

# nescot

# Examinations Policy

November 2025

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## **Section 1: Introduction, Purpose, and Scope**

### **1.1 Purpose of the Policy**

The purpose of this document is to ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interest of candidates, ensuring the operation of an efficient exam system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff. The procedures herein ensure that the assessment process is open, fair, free from bias, and compliant with national standards. The College aims to take all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any malpractice (which includes maladministration) before, during and after examinations have taken place.

### **1.2 Scope of the Policy**

This policy governs all aspects of examination administration, including:

- Providing timely procedures for examination entries and tracking/monitoring entries in accordance with external exam timetables.
- Maintaining examination papers in secure locations according to JCQ and awarding organisation expectations.
- Ensuring appropriate contingency planning for examinations in line with JCQ and awarding organisation expectations.
- Complying with equality legislation and providing reasonable adjustments – also see Exams Access Arrangements Policy.
- Coordinating, tracking, recording and despatching controlled assessment and internally assessed work.
- Investigating any suspected malpractice - also see Academic Integrity Policy.
- To provide candidates, curriculum staff and managers with results and certificates in a timely manner.
- To facilitate Post Results Services in accordance with Awarding Body deadlines.

## Section 2: Roles and Responsibilities

The head of centre is accountable to the awarding bodies for ensuring compliance with published JCQ regulations and requirements to ensure the security and integrity of the examinations/assessments.

Role	Key Responsibilities
Head of Centre	Overall responsibility for NESCOL as Head of Centre including Conflicts of Interest. Must confirm annually adherence to JCQ regulations. Must ensure continuity, including succession arrangements for staff involved in exams administration.
Senior Leadership Team (SLT)	Understand and refer to annually updated JCQ publications. Responsible for agreeing further actions in the event of major disruption.
Exams Manager/Team	Responsible for the day to day running of the exams department. Operational responsibility for contingency planning for Exams administration. Collate evidence and report all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice. Organises recruitment, training, and monitoring of invigilators. Manage the annual staff Conflict of Interest audit. Take home essential candidate and invigilator lists if bad weather is forecast.
Quality Team	Responsible for maintaining awarding body compliance. Supports Exams Manager with reporting suspected or actual incidents of staff malpractice or maladministration.
Curriculum staff	Responsible for requesting and confirming registrations and entries. Responsible for referring learners to Exam Access Arrangements team if reasonable adjustments are required.
Candidates	Responsible for checking exam entries. Responsible for reading and understanding the current JCQ Information for Candidates – see appendix 1. Must understand coursework regulations and sign a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.

	Responsible for arriving on time for examinations and not bringing any unauthorised materials into the room.
Invigilators	<p>Collection of exam papers and other material from the Exams office before the start of the exam.</p> <p>Checking the identity of candidates and completing the attendance register.</p> <p>Maintain the integrity of assessments by ensuring exam conditions are adhered to.</p> <p>Keeping a record of any incidents and reporting these to the Exams team.</p> <p>Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the Exams team.</p>

### **Section 3: Core Examinations Administration**

#### **Storage of Assessment Material**

All assessment material is stored in secure storage and recorded using the 'Confidential materials: receipt, secure movement and secure storage log'.

The Exams Team ensures all regulations related to confidentiality and security are followed. A 'second pair of eyes' check must be performed for timetabled papers and recorded on the log.

#### **Invigilation and Conduct**

A pool of permanent staff are used to invigilate external examinations. Invigilators must be thoroughly trained annually on current regulations. Invigilators must establish the identity of all candidates sitting examinations in accordance with written procedure (see appendix 2). Candidates must be informed to turn phones off and take off watches and place all belongings at the front of the room, as possession of unauthorised items is deemed malpractice and may lead to disqualification (see appendix 1 for JCQ Information for Candidates including confirmation of unauthorised material).

#### **Results and Certificates**

The Examinations team is responsible for receiving/collecting results and entering data into the MIS system. Certificates are posted to students no later than one month after receipt. Certificates are not withheld for any reason. Unclaimed certificates must be retained securely for a minimum of 12 months from the date of issue. After this date, they may be securely destroyed.

## **Section 4: Examination Malpractice and Integrity**

This section confirms the College's dedication to integrity, covering both definitions and procedures for handling breaches.

### **4.1 Malpractice Definition and General Principles**

'Malpractice' or 'maladministration' involves a failure to follow the rules of an examination or assessment. This includes any act or failure which breaches regulations, compromises public confidence, or damages the integrity of a qualification.

**Candidate Malpractice:** Malpractice by a candidate in connection with any examination or assessment, including the preparation and authentication of controlled/non-examination assessments.

**Centre Staff Malpractice:** Malpractice committed by a member of staff, contractor, or volunteer, such as an invigilator or scribe.

JCQ information for candidates documents are available below (see appendix 1). They will also be published on the college website and updated annually, offering candidates advice for what to do/not to do to avoid malpractice. JCQ warning to candidates and unauthorised items posters will be displayed outside every examination room.

Invigilators will remind learners of key regulations at the start of each external examination.

Centre staff involved in facilitating or invigilating exams are required to attend annual training updates, to ensure they understand their role and are able to support their students to adhere to JCQ regulations. Centre staff who regularly act as invigilators, readers or scribes must complete The Exams Office online training modules annually to refresh their understanding.

### **4.2 Reporting and Investigation Procedures**

1. All centre staff have a responsibility for reporting any potential malpractice to the Exams team, who will inform the awarding body immediately of any alleged, suspected, or actual incidents of malpractice involving a candidate or member of staff.
2. The Exams Manager collates all evidence, including invigilator reports and signed staff/candidate statements.
3. The Exams Manager completes a JCQ M1 form if the malpractice is a candidate and an M2 form if it is regarding a member of staff.
4. The Head of Centre notifies the appropriate awarding body immediately.
5. If sufficient evidence exists, the accused individual (candidate or staff member) will be informed of their rights.

6. The awarding body decides the outcome based on a written report submitted by the Head of Centre or a suitable responsible Senior Leader.

#### 4.3 Policy on AI Use in Assessments

AI misuse constitutes malpractice. Candidates are informed of the appropriate and inappropriate use of AI, the risks involved, and the possible consequences of using AI inappropriately.

Examples of AI misuse include:

- Copying or paraphrasing sections or whole responses of AI-generated content.
- Using AI to complete parts of the assessment so the work does not reflect the student's own work.
- Failing to acknowledge the use of AI tools when used as a source of information.

If a student uses an AI tool that provides sources, those sources must be verified and referenced normally. If the tool does not provide sources, the student must independently verify the AI-generated content. The student must retain a copy of the question(s) and computer-generated content for reference.

#### 4.4 Management of Conflicts of Interest

The College maintains procedures to manage Conflicts of Interest, including an annual audit of all staff is carried out to identify any conflicts of interest.

High Risk Conflicts (Must be notified to Awarding Organisations):

- Centre staff taking qualifications at their own centre which include internally assessed components/units.
- Centre staff teaching or preparing family/close friends for qualifications including internally assessed components/units.

Mitigation involves discussion with the staff member and Curriculum Lead, completion of relevant paperwork, and informing the Awarding Organisations.

Medium Risk Conflicts (Internal records must be maintained):

- Exams office staff having family/close friends entered for exams at any centre.
- Staff taking qualifications at their own centre that do not include internally assessed components/units.
- Staff taking qualifications at other centres.

Mitigation involves discussion and maintaining clear records; Awarding Organisations do not need to be informed.

Failure to declare a conflict of interest that later comes to light is considered potential gross misconduct.

## **Section 5: Contingency Planning and Crisis Management**

Every effort should be made to run examinations wherever possible; however there may be times when the college has to close due to an unforeseen emergency or adverse weather conditions. In these circumstances the following arrangements should be put in place wherever possible.

The overall contingency plan is designed to ensure a consistent and effective response in the event of major disruption to the management and administration of the examination system (e.g., widespread illness, travel disruption, bad weather, or power failure). This plan is informed by the JCQ contingency plan for the examination system.

### **5.1 Priorities During Disruption**

The priority when implementing contingencies is to maintain three principles:

1. Delivering assessments and examinations to published timetables.
2. Delivering results to published timetables.
3. Complying with regulatory requirements in relation to examinations, assessment, marking, and standards.

### **5.2 Procedures for Unforeseen College Closure**

In the event the college has to close due to an unforeseen emergency or adverse weather:

- The Examinations Manager or a nominated member of the Exams Team should take home the following day's candidate list, details of external exams, and invigilator/AO contact details.
- The relevant member of SLT responsible for exams ensures any announcement about closure specifically mentions if external exams are affected.
- If necessary, apply for special consideration (bearing in mind limitations for joint council exams).
- Centres must have a written centre policy for dealing with an emergency evacuation of the examination room.

In an emergency requiring the evacuation of the exam room, such as a fire alarm or a security alert, the invigilator must take the following action:

- stop the candidates from writing;
- collect the attendance register (to ensure all candidates are present) and evacuate the examination room in line with the instructions given by the appropriate authority;
- advise candidates to leave all question papers and scripts in the examination room. Candidates must be advised to close their answer booklet;
- ensure the candidates leave the room in silence;
- ensure candidates are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room so that there is no discussion about the examination;
- make a note of the time of the interruption and how long it lasted;
- allow the candidates the rest of their examination time when the examination starts again;
- if there are only a few candidates, consider the possibility of taking the candidates (with question papers and scripts) to another place to finish the examination.

For on-screen assessments:

- candidates must be closely supervised if an emergency evacuation of the assessment room occurs;
- invigilators should refer to any software specific instructions to safeguard the security of the assessment content and candidates' responses. For example, pausing the assessment for all candidates and locking the evacuated assessment room without closing down the software;
- invigilators should understand the procedures for re-starting an on-screen assessment after an emergency evacuation of the assessment room, controlling the re-starting of the assessment, re-setting the timing and ensuring, where appropriate, candidates can access their previous responses.

A full report of the incident must be produced and retained on file if required by an awarding body.

Any breach of question paper security or malpractice must be reported to the awarding body immediately.

An online application for special consideration must be submitted to the relevant awarding body where candidates have been disadvantaged.

### 5.3 Procedures for Major Operational Disruptions

Examples of major disruptions include but are not limited to:

Disruption Scenario	Action / Procedure
Exams Team Extended Absence	The Exams Officer takes responsibility for the duties of the Head of Examination and Assessments, with support from the Director of Exams/MIS and Exams team.

Deferral of on-demand exams may occur to prioritise nationally timetabled exams.

ALS Assessor  
Extended  
Absence

Head of Learning Support allocates tasks to relevant members of the learning support team.

Candidate Unable to Attend (Crisis)

Exams team liaises with candidate and awarding organisation regarding alternative venues (e.g., hospital). Offer candidates the opportunity to sit the missed exam at the next available series and apply for special consideration if requirements are met.

Disruption to Paper Distribution

Exams team contacts the awarding organisation to obtain electronic versions of the examination paper (via email or secure site).

Disruption to Script Transportation

Seek advice from awarding organisations/agency for alternative collection date/time. Completed scripts will be stored securely until collection.

Assessment Evidence Damage

Notify the awarding organisation immediately. Student marks would be submitted based on appropriate evidence and candidates would be given the opportunity to retake in the subsequent series. Special consideration application will be submitted if requirements are met.

## **Appendix 1**

### **JCQ Information for Candidates and Centre Staff – 2025/26**

Please follow the links below to access the relevant JCQ documents for the current academic year:

Coursework assessments

[IFC-Coursework Assessments 2025 FINAL.pdf](#)

Non-examination assessments

[IFC-NE Assessments 2025 FINAL.pdf](#)

On-screen tests

[IFC-On-Screen Examinations 2025 FINAL.pdf](#)

Written examinations

[IFC-Written Examinations 2025 FINAL.pdf](#)

Exam day checklist

[JCQ-Preparing-to-sit-your-exams\\_-2025\\_2026.pdf](#)

Social media and examinations

[JCQ Social Media Infographic v4](#)

Unauthorised Items poster

[2025 Unauthorised-Items-poster](#)

Warning to Candidates poster

[JCQ-ICE-Warning-to-candidates-2025.pdf](#)

## **Appendix 2**

### **Identity Check Policy**

Inline with the JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations 25/26:

‘Centres must have a written procedure which details how the identity of all candidates sitting examinations will be confirmed. Invigilators must establish the identity of all candidates sitting examinations, in accordance with the written procedure.’

[JCQ ICE 16.1]

Candidates will be required to bring photo ID to all examinations. This can be their Nescot student card, or a government issued ID such as a passport or driving licence. The name on their Identity Document must match the name they have been registered with for the exam.

Candidates will be called into the examination room and asked to present ID. If a candidate has forgotten to bring their college student card and does not have an alternative form of photo ID, upon arrival they should request a replacement from security at Foundations Reception.

Candidates may be asked to place their ID on their desk during the exam, to allow invigilators to verify their identity and complete the attendance register.

In accordance with JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations, 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, then taken to a private room and politely asked to remove the religious clothing for identification purposes. Centres must inform candidates in advance of this procedure and well before their first examination. Once identification has been established, the candidate should replace their religious clothing and proceed as normal to sit the examination.