



Exams Policy 2025-2028

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*This policy may need to be reviewed before the review date stated to reflect changes in government and other agencies' advice, guidance and legislation. **This policy utilises the JCQ template to ensure compliance with JCQ regulations for examinations.**

Revision Log

Date	Version No.	Brief detail of change
July 25	1	

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1. Introduction

City College Plymouth (the 'College') is a leading provider of vocational, professional and technical training in the South West, that strives to provide a learning environment and organisational culture that impacts positively on the health, wellbeing and sustainability of our community, to enable all our students and staff to achieve their full potential. The College is also referred to as 'the Centre' throughout this policy.

The term 'College Community' includes all staff, governors, students, parents/carers, volunteers and visitors.

Our vision:

- The learning destination of choice

Our core values:

- Respect
- Ownership
- Integrity

2. Policy Statement

The purpose of this exams policy is:

- to ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interest of students, providing a positive input into the student journey experience.
- to ensure the operation of an efficient exam system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.

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

This exam policy will be reviewed every three years by the Exams Manager.

3. Exam Responsibilities

The Principal/CEO has overall responsibility for the College as an Exam Centre. The Exams team manages the administration of all external and internal exams, except for certain short course exams.

Roles & responsibilities of the Exams Manager;

The Exams Manager is familiar with the entire contents of JCQ publications, and refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publications including;

- JCQ General regulations for approved centres
 - JCQ Instructions for conducting Examinations
 - JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments
 - Instructions for conducting coursework
 - Instruction for conducting NEAs (non Examined Assessments)
 - Suspected malpractice in Examinations and Assessment
- Ensures a policy demonstrating the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place and ensures the assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations
 - Supports the Learning Support & Inclusion Manager in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements
 - Leads on the access arrangements process to facilitate access for students
 - Ensures that all assessments carried out and arrangements put in place comply with JCQ and awarding Organisation regulations and guidance
 - Line manages the Examination team, ensuring that workflow is maintained and strategic College targets are achieved.
 - Organises the recruitment, training and ongoing monitoring of a team of Exam Invigilators who are responsible for the conduct of exams.
 - Maintains and reviews systems and processes to support the timely entry of students for their exams.
 - Accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.

The Exams Manager/team;

- Advises relevant staff, including Curriculum Lead Development Officers (CLDOs), Programme Managers, teaching staff and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as stipulated by the various exam boards.
- Oversees the production and distribution to staff of an annual calendar for all exams involved and communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events.
- It is then the curriculum/delivery teams responsibility to share this information with learners and ensure they are informed of and understand those aspects of the exam timetable that will affect them.
- Organises mock assessments.
- Provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries.
- Receives, checks and stores securely, all exam papers and completed scripts.
- Ensures there are sufficient exam materials and spare copies.
- Administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration using the JCQ Access arrangements and special considerations regulations and Guidance relating to students who are eligible for adjustments in examinations.
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- Submits student assessment marks.

- Tracks, dispatches and stores any returned coursework, and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to students and provides relevant information regarding Exam Board requirements.

The Exams team also provides support to the following staff in the following situations.

Curriculum Managers (CLDOs and Programme Managers):

- Providing clarification and support to those students who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries.
- Involvement in post-results procedures, such as data interrogation of results.
- Aid in the process of completing assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- Accurate completion of entry sheets and adherence to deadlines.
- Alterations of course/entry/levels.

Delivery Staff (Lecturing/Teaching Staff/Tutors/Assessors):

- Additions or removals from student exam entry lists.
- Arrangements of exams and coursework:
 - support for the input of data
 - communication with the awarding bodies
 - posting of exam papers
 - post-results procedures

Learning Support:

- Liaising with Learning Support to ensure that Access Arrangements are implemented for students in a timely manner.
- Administration of access arrangements to ensure that the student is fully aware of the arrangements that have been put in place for forthcoming exams.
- Ensure that all invigilators are fully trained regarding special arrangements and that they are aware of the requirements of the role.

Lead invigilator/invigilators:

- Collection of exam papers and other material from the Exams team before the start of the exam.
- Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the Exams Office.

4. Qualifications

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by Curriculum Leaders, with input from delivery staff, corporate support teams, students and employers. This is then agreed at Executive level via the Skills Planning Process. The College currently

delivers a range of qualifications from Entry Level to Level 7 including, Vocational, Technical, T levels and Apprenticeships.

Some of the Awarding Organisations used by the College are;

- AQA, Pearson/Edexcel, City & Guilds, OCR, UAL, NCFE, EAL, NOCN, CAVA, VTCT, OCN London and YMCA.

The College is also accredited to deliver HNC, Foundation and top-up Bachelors through the University of Plymouth.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found on the College website.

5. Exam Season, Timetables and Clashes

All internal exams are held under external exam conditions. The exam series used by the centre is decided by the Executive of Curriculum, Quality and Student Experience. The Exams Manager will check crucial dates set by the exams board to create a schedule focussed on fairness for all students, ensuring that exams align with the College calendar.

Timetables;

The Exams team will input the students timetables on to Pro solution. These can be viewed by Curriculum staff and students on Pro solution Web and Pro portal. The students will also receive a text message with their exam details.

6. Entries, Late Entries and Retakes/Remarks

Entries;

Students are selected for their exam entries by the relevant curriculum/delivery staff.

The Exams team will accept withdrawals, amendments and changes to students' programmes of study within parameters set by the Awarding Organisation. Only changes submitted and approved via pro solution will be processed by the Exams Manager/team.

Late entries;

The deadlines for late entries are circulated to Curriculum teams via the Exams team. The Exams team will accept entry amendments and withdrawals up to the dates set by the College.

Retakes/Remarks;

Retake/remark decisions are made in consultation with the relevant Curriculum staff member, the ultimate decision regarding this will be made by the Executive of Curriculum, Quality and Student Experience in consultation with the relevant Curriculum Lead Development Officer.

7. Exam Fees

Exams Fees are approved by the Exams Manager via the Exams budget and in many cases this is covered by government funding. If registration and exam fees are due to be paid by the student, the Colleges MIS team would deal with this.

Where required, reimbursement of fees will be sought from students who fail to sit an exam or meet the necessary coursework requirements without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances.

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

8. The Exam Disability Responsibility, Special Needs and Access Arrangements

The Equality Act 2010 replaced the Disability Discrimination Act and ensures that disabled individuals have the right to "reasonable adjustments" to access jobs and services. It is a legal obligation to provide access for disabled people. Colleges must proactively address barriers that hinder disabled students. Curriculum leaders should consider the variety of disabilities among students. The Act also mandates that awarding organisations make reasonable adjustments to prevent disabled learners from being at a significant disadvantage compared to non-disabled learners.

The College should take all feasible actions to implement reasonable adjustments, ensuring equal access for learners who face significant disadvantages compared to those without disabilities or difficulties.

Access Arrangements;

Access arrangements are pre-agreed reasonable adjustments that are made for individual students to ensure that they can access exams and have the same opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and abilities, as other learners.

- Assessment arrangements may be varied for students with disabilities and/or difficulties. The nature of any special arrangement depends largely upon the qualification being delivered and the assessment strategy employed.
- Each case must be considered individually.

- Delivery staff who consider that a learner is eligible for special consideration or access arrangements should contact the Learning Support Team and Exams Manager at the earliest opportunity in the academic year, so that a request can be submitted to the Awarding organisation, requesting permission to make special arrangements and citing any supporting evidence.
- Learners eligible for special consideration or access arrangements would normally have an established diagnosis of difficulty e.g. dyslexia or visual impairment.

Identifying the need for access arrangements;

If students coming from school with an EHCP (Educational Health and Care Plan) don't require additional testing, an Assessor will meet with them to determine their concessions and gain their consent for the agreed Access Arrangements. Any learners with a formal diagnosis (with the required medical evidence) such as ASC or ADHD would also not require further testing. Learners with a Note in Lieu Non statutory EHCP My Plan report, will be tested as a priority so their exam concessions can be put in place if they have no formal diagnosis.

Next in line for testing will be students who have disclosed a learning difficulty on their application forms, with confirmation of diagnosis, which places them on the SEN Register.

Tutors will ask all students if they previously received Access Arrangements or have a current learning need which could impact on exam performance. Tutors will complete a Tutor Feedback Form, detailing the student's current difficulties and normal way of working, and return this to the Learning Support Team. This will then be forwarded to the Exam Concessions Assessors who will make contact with the student for assessment.

Following Access Arrangement testing, a report will be produced indicating which concessions, if any, have been granted. These arrangements will be determined by the SENCo or an equivalent member of staff. Teachers of the individual student will be alerted via Pro Monitor, with details of the Access Arrangement/s granted. The report will also be attached to Pro Solution for future reference.

The following arrangements may be provided;

- Coloured and/or enlarged paper
- A reader (Note: only for exams specified in JCQ regulations)
- A scribe/Word Processor with spellcheck enabled
- Extra time (25%)
- Amplification equipment
- Low vision aid/magnifier
- Optical Character Reader (OCR) scanner
- Providing Braille papers for a blind or partially sighted student
- Bilingual Translation Dictionaries (only for exams, cited in JCQ guidance)
- Prompts
- Alternative rooming arrangements away from the main examination room, i.e for a smaller group of students with similar needs

- The use of word processors, computers, laptops and tablets, with the spelling and grammar check/predictive text disabled
- Extra time (over 25% and up to 50%) for students with significant needs (very rare circumstances relating to EHCP students)
- A practical assistant (students with physical/sensory needs)
- A Communication Professional (for students with hearing loss)
- Computer reader (From 2025/26 Academic year)

Lecturers must give the Exams Office 4 weeks notice of a formal examination so they can notify awarding organisations of any access arrangements required, prior to the exam taking place.

It is the lecturer's responsibility to mirror these arrangements as far as possible in the classroom. Any access arrangement made for external examinations must also be made for internal assessments such as mocks, or internal verified assignments.

Other adjustments can be managed internally without applying to the awarding organisations. Examples:

- Supervised rest breaks, for learners that have low concentration levels or Social, Emotional or Mental Health difficulties e.g anxiety
- A scribe for a learner with a broken arm
- A separate room for a pregnant learner needing to stand up or use the facilities frequently
- Coloured overlays

For non-examined assessments please refer to the relevant awarding organisation specification which will include information and guidance on access to qualifications for learners with disabilities or specific needs.

Requesting access arrangements;

Students who may require access arrangements are identified during the admissions process. The Learning Support department produces a diagnostic report which they will forward to the Exams Team and to the wider College staff, this will include further details regarding the diagnosis. It remains the Tutors responsibility to advise the exams team that the student requires "access arrangements" when the exam booking is made.

Course tutors identifying students who may require access arrangements after the start of the course, should complete an exam concession application form at the earliest opportunity, to ensure arrangements are made as soon as possible after the start of the course.

When the Exams Office has been informed (within the Awarding Organisation deadlines for allocating special arrangements) it is the responsibility of the Exams Office to make the application. Students are made aware of their arrangements at the end of their meeting with the Exams Concession Team. Students sign the consent form at that point to confirm arrangements.

An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

9. Arranging Examinations

The Exams Manager/team will book all exam rooms after liaising with Timetabling.

The question papers, other exam stationery and materials will be packed ahead of time and made available for the invigilator on the morning or afternoon of the exam.

Site Services will be responsible for setting up the allocated room and will be advised by the Exams Manager with regards to the number of desks/chairs required.

The lead invigilator will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines. Awarding organisations published starting time for all morning examinations is 9.00am and 1.30pm for all afternoon examinations. These are known as the morning and afternoon sessions.

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

In practical exams subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties. Subject staff must not be in the room once the exam has started, and must not read the exam paper.

10. Clash Students

The College must not vary the timetable if a timetabled examination clashes with any of the following;

- work experience;
- school function or closure;
- a field trip;
- sporting events below international level;
- holidays and weddings;
- a candidate's personal arrangements;
- school transport arrangements.

In exceptional cases, JCQ guidelines will be followed, for example;

- If the cohort size prevents all students from taking the exam at once, the college may divide the group into two, with one group sitting the exam at a different time than the awarding body's published schedule.

- If students are taking two or more examinations timetabled for the same session and the total time is more than three hours including approved extra time allowances and/or supervised rest breaks, the college will conduct one examination in a later or earlier session within the same day.

Overnight Supervision Arrangements;

Overnight supervision arrangements should only be applied as a last resort and once all other options have been exhausted. In this instance, JCQ guidelines would be followed.

11. Preparing for the Examinations

Securing Question Papers and Examination Material;

Before examinations, all question papers and materials will be stored in a secure room with a secure storage facility to maintain the integrity and security of the exam. The Exams team will keep records of the receipt, secure movement, and storage of these materials. If the security is compromised, awarding organisations will be notified immediately.

The Exams Team will verify and organise the materials in the secure location, ensuring only authorised personnel access them. The exam materials will be checked and confirmed correct no later than the next working day after delivery, and they will be arranged according to the timetable to prevent early opening of confidential materials.

The awarding organisation must be contacted immediately if:

- a package appears to have been opened in transit.
- there is a difference between material and delivery note
- the material has been damaged in transit.
- the material does not meet our needs.
- the material has been received in error.

The secure room and secure storage facilities;

- Is restricted to two key holders, one is the Exams Manager and another is with a full time member of the exams team.
- The secure storage has the capacity to hold up to three weeks of exam material.
- All examination stationary, answer booklets and formula booklets are stored in the secure room.
- This is only to be used for current or live confidential material; mocks, internal assessments and past papers are not kept within the same storage area.
- Question papers must always be kept in their sealed packets until signed out for the appropriate exam session.

Only authorised members of the exam team, between two and six individuals, are allowed to handle electronic question papers and materials. The awarding organisation sets the release times for downloading, printing, and collating electronic materials. The integrity and security of the papers must be maintained at all times. Once printed, question papers must be sealed in a non-transparent envelope, clearly labeled with the exam details.

Removing Question Papers and Examination Material;

A second member of the exams team, in addition to the person removing the question paper packets from secure storage, must verify the day, date, time, subject, unit/component, and tier of entry before opening the packet. This check must be recorded. The second person helps reduce the risk of overlooking errors. If the wrong question paper is opened, it must be resealed, and the incident reported immediately to the awarding organisation's Malpractice Investigation Team.

Question paper packets should be;

- Taken to the designated examination rooms as close to the start of the examination as possible.
- They must not be removed from the College's secure storage facility and taken to the designated examination rooms any earlier than 60 minutes prior to the awarding body's published starting time for the examination.
- **The question papers must not be left unattended.**

Start Times for Examinations;

Awarding Organisations published starting time for all morning examinations is 9.00am and 1.30pm for all afternoon examinations.

12. Managing Invigilators and Examinations

Managing Invigilators;

Invigilators have a key role in upholding the integrity of external examinations / assessment processes. Invigilators ensure that exams are conducted in accordance with JCQ regulations.

The College will utilise members of the Exams team on a day to day basis for invigilation of exams, the College also uses a team of bank trained invigilators regularly throughout the year. During busy exam periods the College will utilise other trained members of staff within the College.

The recruitment and training of invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams Manager. The Exams Manager will ensure that all Invigilators are aware of and comply with the JCQ checklist for Invigilators. A copy of this is provided to invigilators with their exams packs prior to each exam. All College and bank staff adhere to the Colleges Safer Recruitment processes and as such DBS checks are completed every 3 years.

The Exams Manager is responsible for;

- Providing training to invigilators (annually) ensuring that invigilator competence and understanding is tested
- Maintaining a record of training and content delivered, along with attendees
- Ensuring Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Exams Office prior to exams

Student rules:

- JCQ rules on learner use of mobile phones and all electronic devices apply at all times. Learners must not be in possession of the following items:
 - AirPods
 - Earphones/earbuds
 - iPods
 - Mobile phones
 - MP3/4 players or similar devices
 - Watches
 - Smart glasses
 - Any other smart devices
- Normal centre rules on dress and behaviour apply; students are not permitted to retain their coats on the backs of their chairs or to wear hats (apart for religious reasons at which time JCQ Rules apply) in order for invigilation staff to clearly identify participating students
- Students' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and will be either stored at bag drop off zones or stored at the rear of the room and the Centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.
- Any pencil cases taken into the examination room must be see-through;
- Disruptive students are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices in Exams**Paper-Based Exams:**

- **Prohibition of Electronic Devices:**
 - Mobile phones, smartwatches, and other electronic devices are not permitted in the exam room (except for medical purposes - e.g. phones to monitor sugar levels of a diabetic student. In these circumstances, the invigilator will supervise the candidate should they need to check it.)
- **Storage of Unauthorised Items:**
 - Ideally, all unauthorised items should be left outside the exam room.
 - If students are unwilling to leave their belongings in designated storage areas, devices should be switched off and handed to the invigilator for safekeeping.
 - The invigilator will store the devices in a tray at the front of the room.

External Online Exams:

- **Application of Rules:**
 - The same rules regarding mobile phones and electronic devices apply to online exams.
- **Prohibition of External Aids:**
 - The use of external aids, particularly for spelling, punctuation, and grammar (e.g., dictionaries, spelling and grammar-checking software, or cloud-based/AI tools), are not permitted during online assessments.
- **Pre-Exam Preparation:**
 - External applications (such as dictionaries or grammar tools) should be disabled before the exam begins.
- **Vigilance During Exams:**
 - Invigilators must remain vigilant to detect any potential malpractice or misuse of AI tools during online exams

13. Preparation before Conducting Examinations

Examination Packs:

- The Exams Team will provide examination packs, which should be read by invigilators before students enter the room.
- These packs contain procedures for registering students, a script to read to students, and guidelines for handling lateness and leaving times.

Invigilator Responsibilities:

- **Examination Materials:** Ensure that the correct examination question papers are placed face-up on candidates' desks, along with any other required materials, including modified papers or papers on coloured paper.
- **Stationery:** Provide the official examination stationery (e.g, answer booklets and additional answer sheets) for the unit/component. No other stationery, including paper for rough work, can be provided.
- **Objective Tests/Personalised Papers:** If applicable, ensure that individual pre-printed answer sheets are provided for each candidate in subjects with objective tests or personalised question papers.
- **Restrictions on Items:** Ensure that candidates have no access to items other than those listed in the instructions on the question paper, the stationery list, or the subject specification.
- **Seating Plan:** Verify that candidates are seated according to the pre-arranged seating plan.

Prohibited Actions for Invigilators:

- Do not direct candidates to specific questions or sections of the question paper.
- Do not comment on or acknowledge any perceived errors or omissions on the question paper unless an official erratum notice has been issued or the awarding body has given permission.
- Do not read or rephrase any words or questions from the question paper, other than the instructions on the front cover.
- Do not explain subject-specific or technical terms, nor offer any advice or comments on the work.
- Do not provide any indication of the time elapsed or remaining, unless the candidate has been awarded a prompter. A five-minute warning may only be given at the end of the examination.

By following these procedures, invigilators will help maintain the integrity of the exam process and ensure a fair environment for all candidates.

14. During the Examination

Procedure for Invigilators:

- Invigilators must supervise candidates throughout the entire examination, giving full attention to this duty.
- Be vigilant for any incidents or emerging situations, such as malpractice, students feeling unwell, or needing a toilet break.
- All incidents must be recorded in the incident log.

Arriving Late:

- A student arriving after the exam start time may be allowed to sit the exam but must be granted the full examination time.
- If a student arrives more than one hour after the published start time (after 10:00 AM for a morning exam, or after 2:30 PM for an afternoon exam), they are considered "very late."
- In the case of very late arrivals, the Exams Team will send the script with a form that includes the time of arrival and the reason for lateness.

Registering Attendance:

- It is vital to accurately register attendance. Indicate students who are present, absent, or transferred.
- Report any absences to the Exams Manager so students can be contacted regarding their attendance.

Leaving the Examination Room:

- For exams lasting one hour or more, students must remain under supervision for at least one hour after the published start time.
- For exams shorter than one hour, students must remain in the room for the entire duration of the exam.
- Any student leaving the examination room temporarily must be accompanied by a member of staff, excluding the subject teacher or expert for that exam.
- Students finishing early must hand in their scripts, question papers, and any other materials before leaving and cannot re-enter the room.

Malpractice:

- If a student is disruptive, warn them they may be removed from the examination room and that the awarding body may impose penalties, including disqualification.
- The incident must be recorded, and support from the Exams Team should be sought.
- The Head of Centre has the authority to remove a student from the examination room if their presence would disrupt others.
- The Exams Manager is responsible for reporting the incident to the awarding organisation.

Emergencies:

- Follow the College's policy and any instructions from relevant agencies in case of emergencies.
- In emergencies such as a fire alarm or bomb threat, take the following steps:
 - Stop students from writing and collect the attendance register.
 - Evacuate the room as instructed by the appropriate authority.
 - Advise students to leave all question papers and scripts behind.
 - Supervise students closely while outside the examination room to prevent discussion about the exam.
 - Record the time of interruption and its duration.
 - Ensure students complete the exam in the remaining time allotted.

Incident Reporting:

- A full report must be produced and retained on file if required by the awarding organisation.

15. At the End of the Examination

Finishing the Examination:

- **Five-Minute Warning:** Invigilators are permitted to give a five-minute warning to students before the end of the examination.
- **End of Examination:** At the end of the examination, invigilators must:
 - Instruct students to stop working and remind them they are still under exam conditions.
 - Allow late-arriving students who were granted full working time to continue until their designated finish time.
 - Remind students to ensure all necessary information is written on their answer booklets and any additional answer sheets.
 - Collect any unused stationery and return it to the Examination Team.
 - Record any abnormalities or incidents during the exam and report them to the Exams Manager.

Collecting Scripts:

- **Collection of Materials:** Invigilators must:
 - Collect all scripts, objective test sheets, question papers, and any other materials from every student before allowing them to leave the exam room.
 - Ensure that the names on the scripts match the details on the attendance register and arrange the materials in the order shown on the register.
 - Confirm that students have used their correct centre and candidate number.
 - Hand over the examination materials to a member of the Exams Team.

Handling Scripts Securely:

- All staff, including invigilators, must ensure that scripts are handled securely at all times.

Discrepancies in Student Information:

- If a discrepancy is identified when checking the student and centre details against the attendance register:
 - The college may correct the discrepancy or add the missing information on the front of the answer booklet and/or any supplementary sheets.
 - Any corrections must be counter-signed on the script.

Secure Storage of Scripts:

- Scripts must be kept in a secure room until they are ready for collection.

After the Examination:

- **Packaging of Scripts:**

- Use plastic envelopes provided by the awarding body for dispatching scripts, regardless of the number of scripts.
- Ensure that each script or objective test sheet from the examination is included.
- Separate scripts for each unit/component should be packed in individual plastic envelopes.
- Include the relevant attendance register(s) with the scripts or objective test sheets. The attendance register must be sent even if no scripts are present due to candidates being absent or withdrawn.
- Ensure the correct and most up-to-date label is used for each unit/component; photocopied labels must not be used.

Sending Scripts and Handling Examination Materials

Sending Scripts:

- Scripts must be sent to the provided address on the same day as the exam. If not possible, send them the next working day.
- Ensure all scripts are dispatched within the designated delivery window.
- If using a non-secure despatch service, proof of postage or despatch is required.

Unused Stationery:

- Return unused stationery to the secure storage facility or secure room for future exams.
- Destroy any out-of-date stationery confidentially.

Releasing Question Papers:

- Do not release question papers across the college until after the awarding body's published finishing time or after all candidates have completed the exam.

16. Special Consideration

Special Consideration is a post examination adjustment to a student's mark or grade.

Eligibility for Special Consideration:

- Special consideration is available for students who experience temporary injury, illness, or other significant circumstances (e.g., family bereavement, mental ill health, miscarriage) at the time of the exam.

- It is not applicable to ongoing disabilities.
- Awarding organisations may grant up to 5% extra marks.

Student Responsibility:

- If a student is unable to sit the exam due to illness, bereavement, trauma, or becomes ill during the exam, they must inform the Centre as soon as possible.
- The student must provide evidence that they were incapacitated or materially affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control.
- This evidence must be submitted to the Exams Team within five days of the exam.

Submission of Application:

- The Exams Manager will submit the special consideration application to the Awarding Organisation for evaluation within 10 days of the exam.

Awarding Organisation Evaluation:

- The Awarding Organisation will review the special consideration request and communicate directly with the Exams Team.
- Any feedback, including potential mark adjustments, will be shared with the relevant individuals, including the student.

17. Exam Staff Responsibilities in Controlled Assessments

Controlled assessments are not covered by the JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations (ICE) and may involve assessments that are externally set and internally assessed, not necessarily in written form.

Refer to the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Handbook for additional guidance.

- Exam staff are responsible for the safe and secure conduct of controlled assessments.
- Ensure that all assessments comply with JCQ guidelines and subject-specific instructions from awarding bodies.

Coordination and Scheduling:

- At the start of the academic year, the Exams team will coordinate with Programme Managers to schedule controlled assessments.
- Map out the resource management requirements for the academic year, addressing:
 - Clashes or problems with the timing or operation of assessments.
 - Special requirements such as facilities (rooms, IT networks, etc.).

- Allocate invigilators and rooms where needed and ensure a clear calendar of events and deadlines is shared with all staff involved.

Student Entries:

- Ensure that students are entered for controlled assessments in accordance with awarding organisation deadlines.

Confidential Materials:

- If confidential materials are directly received by the exams office, ensure their safe receipt, storage, and transmission, whether in digital or hard copy format.

Mark Sheets:

- Download and distribute mark sheets for teachers/assessors to use in marking controlled assessments.

Accommodation and Support:

- In exceptional circumstances, arrange alternative accommodation for controlled assessments if they cannot be conducted in the classroom.
- Ensure that access arrangements are applied for and work with teaching staff to meet the requirements for support staff.

Invigilator Training:

- Ensure invigilators are appropriately trained and capable of carrying out their duties effectively.
- Maintain records of invigilator training

Authentication and Signatures:

- Ensure supervising teachers sign authentication forms upon completion of controlled assessments.

18. Coursework and Appeals

Coursework Submission:

- Students must submit coursework by the required date.

Record Keeping:

- Curriculum teams are responsible for maintaining internal records of assessment and tracking of learner progress.

- The Exams Team is responsible for maintaining up to date records with External Awarding organisations.

Marks Submission:

- Course tutors must provide marks for all internally assessed work to the Exams Team. The exams team will process all claims.

Appeals Against Internal Assessments:

- The College's appeal process can be found in the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment document, which is reviewed annually.

19. Results and Enquiries about Scripts

Results Distribution:

- Individual student statements of results will be distributed in class.
- If class distribution is not possible, students can collect their results from the Exams Team.
- Uncollected results will be posted to the students' home address.

Enquiries About Results:

- Students or Centre staff can request an enquiry about results if there are reasonable grounds to believe there has been an error in marking.
- If the enquiry is not upheld by the Centre, students may request the enquiry themselves, but will be charged if they proceed against the advice of subject staff.

Access to Scripts:

- After the release of results, students may ask Curriculum Leaders to request the return of their exam scripts within three days.
- If a result is queried, the Exams Manager, in collaboration with teaching staff or the Head of the Centre, will assess the possibility of requesting a re-mark at the Centre's expense.
- Centre staff can also request scripts for investigation or teaching purposes, but student consent and applicable fees must be considered before making the request.

20. Certificates

Certificate Posting:

- Certificates will be posted (first class) to the student's home address listed on Prosolution.
- It is the student's responsibility to inform the College of any address changes. If a student does not update their address, they are responsible for the cost of a replacement certificate.

Third-Party Collection:

- Certificates may be collected on behalf of a student by a third party, provided written and signed authorisation has been given.

Withholding Certificates:

- Certificates may be withheld from students who owe fees. The Exams Team will consult with the Finance Department to make this decision.
- A transcript of results may be issued if the student agrees to pay the incurred costs.

Retention of Certificates:

- The Centre will retain returned certificates for two years.

21. Contingency planning

The College's contingency plans focus on enabling learners to take their examinations if the College is at risk of being unable to open as normal.

Responsibility for Opening Decisions:

- The Head of the Centre is responsible for deciding whether it is safe for the College to open. They must take advice or follow instructions from relevant local or national agencies.

Mitigating Disruption to Assessments:

- The College offers qualifications with externally assessed components, many of which must be completed on specific dates or within an assessment window.
- This policy aims to mitigate disruptions that may prevent assessments and ensure learners can complete planned assessments with fair and valid outcomes.

Examples of Disruption:

- Criminal activity (e.g., bomb threat, cyber-attack)
- Supply shortages (e.g., transport issues)
- Significant damage to College property (e.g., fire)
- Severe weather (e.g., flooding)
- Public health incidents (e.g., pandemic)
- Local community incidents
- Serious injury to staff or learners
- Industrial action

Exams Manager Responsibilities:

- The Exams Manager is responsible for implementing the contingency plan to ensure minimal disruption to assessments.

Key Point

Our contingency plan ensures that external assessments can proceed whenever possible, focusing on learners whose progression may be affected by disruptions. Its purpose is to help centre staff respond effectively to emergencies

Situation	Considerations and possible mitigations
Staffing emergencies e.g. Invigilator or Learning Support Assistant is unable to fulfil their duties in an external assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Utilise members of the Exams team• Utilise other trained members of staff within College• Utilise the bank of VHL trained invigilators
Issues with the assessment room, site, or location e.g. assessment room is unexpectedly unavailable	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with timetabling to utilise other rooms within College suitable for an external assessment• Consider use of other College sites i.e. Picquet Barracks, Oceans Gate or Pin Point• Assessment material security and integrity to be maintained by the Exam Team following the normal process for delivering and returning assessment materials.• Where issues cannot be avoided, prioritise learners whose progression would be limited should they be unable to complete the assessment.

Medical emergencies during an external assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invigilator will have either the Exams Manager mobile • Or a POC in the Exam team who will be nearby and free during assessment to support with any incidents • H&S Manager and/or College First Aiders can be contacted to attend • Where appropriate learners will be moved out of the exam room and into a quiet space, to support treating them and to ensure the impact on other learners is minimised.
Severe weather conditions e.g. heavy snow or flooding which impacts learners and/or the centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider delaying the start time of the Exam • Consider allowing late admission within the first 30 minutes of exams. • Consider cancelling the exam in instances of severe weather, as long as all learners can be contacted/made aware • Check AO regulations for such instances
Public health incidents e.g. a flu pandemic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimise the potential impact in advance by offering exams in smaller groups or keeping set courses together • Wearing of Face masks • Increasing distance between desks
Centre closure e.g. a localised threat, extreme circumstance which leaves the centre buildings inaccessible, or industrial action affecting staffing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External Assessments booked ahead of time supporting the ability to mitigate disruption. • The Centre has 3 alternative sites (listed above) • The Centre has a number of subcontractors and partnerships which could be called upon, including; Achievement Training, Plymouth Argyle • Community Trust, University of Plymouth and Plymouth Marjon University. • Papers can be moved on the day of the assessment within a lockable suitcase. The Exams Manager maintains the case and key

Consideration Matrix

External Assessments can be either;

- Set time and date assessments
- Windowed assessments
- On demand assessments

In most cases on demand assessment can easily be moved to another date, so this applies mainly to set and windowed assessments. The Exams Managers can consider the following options, depending on the scenario or disruption.

Disruption type	Option
Negligible disruption Slight disruption that does not impact the assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue the assessment as scheduled
Minor disruption A slight disruption impacting a single, or small group of learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider a delay to the start time of the assessment by up to 30 mins Consider a delay to the scheduled session Reschedule within the allowed assessment window
Moderate disruption A modest disruption that impacts several learners or centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue the assessment where possible Consider a delay to the start time of the assessment Learners may be eligible for a Special Consideration Consider rescheduling the centre scheduled session to later within the allowed assessment window
Major disruption A regional disruption that impacts multiple learners and centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue the assessment where possible. Consider a delay to the start time of the assessment Consider rescheduling the centre scheduled session to later within the allowed assessment window Consider cancelling and rebooking assessments for a later date Look for further instruction from government, regulators, and Awarding Organisations
Severe disruption Significant national disruption, impacting all learners and centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Await further instruction from government, regulators, and Awarding Organisations