relation to the access arrangement(s), reasonable adjustment(s) or special consideration that apply for a candidate or candidates:

- If a candidate who is the subject of the relevant decision (or the candidate's parent/carer) disagrees with the decision made and reasonably believes that the centre has not complied with its responsibilities or followed due procedures, a written request setting out the grounds for appeal should be submitted
- An internal appeals form should be completed and submitted within 5 working days of the decision being made known to the appellant.

To determine the outcome of the appeal, the head of centre will consult the respective JCQ publication to confirm the centre has complied with the principles and regulations governing access arrangements and/or special consideration and followed due procedures.

The appellant will be informed of the outcome of the appeal within 5 working days of the appeal being received and logged by the centre.

If the appeal is upheld, NCLT will proceed to implement the necessary arrangements/submit the necessary application.

6.4 Appeals regarding centre decisions relating to other administrative issues

6.4.1 Circumstances may arise that cause NCLT to make decisions on administrative issues that may affect a candidate's examinations/assessments.

Where NCLT may make a decision that affects a candidate or candidates:

- If a candidate who is the subject of the relevant decision (or the candidate's parent/carer) disagrees with the decision made and reasonably believes that the centre has not complied the regulations or followed due process, a written request setting out the grounds for appeal should be submitted
- An Internal appeals form should be completed and submitted within 5 working days of the decision being made known to the appellant.

The appellant will be informed of the outcome of the appeal within 5 working days of the appeal being received and logged by the centre.

7.0 Access Arrangements

7.1 Definition

Access Arrangements are pre-exam adjustments made for individual students, based on evidence of need and the student's normal way of working. These are agreed before the assessment stage and help reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty, which places the student at a substantial disadvantage.

There are wide varieties of disabilities that may affect study in a College/School. These range from obvious, severe physical limitations and sensory impairments to the more subtle effects of specific learning difficulties (e.g. dyslexia or dyspraxia), mental health issues and brain injuries.

Therefore, it is impossible to state requirements that would apply to all Access Arrangement students.

Some examples are (but not limited to):

- Modifying assessment materials such as large print question papers
- Providing assistance during the assessment such as a scribe, a reader and/or a prompt
- Practical assistant or a sign interpreter
- Re-organising the student's physical environment
- Alternative ways of presenting responses such as a word processor
- Allowing extra time for an examination or for the completion of coursework
- Supervised rest breaks.

An adjustment **will not** be approved if it:

- Involves unreasonable costs to the awarding body;
- Involves unreasonable timeframes; **or**
- Affects the security and integrity of the assessment.

Any students using a wheelchair will be able to use the slopes around site, the lifts and if taking exams in the sports hall, this is situated on the ground floor. Early access into the exam room can be given for wheelchair users or those using crutches, before other students arrive.

It is the responsibility of the SENCo to identify students who may be in need of Access Arrangements. This is done via a variety of sources: college application forms, tutor/teacher referrals, testing in College/School, parents and student self-referrals.

Assessments are carried out by an assessor(s) appointed by the Head of Centre. The assessor(s) are appropriately qualified as required by JCQ regulations in Access Arrangements section 7.3.

At the point an assessor is engaged/employed in the centre, evidence of the assessor's qualification is obtained and checked against the current requirements in Access Arrangements by the SENCo. This process is carried out prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate.

The SENCo is responsible for assessing appropriate reasonable adjustments based on the student's needs or arranging for such assessments to be made by a suitably qualified person. Assessments are made on a subject-by-subject basis. All access arrangements will be applied for/implemented at the discretion of the SENCo, will be assessed on an individual basis and in accordance with the JCQ regulations.

Any assessments or tests used in support of the application must show a strong correlation between the assessment or test and specific access arrangement sought.

In other circumstances, such as medical, physical or psychological requirements, a medical consultant, SENCo, CAMHS Specialist or other suitability-qualified person must provide appropriate written evidence of need.

The SENCo prepares a file for each student and includes the Data Protection Notice (DPN Form) which has been signed by the student. The DPN is signed prior to applying for any AAs online, as consent to share information on the secure AAOL website.

Access arrangements must then be approved, by Awarding Body or Centre, according to the JCQ regulations (who comply with the *Equality Act 2010*) set forth in the document Access Arrangements & Reasonable Adjustments and set in place prior to the commencement of the assessment. Each application for access arrangements is considered on its own merit and on the evidence presented.

The SENCo, processes each access arrangement application as follows:

- Applies on-line for Awarding Body(s) approvals using JCQ CAP and/or awarding body secure portals.
- Liaises regarding responses to rejected applications
- The SENCo /Study Support Team will update Cedar/shared access arrangement documentation and the individual student files
- The SENCo will update the Exams Officer with any new or changed Access Arrangements following JCQ approval and/or any Centre Delegated Access Arrangements for each exam series by pre-defined deadlines.
- The Exams Officer will input the AA codes into the relevant Exams MIS Unit E – which will feed through to the seating arrangements
- The SENCo prepares an individual file for each student that is held securely as an electronic file with a copy of the signed data protection notification form and Awarding Body Approval.
- The SENCo ensures files are available for inspectors and Awarding Bodies as required
- The Exams Officer (with assistance of the SENCo) implements the access arrangement for every applicable exam series
- Both departments work within the JCQ and internal deadlines set for each exam series
- All information is treated confidentially and released on a 'need-to-know basis'.

Rooming, invigilation and support for the access arrangement candidates will be organised by the Exams Officer in consultation with the SENCo.

Wherever possible students eligible for access arrangements will not usually be seated in the main examination hall with the main cohort (unless requested). They will be seated elsewhere, although this cannot always be guaranteed. They must remain seated until the end of the normal duration of the exam. They can decide to take none, some or all of their extra time (if eligible). This will be noted on their AA Record form by the invigilator as evidence.

The SENCo ensures all information is handled sensitively and made available to staff via the internal Cedar system/shared access arrangement documentation. The SENCo then

contacts the parent/guardian and the student, informing them, in writing, of the approved access arrangement and when it will be implemented.

Evidence required for eligibility for access arrangements is detailed within the SEND Policy.

Applications should be processed by the SENCo prior to the dates published in the JCQ Access Arrangements publication, released annually.

The Exams Officer must be informed by the SENCo of the individual access arrangements, JCQ approved and centre delegated for each student. The Trust Exams Manager will agree internal deadlines with the Trust SEND Manager in September. This will allow enough time for preparation for each exam series and completion of the seating arrangements.

Any access arrangement requested or information submitted to the Exams Officer after these deadlines, may not be implemented in time for the forthcoming exam series. The SENCo should inform the student if this is the case.

Access arrangements do not have to be used by the student for every exam, but should be implemented should they be required. Details of which access arrangements are used for each exam are recorded by the invigilator for every exam and these record sheets are passed to study support for candidate files as evidence.

7.2 Emergency Access Arrangements

Emergency access arrangements are put in place as a result or consequence of an accident or an emergency where a candidate has temporarily been impaired at the time of their exam, test or assessment.

For example, if a student breaks his/her arm, we may be able to provide a scribe for written work. The Exams Officer deals with these on an individual basis, in liaison with the SENCo.

7.3 Use of Word Processor (spell check and grammar check disabled) in exams

Use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre and be appropriate to the candidate's needs.

The Trust must be satisfied that the candidate has an impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect, giving rise to persistent and significant difficulties.

Candidates who may be granted the use of a word processor are those with:

- A learning disability 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 organisation problems when writing by hand
- Poor or illegible handwriting

Use of a word processor will be granted providing the candidate meets at least one of the above criteria and is their normal way of working. Evidence for this could include an example

of the candidate's written work, a completed evidence form from a tutor, a referral from a teacher highlighting concerns, information collated from the previous school or results from a test of speed in a free writing test.

Use of a word processor will be granted on a subject by subject basis. Use of a word processor may not be required for every subject taken by the candidate. The SENCo must identify which subjects require the use of a word processor for each candidate.

For students who are granted the use of a scribe or word processor, it is not usually recommended that they receive this provision for exams in Mathematics, unless specifically requested by the candidate. This will be determined by the SENCo if granted for Mathematics, and the exams officer will be informed.

If the candidate never uses the word processor for exams, the SENCo will consider withdrawing the exam arrangement.

7.4 Smaller Room Policy for Exams

Any student indicated by the SENCo to have a 'smaller room' would mean that they are not seated in the main examination hall with the main cohort, but there is no limit to how many students are in the smaller room, depending on the capacity. The access arrangement would be determined by the SENCo in line with JCQ guidance.

7.5 Separate Room Policy for Exams

Separate invigilation is determined by the SENCo, in conjunction with relevant teaching staff and Exam Officer. JCQ are clear in that the decision to offer separate invigilation to candidates is the responsibility of the SENCo. Its decision is based on whether the candidate has a **substantial and long term impairment** which has an adverse effect and the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.

Separate invigilation is no different to other access arrangements; such as prompters, supervised rest breaks etc. Progress tutors, teachers, Safeguarding and the SENCo with pastoral responsibilities will know precisely those students with established and long term health conditions and whether separate invigilation is warranted. Working with the SENCo and Exams Officer, who may highlight issues such as room availability and the need for additional invigilation, a centre-based decision is made on the need for separate invigilation.

Medical evidence must be provided from a consultant or specialist (not a GP) in advance, to support a separate room access arrangement and then be approved by the SENCo. Nervousness, low level anxiety or being worried about exams **is not** sufficient grounds for separate invigilation within the centre.

7.6 Other Access Arrangements

Where a student has an appropriate access arrangement and the use of resources printed on coloured paper is their normal way of working in lessons, exams will be printed on coloured paper. This will be determined by the SENCo. The use of coloured overlays/coloured glasses in exams for use with printed reading material will be encouraged, but in some circumstances that reading material may need to be printed on coloured paper.

This will also be determined by the SENCo. The SENCo will provide the Exams Officer with full details of the exact colour of paper required by each student.

Students requiring the use of a reader will be encouraged to use a reading pen/computer reading software rather than a human reader, unless absolutely necessary. This will be determined by the SENCo.

Where a student is eligible for a scribe, the candidate will be encouraged to use a word processor (depending on typing skills/speed) unless a scribe is deemed absolutely necessary and is the normal way of working. This will be determined by the SENCo.

8.0 Verifying Identity

8.1 Invigilators must establish the identity of all candidates sitting examinations.

8.2 A private, external or transferred candidate who is not on roll at the college/school must show photographic documentary evidence to prove that they are the same person who entered/registered for the examination/assessment, e.g. passport or photographic driving licence. External candidates are identified on the seating plan to the invigilators.

8.3 In cases where it is impossible to identify a candidate due to the wearing of religious clothing, such as a veil, the candidate should be approached by a member of staff of the same gender and taken to a private room where they should be politely asked to remove the religious clothing for identification purposes. This includes checking for ear phones underneath head veils where the ears are covered. Centres must inform candidates of this procedure in advance of their first examination.

8.4 Once identification has been established, the candidate should replace, for example, their veil and proceed as normal to sit the examination.

8.5 All College students must wear their individual college photo ID card lanyard at all times whilst on Trust premises. All candidates are informed that they must bring their ID card for all exams. They are asked to place their photo ID badge on the desk so it is visible to the invigilators throughout the exam. In schools, all students have a photo ID card placed on their desk prior to the start of the exam by a member of the exams team.

8.6 The invigilators perform a thorough ID check against the seating plan as soon as the exam starts.

8.7 Should a Post-16 candidate forget their ID badge, they should have obtained a temporary ID badge from reception before entering the exam room and there are photobooks in the main exam venue for the invigilators to check. If in doubt, the Exams Officer can check identity on Cedar.

9.0 Emergency Evacuation Procedure

9.1 The exam announcement will be read out before commencing each exam. The exam announcement explains what the students should do and where they should go in the event of a fire alarm or another alert and if evacuation is necessary. All exams staff and invigilators should be familiar with the Emergency Evacuation Procedure for their centre.

The safety of the students is paramount.

9.2 Invigilators at NCLT have been informed that they must take the following action (in accordance with JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations (ICE) regulations.

- Stop the candidates from writing and close their exam papers. Make a note of the time.
- For the **SPORTS HALL** – the Lead Invigilator(s) should await instructions from either the Exams Team or Senior Management as to whether it should be evacuated, unless the fire can be seen or smelt, in which case the room should be evacuated as per the procedure below. Students should stop writing and close their exam papers. The exam is temporarily stopped and restarted when the alarm has stopped, the students should be given the full-time duration.
- In all other venues (other than the Sports Hall) – students should evacuate on the sounding of the alarm and follow the procedures set out in the Centre Evacuation Policy.

9.3 Announce the following to all students if the room needs to be evacuated:

- Use the nearest fire exit door(s) and stay with the invigilators, congregate within the relevant fire assembly point, away from non-exam students
- You must leave all your exam materials on the desk
- Do not collect your coats and/or personal belongings
- You must remain under exam conditions and stay silent
- Now listen to my instructions on how we will evacuate the building.

9.4 The Lead Invigilator must evacuate the room quickly, quietly and orderly. They must collect the Attendance Register, ensure all students have evacuated the exam room, close/lock the exam room door and move the group calmly to the relevant Fire Assembly Point for exam students.

- Once at the Exams Designated Fire Assembly Point – check all students are accounted for using your Attendance Register. If anyone is missing, this must be reported to the evacuation official and Exams Officer immediately.
- Students should be reminded not to talk at any time as they are still under exam conditions and the evacuation will need to be reported to the relevant exam board(s) by the Exams Officer as soon as possible.
- Supervise students as closely as possible while they are out of the exam room to make sure there is no discussion about the exam or other signs of misconduct. Students should remain in one place under the supervision of the invigilator(s).
- When instructed, supervise the return of students to the exam room.
- Make a note of the time of the interruption and how long it lasted.
- A member of the Exams Team and/or the Lead Invigilator will announce that the exam will restart and they will be given the full remaining time allotted for their exam and the Awarding Body(s) will be informed of the incident.
- The Lead Invigilator must complete an Incident Report Form and this must be given to the Exams Officer so they can produce a full report of the incident and of the action taken to be forwarded to the relevant Awarding Body(s).
- A special consideration application will be submitted at the end of the series by the Exams Officer for all candidates affected.

9.5 In addition to the actions required by JCQ ICE regulation above, invigilators are also informed of the following centre-specific actions or information.

- The exam room must be evacuated by the nearest fire exit.

- Ensure aid is provided for anyone who needs assistance to leave the exam room/building.
- On returning to the exam room, ensure students are in their correct seat, allow them time to settle down and remind them they are still under exam conditions.
- Restart the exam and allow students the full working time set for the examination.
- Make relevant changes to the displayed finish time.
- All information regarding the evacuation must be recorded on the Incident Report Form.
- The Exams Officer must submit a written report to the relevant awarding body for all of the exams affected.
- The Exams Officer must submit any necessary applications for special consideration for all candidates affected.

10.0 Lockdown Procedure (please refer to NCLT Lockdown/Evacuation Procedure)

10.1 The lockdown procedure as detailed in the Lockdown Policy will be followed when students are taking examinations. On hearing the lockdown alarm staff, students and visitors will:

Run – Move quickly and calmly to the nearest safest point

Hide – Take reasonable steps to hide from a potential threat

Tell – Inform others of the threat

11.0 Examination Timetables & Clashes

11.1 For each exam series, individual student exam timetables for College students will appear on Cedar shortly before the first exam. Students and Progress Tutors will be notified when it is available to be viewed. In schools, individual student timetables will be shared via e-mail shortly before the first exam or students will receive a printed copy of their exam timetable.

11.2 **Candidates are asked to check their personal details (full legal name, spelling and date of birth) and their exams very carefully via tutorials – if there are any discrepancies they should inform Students Services and the Exams Officer immediately and follow the procedure to verify and change the information.** If there are any errors/omissions/queries or their exam timetable is not on Cedar, they are advised to contact the **Exams Office** immediately.

11.3 Start times for exams at colleges are 9.00am and 1.15pm. The school start times are 9.20am and 1.00pm at Brinsworth Academy, 9.30am and 1.00pm at Dinnington High School and 9.00am and 1.00pm at Wingfield Academy. The JCQ published start times are 9.00am and 1.30pm therefore ALL students MUST be supervised until 10.00am and 2.30pm (1 hour after the JCQ published start time) to maintain the security and integrity of the exam papers. Any student leaving the exam unsupervised before this time will be reported to JCQ and will be at risk of disqualification.

11.4 All students are expected to stay until the end of the normal exam duration.

11.5 Candidates with exam clashes of three hours or less in total per session (AM or PM) will sit their exams consecutively. Their exam timetable will be amended accordingly and they will be informed of any changes.

- 11.6 Candidates with exam clashes totalling **more than** three hours in one session, may have an exam moved to an earlier or later session on the same day. However, there are strict JCQ regulations that students are made aware of and must adhere to. They will be kept under supervision by allocated members of the invigilation team from the start of the first exam until the end of the last exam that day. They must bring their own lunch/drinks and revision materials at the start of the first exam. They will not be allowed to leave the room unsupervised at any time. Cigarette breaks or buying food from the canteen will not be permitted.
- 11.7 Where a candidate has a timetable clash involving an AS Further Mathematics, AS Mathematics, A-Level Further Mathematics or A-Level Mathematics examination, these examinations **cannot** be moved to the morning session, as per JCQ Regulations.

12.0 Overnight Supervision

- 12.1 Any students with the exam duration of **more than** six hours in one day (for GCE and Level 3 qualifications) or **more than** five hours and 30 minutes in one day (for GCSE and Level 2 qualifications), including approved extra time allowances and/or supervised rest breaks, may be offered overnight supervision, this must be in adherence with JCQ regulations. Overnight supervision arrangements should only be applied as a last resort and once all other options have been exhausted. The head of centre must be satisfied with any arrangement for overnight supervision of a candidate where necessary and must accept full responsibility for the security of the examination throughout.
- 12.2 If a student takes exams in excess of the above durations, special consideration will be applied for the last exam of the day. If overnight supervision is agreed instead, special consideration will not be applied. The candidate must be under centre supervision from 30 minutes after the awarding body's published starting time for the delayed examination and the centre must ensure there is no contact with other candidates. The supervision of a candidate on journeys to and from the centre and overnight may be undertaken by the candidate's parent/carer or centre staff. The centre must determine a method of supervision which ensures the candidate's well-being.
- 12.3 The overnight supervision arrangements must ensure that the candidate does not have advance warning of the content of the examination deferred until the following morning. This means the candidate must not meet or communicate with anyone who may have knowledge of the content. This includes any form of electronic communication/storage device, e.g. telephone (both landline and mobile), e-mail, internet and social media. It also extends to television and radio, which could report key details of the day's examinations.
- 12.4 This is arranged by the Exams Officer in advance and in agreement with the students/parents/carers/staff supervisor following a formal meeting with the Principal. It is explained in writing and verbally that any infringement of the conditions may lead to the awarding body being unable to accept the script and/or the application of sanctions/penalties as detailed in the JCQ publication Suspected Malpractice: Policy and Procedures. The JCQ Overnight Supervision Declaration forms are signed by all parties and held in the exams office available for inspection until the deadline for reviews of marking has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later.

13.0 Severe Weather on Exam Days

13.1 Exam Boards make no allowances for severe weather. External public exams cannot be rescheduled for any reason, and it is our intention that these exams will still take place even if a college/school has had to close for normal lessons.

13.2 All students should do all they can to get into college/school to sit their exams and arrive no later than 15 minutes before their scheduled start time. Therefore, students are advised to plan ahead with travel arrangements.

13.3 Students who would normally travel to college/school by bus and are unable to get safely to college/school for an exam are advised to contact the college/school as soon as possible and it should be before the scheduled start time of the exam.

14.0 Exam Equipment & Unauthorised Items

14.1 Candidates are informed that it is their own responsibility to bring their own equipment for every exam, including calculators where permitted.

14.2 All equipment is provided in a clear pencil case for students at Dinnington High School and Wingfield Academy, including calculators where permitted.

14.3 Candidates are notified of the type of equipment required by their class teachers. Candidates are also informed of the unauthorised items which are not allowed in the exam room. In Colleges no food is permitted, unless for medical reasons and the Exams Officer should be aware of this prior to the exam. In schools food is allowed at the Head Teachers discretion. Only clear plastic bottles containing clear still water are permitted but all labels must be removed before entering the exam room.

15.0 Malpractice

15.1 'Malpractice' and 'maladministration' are related concepts, the common theme being 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'. Malpractice consists of those acts which undermine the integrity and validity of assessment, the certification of qualifications and/or damage the authority of those responsible for conducting the assessment and certification 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

NCLT does not tolerate actions (or attempted actions) of malpractice by students or staff. This policy informs you of the action the Trust will take in suspected cases and that it will

- take all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any malpractice (which includes maladministration) before, during and after assessments have taken place
- inform the awarding 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
- as required by an awarding body, ensures evidence of any instances of alleged or suspected malpractice (which includes maladministration) is gathered in accordance with the current JCQ document Suspected Malpractice - Policies and Procedures and provides such information and advice as the awarding body may reasonably require
- ensure any person involved in administering, teaching or completing examinations/assessments is advised 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

Awarding Bodies may impose penalties and/or sanctions on students or centres where incidents (or attempted incidents) of malpractice have been proven.

15.2 Student Malpractice

Attempting to or actually carrying out any malpractice activity is not permitted by the Awarding Bodies. The following are examples of malpractice by students; this list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by Awarding Bodies at their discretion.

- Plagiarism by copying and passing off, as the student's own, the whole or part(s) of another person's work, including artwork, images, words, computer-generated work (including Internet sources and artificial intelligence), thoughts, inventions and/or discoveries, whether published or not, with or without the originator's permission and without appropriately acknowledging the source.
- Collusion by working collaboratively with other students to produce work that is submitted as individual student work.
- Impersonation by pretending to be someone else in order to produce the work for another or arranging for another to take one's place in an assessment/examination.
- Fabrication or Alteration of results and/or evidence.
- Failing to abide by the instructions or advice of an assessor, a teacher, an Exams Officer, an invigilator, or Awarding Bodies' conditions in relation to the assessment/examination rules, regulations and security.
- Introduction and/or use of unauthorised material contra to the requirements of supervised assessment/examination conditions, for example: notes (including writing on hands/body); study guides; calculators; dictionaries (when prohibited); an iPod,

MP3/4 player, AirPods, earphones/earbuds, all watches, mobile phones, smart glasses and other smart devices.

- Talking, attempting to communicate with or disturb other candidates once they have entered the exam room.
- Attempting to gain an unfair advantage - obtaining, receiving, exchanging or passing on information which could be assessment/examination related (or the attempt to) by means of talking or written papers/notes during supervised assessment/examination conditions.
- Allowing work to be copied, e.g. posting work on social networking sites prior to an examination/assessment
- Leaving an examination room, unaccompanied, prior to the end of an assessment/examination

15.3 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 by Awarding Bodies at their discretion.

- Failing to keep any awarding body mark schemes secure or the alteration of any awarding body mark schemes or assessment and grading criteria.
- Assisting students in the production of work for assessment, where the support has the potential to influence the outcomes of assessment, for example where the assistance involves centre staff producing work for the student.
- Producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence that the student has not generated.
- Allowing evidence, which is known by the staff member not to be the student's own, to be included in a student's assignment/task/portfolio/coursework.
- Facilitating and allowing impersonation.
- Failing to keep students' computer files secure.
- Falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or by fraud.
- Fraudulent certificate claims, that is claiming for a certificate prior to the student completing all the requirements of assessment.
- Failing to keep assessment/examination papers secure prior to the assessment or examination.
- Failing to dispatch students' scripts/controlled assessments/coursework to the Awarding Bodies/examiners/moderators in a timely way.
- Failing to report an instance of suspected malpractice in examinations or assessments to the appropriate Awarding Body as soon as possible after such an instance occurs or is discovered.

15.4 Identifying Malpractice

Cases of malpractice can be identified in a number of ways. They may be reported by:

- The Trust (e.g. Via a report from an invigilator, student, teacher or examinations administrator)
- An examiner or assessor, who may identify shared answers in an exam script or identical wording in a coursework assignment
- A moderator, who may identify identical work in coursework assignments.

15.5 Reporting Malpractice

If malpractice is discovered or reported, the Trust **must** report this allegation to the relevant Awarding Body.

The individual(s) involved will be made fully aware in writing at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and possible consequences should malpractice be proven.

The individual(s) involved will be given the opportunity to respond in writing to the allegation having been given full and complete details.

The Awarding Body will then conduct an investigation appropriate to the nature of the allegation. Awarding Bodies reserve the right to access any documents held by the Trust in relation to alleged malpractice.

15.6 Outcomes of Malpractice

Where malpractice is proven, the sanctions and/or penalties imposed are solely up to the Awarding Body affected and the individual(s) involved will be informed in writing.

NCLT may take internal disciplinary action in-line with Trust policy and procedures should the malpractice be proven. This action will be commensurate with the seriousness of the malpractice.

The individual(s) will be informed of avenues for appealing should a judgment be made against them.

16.0 People Present in the Exam Room

JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations provides clarity on who may be present in the examination room. The head of centre has a duty to maintain the integrity of the examination and to ensure that fully trained invigilators are in place for examinations and on-screen tests. Senior members of centre staff are not routinely expected or required to attend exams, and if they do so it must only be for the purposes set out in the JCQ guidance.

Invigilators must have been trained to undertake their duties as outlined in JCQ guidance.

16.1 Rules relating to centre staff other than exams officers and invigilators

Senior members of centre staff approved by the head of centre, who have not taught the subject being examined, may be present at the start of the examination(s). When entering an examination room, the senior member of centre staff must identify themselves and their purpose for being there to the senior invigilator and/or 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
- To check that candidates have been issued with the correct question paper for the day, date, time, subject, unit/component and tier of entry if appropriate
- To check that candidates have the appropriate equipment and materials for the examination
- In the absence of the exams officer / senior invigilator, to commence the examination.

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 with the 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 reporting the issue to the awarding body
- 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 timed art tests or where 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.

Support and encouragement may be offered at any point up until the time that candidates enter the examination room. From that moment onwards they are under formal examination conditions and the strict protocols must be adhered to.

Copies of exam papers will be made available by the exams team approximately 24 hours after candidates have sat the paper. Some papers such as Functional Skills and University Admissions Tests cannot be passed on and must be confidentially destroyed at the end of the exam.

17.0 Applied General resits

For some courses such as BTEC, Cambridge Technicals, Cambridge Nationals and Criminology, there are opportunities to 'resit' units in January and/or Summer. The Trust will routinely pay the registration fees which includes one sitting of each required unit. Should a student wish to, or be required to resit a unit again, they will be expected to pay the resit fee as agreed by the Trust.

18.0 Claiming Lower Awards

Students are generally enrolled on two-year courses. Therefore, if a student leaves before the end of the two years, and/or fails to achieve the qualification they are enrolled on to, it is not guaranteed that they would be eligible to claim for any lower qualifications.

19.0 Leavers Exam Resits – (Private/External Candidates)

19.1 We do not accept private/external candidates in schools. Former students of any of the Colleges may be accepted.

19.2 We only accept former students for one year after leaving College. We do not advise or encourage students to re-sit subjects, even though we would offer this provision. The chances of improving their grades are greatly reduced by the fact that they will no longer

be receiving tuition with the appropriate practice and support. They should also be advised to check with their chosen university whether 'resit' grades will be accepted.

19.3 If a student still wishes to re-sit as a private candidate, then NCLT cannot accept responsibility for the ultimate grade achieved. They should register their interest in the first half term. This is by email to exams@nclt.ac.uk stating the subject(s) they would like to re-sit. An email will be sent to them explaining the process, fees and deadlines for information and payment to be received. The following guidelines must be followed.

- The student must supply the required information, such as the subject(s) they wish to resit, an alternative email address and contact number and agree to pay any fees by the given deadline. An administrative fee will be applicable in addition to the Awarding Body entry cost for each series. All fees are non-refundable and must be paid upon submission of the application.
- The candidate will be informed that additional costs may be incurred for invigilation. They will be notified at least one week before the exam(s) if this is applicable and will be responsible for covering this cost.
- This service is only extended to students one year after their departure from NCLT and is **only available for written exams**. It must be possible to carry-forward any NEA or practical endorsements, otherwise it may not be possible to 'resit' – the Exams Team can advise whether this is possible at the time of registering interest.
- Leavers retaking linear specifications, must be made aware that they are required to sit ALL of the written components again. Only NEA marks can be carried forward and they cannot retake NEA components or practical endorsements again within the Trust, as a private candidate, only written exams can be retaken.
- External candidates can only resit qualifications which are still valid and currently being offered by the Trust.
- Any previous access arrangements granted, even if not yet expired, will not be implemented, due to being unable to evidence the student's 'normal way of working' as they are no longer on roll at NCLT.
- The college has the right to refuse a leaver re-sit request.

20.0 Re-sitting GCSE Maths/English

20.1 Any Year 12 student on roll who has not achieved a Grade 4 in GCSE English/Maths will automatically be enrolled onto the relevant course and must attend lessons. They will be entered for November and/or Summer depending on the decision by the subject department. Some students, may be entered for Functional Skills Level 1 or 2 and will sit these tests throughout the year – this decision is made by the Head of Faculty/Department/Curriculum Team Leader.

20.2 Students who have already achieved grade 4 in GCSE maths or English sometimes request to complete a resit to try to improve their grade further. Such requests for entries will be considered on an individual basis, taking into consideration the student's rationale and progression plans. Students that have achieved grade 4 and for whom a resit has been agreed may be enrolled into a resit class where their timetable permits. However, as GCSE resit classes are aimed primarily at students with grade 3 or below, students that wish to complete a resit having already achieved grade 5 or above will need to prepare independently and will not be added to a GCSE resit class. The student may still be

entered as a 'private candidate', but will be required to pay the entry fee but the administration fee would be waived.

21.0 NEA/Coursework

21.1 NEA (non-examined assessment)/Coursework will be a feature of all applied general qualifications and usually takes the form of assignments set throughout the year.

21.2 The Awarding Bodies determine the rules for coursework submission for applied general qualifications, not the Trust. It is therefore critically important that students work hard to ensure that coursework for each first submission deadline is completed fully, on time and to the highest standard possible. If they do not meet a first submission deadline then the exam board rules for most courses mean that you also lose the opportunity to complete a resubmission if their work is not of a suitable standard, making it harder for them to achieve the grades of which they are capable.

21.3 For most courses there are no opportunities to submit coursework beyond a formal resubmission deadline. This means that if students fail to meet deadlines or produce poor quality work for mandatory units they will fail that course outright and their place at College/School 6th Form will then be at risk.

22.0 Special Consideration

22.1 Special Consideration is a post-examination adjustment to a candidate's mark or grade to reflect temporary illness, temporary injury or other indisposition **at the time of the examination/assessment**, which has had, or is reasonably likely to have had, a material effect on a candidate's ability to take an assessment or demonstrate his or her normal level of attainment in an assessment.

22.2 The guidelines for this are set out in the JCQ document: *A Guide To The Special Consideration Process*.

22.3 It is available for:

- Students who are present for the assessment but disadvantaged.
- Students who are absent for a timetabled component/unit for acceptable reasons.

22.4 The student must:

- inform the Exams Officer before the assessment takes place
- complete a Special Consideration Application and include supporting evidence. All information is treated confidentially and released on a 'need-to-know basis' return the application within 5 days of the date of the assessment affected
- failure to do any of the above will result in the application being rejected.

The application must then be approved by the Head of Centre before it is ~~then~~ submitted by the Exams Officer to the relevant Awarding Body(s) before the deadline for each exam series, and each case is judged on its own merits. The Awarding Body will then, while

marking the assessment, take into consideration how the circumstance may have affected the performance of the candidate.

The final decision is made by the Awarding Body(s) as to the amount of adjustment given. The maximum allowance available is 5% of the total raw marks for the component concerned. No feedback of the adjustment received from the Awarding Body(s) is ever provided to the Trust or the candidate.

23.0 Absence from Exams (Including written, on-screen, orals, practicals, controlled assessments, and submission of NEA/coursework.)

23.1 It is made clear to students that holidays **must not** be taken during term time, including the examination period, and that attendance at all examinations for which students have been entered is compulsory. This compulsion extends to resits; once a student has submitted a resit form they are required by the Trust to sit that examination.

23.2 All students are informed of the JCQ Contingency Days, and must be available up to an including the date of the final Contingency Day.

23.3 The impact of students failing to attend examinations is clear.

- Students risk failing courses or severely compromising their performance, undermining the overall results of the Trust and the future academic and employment opportunities of students.
- Loss of entry fees paid by the Trust.
- Staff time is wasted as teachers, Heads of Faculty/Department/Curriculum Team Leaders and the Examinations Team investigate reasons for absence.
- The effort and resources of staff and students in preparing students for examinations are wasted.

23.4 The Trust has adopted a zero-tolerance approach to failure to attend examinations where there is not a clear, legitimate, and approved reason. This policy intends to set out the actions which follow a student's failure to attend an examination with the objective of preventing, or at least minimising, non-attendance at examinations.

23.5 All possible attempts must be made to take all examinations as public exams cannot be rearranged to suit individuals, the Trust or any other reason.

23.6 There are some legitimate reasons why a student may not be able to attend, such as emergency hospital admittance, genuine illness with supporting medical evidence proving they are medically unfit to sit the exam or a sudden close family bereavement. The Exams Officer should be informed at the earliest possibility so that they can offer advice and whether the student might be eligible for special consideration as an absent candidate.

23.7 An overall grade can only be issued if the candidate has a genuine absence, has completed the full course and has met Awarding Body criteria

23.8 In the event of a student missing an examination and the Exams Officer is not informed and/or there is an unacceptable reason, there might potentially be no further opportunity to sit the examination and this might mean that completion of the course and/or continued study becomes unviable. In such situations, the Trust reserves the right to withdraw a student from a qualification or withdraw their place at college/school 6th Form.

- 23.9 In the event of a student missing an examination and the Exams Officer is not informed and/or there is an unacceptable reason, the college may take appropriate disciplinary action via the college's formal intervention procedures / contracts. Where there are already serious concerns the college reserves the right to withdraw a student's place at college/school 6th Form.
- 23.10 In the event of a student missing an examination and the Exams Officer is not informed and/or there is an unacceptable reason, the student may be required to pay a fee to cover reasonable costs associated with examination entry fees and costs associated with the administering and invigilating of examinations, in accordance with the Trust's Fees Policy. If a student fails to pay the required fee in full by the given deadline, a student may not be permitted to enter any further examinations Trust therefore reserves the right to withdraw a student's place from a qualification or withdraw their place at college/school 6th Form.
- 23.11 The Trust may also take appropriate disciplinary action if students fail to attend other significant internal examinations such as formal mock exams or formal progression exams and may similarly require appropriate evidence, such as medical evidence, to verify a legitimate absence. In some circumstances, where there are already significant concerns, students that fail to attend progression exams in Year 12 may not be permitted to progress into Year 13, or their places at college/school 6th Form may be withdrawn.

24.0 Exam Late Arrivals

- 24.1 In the event of a student arriving late for an exam their admittance into the examination room is entirely at the discretion of the Centre.
- 24.2 If the candidate has arrived within one hour of the published start time, the candidate will be allowed entry and given the full-time allowance (where possible). All time taken by late candidates is recorded by the invigilators. The student is given a verbal warning about the importance of arriving on time for examinations.
- 24.3 If the candidate arrives more than one hour after the published start time but the exam is still in progress, the candidate is made aware that the awarding body may not accept their paper for marking, but they are given the opportunity to sit the exam with the full time allowance wherever possible. Supervision should be organised. The candidate will be asked to provide a written statement immediately after the exam to the Exams Officer, providing a full explanation in their own words as to why they arrived late. If they do not provide this, then the report will be submitted without their statement, based on their verbal explanation. It is unlikely that an exam paper is accepted for marking due to the awarding bodies being unable to guarantee the security and integrity of the paper if they have arrived more than one hour after the published start times.
- 24.4 The candidate's written statement will be submitted along with a report by the Exams Officer to the relevant awarding body within 5 days of the exam date.
- 24.5 If the candidate arrives after the exam has ended and the students have been allowed to leave the venue, the late candidate will not be allowed to sit the exam. The candidate will be asked to provide a written statement giving the reasons why they were unable to arrive on time for the exam.

25.0 Procedure Following Examination Absence

- 25.1 For Colleges, the candidate's absence is recorded on an Exams Tracking spreadsheet with the reason for absence being noted if provided
- 25.2 For Schools, the candidate's absence is recorded by the Exams Officer with the reason for absence being noted if provided
- 25.3 In all cases, the Exams Senior Leadership Link reviews the reason for absence and students will be charged in line with the Trust's Fees Policy if they fail to attend without good reason

26.0 Disciplinary Action for Unauthorised Absence

- 26.1 The expectation of the Trust is that when a student fails to attend an examination and the Exams Senior Leadership Link deems the absence to be unauthorised, relevant sanctions will normally be made in line with the Student Behaviour and Attendance Policy (Colleges) or the Student Attendance and Punctuality Policy (Schools).
- 26.2 In complex cases, or in cases where there is disagreement, the Head of Centre will have the final decision.

27.0 Exam Results

- 27.1 Candidates are notified about times and dates when their results will be available for collection. Information for obtaining results will also be displayed on the College/School websites. College students should bring their Student ID card with them when collecting results. Results cannot be given over the telephone or sent by email. Results belong to the students and will not be given to a third party without the candidate's written authorisation.
- 27.2 In the event of a traditional 'Results Day' being cancelled (where students cannot visit the Centre to collect their results in person), arrangements will be made for students to access their results.
- 27.3 Results can be posted out on the official release date if requested in writing by the student. They should leave an SAE with the Exams Office prior to the results day.
- 27.4 No results will be divulged to any third party, this includes parents/carers, without written consent from the student.

28.0 Certificates

For students who attended one of the Colleges, certificates are available to collect, in the January following the year you left College for any results achieved in the previous academic year.

Former students may collect their certificates from the main reception. Photo ID is required to collect in all cases. A notice on the College websites will remind students of when and how to collect their certificates.

No certificates will be released to any third party, this includes parents/carers, without written consent from the student.

For students who attended one of the schools, there will be a Certificate Presentation Evening which students will be invited to in the Autumn Term of the year they left School.

If students are unable to attend the Certificate Presentation Evening, they may collect them from the main reception after that event has taken place. Photo ID is required to collect in all cases. A notice on the school website will remind students of when and how to collect their certificates.

No certificates will be released to any third party, this includes parents/carers, without written consent from the student.

28.1 Proxy In-Person Collection

Candidates are required to sign to confirm that they have received certificates and that they are correct. Any candidate unable to collect them in person, needs to give written authorisation for someone else to collect and check them on their behalf. This may be a letter addressed to the Exams Office or an email to exams@nclt.ac.uk (for Colleges) or examsteam@nclt.ac.uk for Brinsworth Academy, din-exams@nclt.ac.uk for Dinnington High School or WFA-exams@nclt.ac.uk for Wingfield Academy. The letter/email should state the candidate's full name, date of birth, contact number and the name of who will collect them. The person collecting them must show some form of their own self-identification (photo ID).

No certificates will be released to any third party, this includes parents/carers, without written consent from the student.

28.2 Certificates to be Posted

Certificates can be sent out via recorded delivery as a last resort.

For Colleges, written authorisation must be provided to exams@nclt.ac.uk ~~the Exams Office~~ giving the student reference number, candidate's full name, date of birth, address, and contact number.

For Schools, written authorisation must be provided to examsteam@nclt.ac.uk for Brinsworth Academy, din-exams@nclt.ac.uk for Dinnington High School or WFA-exams@nclt.ac.uk for Wingfield Academy, giving the candidate's full name, date of birth, address, and contact number.

In all cases payment must be made via the appropriate online payment system for the appropriate amount to cover postage and administration (£7.50 UK, £10 Europe, £12 15 rest of world – all non-refundable).

No certificates will be released to any third party, this includes parents/carers, without written consent from the student.

28.3 Uncollected / Replacement Certificates

All candidates are advised to collect their certificates, as the Trust is only required to keep certificates for twelve months. Certificates would then have to be replaced/re-

issued by a student's direct application to the applicable Awarding Bodies at a substantial fee (approximately £45.00 each).

Receipts for collected certificates will be retained for 5 years. A record of any certificates confidentially disposed of will be retained for 5 years from the date of disposal.

29.0 Contingency Plans

Separate Contingency Plans are in place for Schools and Colleges which will cover all aspects of examination/assessment administration and delivery and is linked to the Trust Business Continuity Plan. This will allow members of the Trust Senior Leadership Team to act immediately in the event of an emergency or staff absence. The examination contingency plans will reinforce procedures in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations, or on results day, owing to an unforeseen emergency.

The plans will cover the following scenarios:

- the head of centre, relevant senior leader(s) with oversight of examination and assessment administration, SENCo, Trust Examinations Manager, Examinations Officer or any other key staff essential to the examination process being absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle
- the potential impact of other events such as flooding which could lead to all or parts of the centre becoming unavailable
- potential issues with the centre's IT systems.

As part of the contingency plans, we will identify an alternative site if examinations cannot be conducted at the registered address.

Each centre will 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.

Each centre must ensure that candidates' work is backed-up and should consider the contingency of candidates' work being backed-up on two separate devices, including one off-site back-up. Centres must implement appropriate security arrangements which protect candidates' work in the event of IT system corruption and cyber-attacks.

29.1 Exams Officer Absence

In the event of an exam officer's absence the Trust Examinations Manager/SLT Exams Lead will oversee the duties at the site referencing the contingency plan.

29.2 Trust Examinations Manager Absence

In the event of the Trust Examinations Manager's absence the Chief Operating Officer with responsibility for exams will cover the role.

30.0 Resilience Arrangements

The Trust must ensure they are familiar with the regulators' guidance on ensuring resilience in the qualifications system. The Trust has in place a process for gathering evidence of candidate performance in line with the published guidance.

31.0 Cyber Security

The head of centre and Trust Director of IT must ensure there are procedures in place to maintain the security of user accounts by:

- providing training for authorised staff on the importance of creating strong unique passwords and keeping all account details secret
- providing training for staff on awareness of all types of social engineering/ phishing attempts
- enabling additional security settings wherever possible
- updating any passwords that may have been exposed
- setting up secure account recovery options
- reviewing and managing connected applications
- monitoring accounts and regularly reviewing account access, including removing access when no longer required
- 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*
Authorised staff will have access, where necessary, to a device which complies with awarding bodies' multi-factor authentication (MFA) requirements.
- reporting any actual or suspected compromise of an awarding body's online systems immediately to the relevant awarding body

32.0 Purpose of the Trust Escalation process

To confirm the main duties and responsibilities to be escalated should the head of centre, or a member of the senior leadership team with oversight of examination administration, be absent.

32.1 Before examinations (Planning)

In the event of the absence of the head of centre or the member of senior leadership with oversight of examination administration, responsibility for implementing JCQ regulations and requirements relating to activity prior to examinations will be escalated to the Chief Operating Officer.

To support understanding of the regulations and requirements, the following JCQ publications will be referenced:

- General Regulations for Approved Centres
- Instructions for conducting examinations
- Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments
- Instructions for conducting coursework
- Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments
- Suspected Malpractice – Policies and Procedures
- A guide to the special consideration process

Main duties and responsibilities relate to:

- Third Party arrangements
- Centre status
- Confidentiality
- Communication
- Recruitment, selection and training of staff
- Internal governance arrangements
- Delivery of qualifications
- Public liability
- Conflicts of interest
- Controlled assessments, coursework and non-examination assessments
- Security of assessment materials
- National Centre Number Register
- Centre inspections

Additional JCQ publication for reference:

- JCQ Centre Inspection Service Changes
- Policies available for inspection

Specific JCQ publications for reference:

- General Regulations for Approved Centres
- Instructions for conducting examinations
- Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments
- Personal data, freedom of information and copyright

Additional JCQ publication for reference:

- Information for candidates – Privacy Notice

32.2 Before examinations (Entries and Pre-exams)

In the event of the absence of the head of centre or the member of senior leadership with oversight of examination administration, responsibility for implementing JCQ regulations and requirements relating to entries and exam preparation will be escalated to the Chief Operating Officer.

To support understanding of the regulations and requirements, sections of relevant JCQ publications will be specifically referenced including:

- General Regulations for Approved Centres
- Instructions for conducting examinations
- Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments

Main duties and responsibilities relate to:

- Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments
- Entries

Additional JCQ publications for reference:

- Key dates
- Guidance Notes for Transferred Candidates
- Alternative Site guidance notes
- Guidance notes for overnight supervision of candidates with a timetable variation
- Centre assessed work

Additional JCQ publication for reference:

- Guidance Notes – Centre Consortium Arrangements
- Candidate information

Additional JCQ publications for reference:

- Information for candidates documents
- Exam Room Posters

32.3 During examinations (Exam time)

In the event of the absence of the head of centre or the member of senior leadership with oversight of examination administration, responsibility for implementing JCQ regulations and requirements relating to during exam time will be escalated to the Chief Operating Officer.

To support understanding of the regulations and requirements, sections of relevant JCQ publications will be specifically referenced including:

- General Regulations for Approved Centres
- Instructions for conducting examinations
- Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments
- A guide to the special consideration process

Main duties and responsibilities relate to:

- Conducting examinations and assessments

Additional JCQ publication for reference:

- Guidance Notes – Very Late Arrival
- Malpractice

- Retention of candidates' work

32.4 After examinations (Results and Post-Results)

In the event of the absence of the head of centre or the member of senior leadership with oversight of examination administration, responsibility for implementing JCQ regulations and requirements relating to after examinations will be escalated to the Chief Operating Officer.

To support understanding of the regulations and requirements, sections of relevant JCQ publications will be specifically referenced including:

- General Regulations for Approved Centres

Main duties and responsibilities relate to:

- Results

Additional JCQ publication for reference:

- Release of Results notice
- Post-results services and appeals

Additional JCQ publications for reference:

- Post-Results Services (Information and guidance to centres)
- JCQ Appeals Booklet (A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes)
- Certificates

33.0 Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing at the colleges/academies is encouraged, not penalised, and staff are made aware that they have a duty to report any concerns they have about the conduct of examinations. This process involved is detailed in the Trust Whistleblowing policy.

34.0 Recognition of Prior Learning

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a method of assessment [leading to the award of credit] that considers whether learners can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and so not need to develop through a course of learning.

Regulatory arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework (Ofqual/08/3726)

The colleges/academy recognises the RPL enables recognition of achievement from a range of activities using any appropriate methodology. Provided that the assessment requirements of a given unit or qualification have been met, the use of RPL is acceptable for accrediting a unit or a whole qualification. Evidence of learning must be valid and reliable.

34.1 Scope

This policy applies to qualifications on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), the Qualifications and credit Framework (QCF) and other national frameworks, self-regulated qualifications and the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for Higher Education. However, where learning is evidenced only through a national examination, the learner is required to sit the examination, e.g. General Qualifications such as GCSEs or GCE are not within the scope of this policy.

34.2 Responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to give full and active support for the policy by ensuring: The policy is known, understood and implemented.

34.3 Principles to Implement and Develop Policy

RPL is a valid method of enabling individuals to claim credit for units, irrespective of how their learning took place. There is no difference between the achievement of the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of a unit through prior learning or through a formal programme of study

RPL processes, procedures, practices and decisions should be transparent, rigorous, reliable, fair and accessible to individuals and stakeholders to ensure that users can be confident of the decisions and outcomes of RPL.

RPL is a learner-centred, voluntary (for the learner) process. The individual should be offered advice on the nature and range of evidence considered appropriate, to support a claim for credit through RPL, and be given guidance and support to make a claim.

The process of assessment for RPL is subject to the same quality assurance and monitoring standards as any other form of assessment. The award of credit through RPL will not be distinguished from any other credits awarded.

Assessment methods for RPL must be of equal rigour to other assessment methods, be fit for purpose and relate to the evidence of learning. Credit may be claimed for any unit through RPL unless the assessment requirements of the unit do not allow this, based on a rationale consistent with the aims and regulations of the framework.

Where units are assessed against assessment criteria or grading criteria, then all evidence must be evaluated using the stipulated criteria. In assessing a unit using RPL the assessor must be satisfied that the evidence produced by the learner meets the assessment standard established by the learning outcome and its related assessment criteria. The evidence must be authentic, current, relevant and sufficient.

The prior learning that would provide evidence of current knowledge understanding and skills will vary from sector to sector. It will depend on the extent of the experience, technological changes and the nature of the outcome claimed. If the currency of any evidence is in doubt, the assessor may use questions to check understanding, and for competence.

The assessment and award of credit must take into account the relevant validating or awarding body regulations pertaining to RPL.

The rules, regulations and procedures governing the recognition of prior learning should be included in the student handbook given to every student when joining the programme/course.

A student should have the right to appeal when an application for credit is unsuccessful.

34.4 Student Entitlements

All students shall be entitled to apply for RPL providing they meet the specific requirements of the validating /awarding body governing the qualification for which they are studying.

A student who makes an initial enquiry about RPL should be given timely and appropriate guidance and support on the rules, regulations and processes involved in accreditation.

A student may appeal against the credit points awarded but only on the grounds of non-observance of agreed procedures and/or improper application of those procedures.

34.5 Student Responsibilities

The student must complete a credit claim form, and provide evidence to show that the requirements of the unit, module or part of a unit, or module have been covered.

The student must consult with the agreed subject specialist in the preparation of his/her evidence.

Students applying for credit must agree an action plan to enable him/her to obtain the award s/he is aiming for.

Students must agree to attend any further oral assessments or appropriate assessments if initial evidence is deemed to be unsatisfactory for the RPL assessor.

34.6 Teaching staff's responsibilities

To provide support and encouragement to all students wishing to claim credit for prior learning.

Following initial enquiries by any student the member of staff should place the student in contact with a subject specialist.

The subject specialist should develop, with the student, an action plan to address the learning outcomes of the programme.

The subject specialist should identify the evidence needed to support the claim for credit and explain how this evidence will be assessed and by whom.

Ensure that the student claiming credit is enrolled with the Centre for a specific award/qualification.

To notify MIS of any student claiming credits by RPL or using units gained from one qualification towards the next level of achievement.

34.7 Management responsibilities

Senior Leadership Teams at all Colleges/Schools should ensure that:

- All staff are fully conversant with this policy and the demands it places on them.
- All appropriate staff are competent to undertake their roles and responsibilities in the procedures for verification and recognition of prior learning.
- Staff development is made available to those staff not conversant with or competent to undertake the procedures for RPL.

35.0 Conflicts of Interest

The Head of Centre should ensure that conflicts of interest are managed 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
- 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
- Are taking qualifications at their own centre which do not include internally assessed components/units
- Are taking qualifications at other centres

And of exams office staff who:

- 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

A declaration of interest form is sent to all staff via an online form in September. Submitted data is returned to the Trust Exams Manager before the published deadline for entries. A conflicts of interest log is maintained, and any potential conflict declared by NCLT staff is centrally recorded on the log. The relevant awarding body(ies) are informed (where required by the nature of the conflict) of specific conflicts of interest/centre staff declarations before the published deadline for entries for each examination series by identifying and following the individual awarding body's administrative process. The agreed measures/protocols taken/put in place to mitigate any potential risk to the integrity of the qualifications affected are recorded on the log and the affected member of staff informed of these measures/protocols.

Policy Status

Policy Lead (Title)	Trust Examinations Manager	Review Period	Annually
Reviewed By	Trust Executive Team	Equality Impact Assessment Completed (Y/N)	Y

POLICY AMENDMENTS

Version	Approval Date	Page No./Paragraph No.	Amendment	Audience	Plan for Communicating Amendments
Version 1	24/11/2020			NCLT College Staff, students and parents.	Moodle NCLT Website
Version 2	09/11/2021		See HR for historical copies		Moodle NCLT Website
Version 3 Updated by Brendon Fletcher/ Andy Woodcock/ Georgina Lawrence	26/04/2022		See HR for historical copies		Moodle NCLT Website
Version 4 Updated by Andy Woodcock/ Georgina Lawrence	18/11/2022		This now includes: the Trust NEA Policy, Trust Escalation Process Refers the Trust Whistleblowing policy. Recognition of Prior Learning	NCLT Secondary School and College staff, students and parents.	SharePoint and NCLT website
Version 5 Updated by Andy Woodcock/ Georgina Lawrence	20/09/2023			NCLT Secondary School and College staff, students and parents.	SharePoint and NCLT website
Version 6	TET 18/11/24	Section 2 Section 3 Section 5 Section 6 Section 15 Section 28 Section 29 Section 31 Throughout	Addition of further detail to Head of Centre role and other postholder responsibilities Equality obligations set out in further detail Removal of Section 5 – separate 'Non-examination Assessments Policy' produced. Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments further detail RoM updated for schools Further Access Arrangements detail Access Arrangement adjustments guidance updated Malpractice definition updated and actions Certificate posted charge increased Contingency Plans arrangements updated Cyber Security updated General updating throughout.	NCLT Secondary School and College staff, students and parents	SharePoint and NCLT website