# SWC

# POLICIES & PROCEDURES

# Examinations Policy V5.0

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| **Policy Owner:** | Centre for Excellence Manager FE & Learner Management |
| **Date Approved:** | 08/03/2023 |
| **Version:** | V 5.0 |
| **Equality Screening Date:** | 9 January 2023 |
| **Date of First Issue:** | 25 November 2009 |
| **Date of Next Review:** | December 2025 |
| **Location:** | Gateway |

# CONTENTS

# 1 Policy Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:

1.1 Staff understand fully their obligations and responsibilities with respect to examinations.

1.2 The planning, administration and management of examinations is conducted efficiently and in the best interest of candidates.

1.3 The Examinations service operates an effective and efficient system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.

1.4 The College meets the requirements of examinations security and is properly equipped to undertake the administration of examinations, including data processing and a results service.

1.5 Accurate examinations data is available on EBS, the College's Learner Management System (LMS) to inform target setting, curriculum planning and collation of Department for the Economy (DfE) returns.

1.6 Students undertake examinations knowing what is expected of them in terms of preparation and behaviour.

# 2 Policy Scope

This policy applies to all staff involved in the management, monitoring and administration of examinations. It extends to all curriculum staff delivering the course specification, business support functions includinge, Quality and faculty administration, and all students undertaking examinations at the College.

# 3 Definitions and Abbreviations

| DfE | Department for the Economy |
|-----|----------------------------|
| JCQ | Joint Council for Qualifications |
| NCN | National Centre Number Register |
| EBS | The College's Learner Management System |

# 4 Policy Aim

This policy outlines the College's commitment to ensuring all examinations are planned, facilitated, and managed with integrity and in compliance with the requirements for all awarding organisations for which the College is an approved centre, with JCQ requirements and with the requirements of the regulators.

# 5 Roles & Responsibilities

## 5.1 Chief Executive

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the College as an examination centre and is the registered Head of Centre with JCQ/NCN register.

## 5.2 Course Co-ordinators and Tutors

Course co-ordinators and tutors are responsible for:

- The timely and accurate processing of student information to the Examinations Officer regarding the registering/entering of their students for examinations, and for preparing their students for examinations in the College.

- Conducting computer based exams / assessments in accordance with the College Staff Guidelines for Conducting Computer Based Examinations or Assessments.

- Ensuring all results are claimed in accordance with Awarding Organisation guidance in a timely manner and within Awarding Organisation deadlines.

- Ensuring students are exam ready for 'on demand exams' and essential skills examinations, so that they are not entered more times that necessary, in line with value for money principles.

## 5.3 Students

Students are responsible for conducting themselves in accordance with the JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations and College Examination Guidelines for Students when undertaking examinations in the College.

Students requiring access arrangements for examinations should make Student Services aware at the beginning of the academic year in order to ensure appropriate evidence is provided so approval can be sought and arrangements put in place for Examinations.

### 5.4 The Examinations Co-ordinator

The Examinations Co-ordinator is responsible for:

The implementation and development of the examination function, the supervision and coordination of the work of the College Examination Officers and for monitoring / overseeing compliance with Awarding Organisation requirements.

### 5.4 The Examinations Officer

The Examinations Officer is responsible for the administration related to the examinations in the college and ensuring the efficient and effective running of the College examination function.

### 5.6 Invigilators

The invigilators are responsible for conducting examinations in accordance with the JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations and for upholding the integrity of the examination process.

## 6  Registration Closing Dates

Registration closing dates are published by Awarding Organisations and collated on a Key Dates Calendar by the Examinations Co-ordinator who will communicate this to the Examinations Officers by email.

The Examinations Officers will keep lecturing staff informed of the registration dates and process by communicating by email:

1.  The registration dates, and

2.  The management information system generated entry forms with students' details pre-printed for verification, signing and return for processing.

## 7  Examination Entries/Registration

It is the responsibility of the Course Co-ordinators to liaise with the Examinations Officer with regard to making exam entries for students in a timely manner and by Awarding Organisation stipulated deadlines. For further information refer to the College BTEC Registration Procedure and College City & Guilds Registration Procedure.

Only students enrolled on EBS, the Learner Management System (LMS) for the correct area of study code, register of regulated qualifications (RRQ) qualification number or prescribed list of accredited qualifications (PLAQ) code will be entered / registered with the awarding Organisation by the Examinations Officer.

Any enrolment errors or omissions should be raised and dealt with by the MIS team before entries / registrations can be processed to ensure student's details are correct. Tickets can be logged via the SWC Service Desk.

The Examinations Officer will provide confirmation of registrations to the Course co-ordinators for their course files on completion, unless already available via secure access.

## 8  Examination Fees

Students are responsible for paying exam fees. These are paid at the time of enrolment with the tuition fees.

## 9  Examination Resits

It is the responsibility of the Course Co-ordinators to liaise with Examinations Officer with regard to making re-sit exam entries for students in a timely manner and by Awarding Organisation stipulated deadlines. Course Co-ordinators should refer to the College BTEC Registration Procedure and the College City & Guilds Registration Procedure for more information.

Students are responsible for paying re-sit fees.

Examination Entry Forms are available from the exam office. Students should collect the form confirming resit fees, complete form and take to Finance for payment. The payment receipt should be recorded on the examination entry form, which the student should return to the Examinations Office for processing.

The Examinations Officer will enter student for re-sit.

## 10 Examination Timetable

The Examinations team will publish the examination timetable to the College Gateway.

## 11 Examination Room

It is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer to ensure an appropriate assessment environment.

Rooms for examinations are booked by the Examinations Officer through MIS on the SWC Service Desk.

Mitie (Omagh/Dungannon) and Caretakers (Enniskillen/Cookstown), are responsible for the maintenance of the buildings and they are contacted by the Examinations Officer by telephone or email to arrange the appropriate set up of the rooms for examinations

## 12 Student Results

Student results are posted out by the Examinations Officer within two working days of receipt from Awarding Organisation.

On results days in August GCSE/GCE and BTEC results can be collected in person from the Examinations Office after 9.30am

Students are informed (by letter when receiving statements of entry) to bring photographic ID with them when collecting their results.

If a third party is collecting a student's result, this must be communicated to the Examinations Officer by the student prior to results day.

Results will not be given out to students over the phone.

A copy of the Awarding Organisation results and the keyed results from EBS (the Learner Management System (LMS)) are given to the tutor for verification.

## 13 Certificates

On receipt from the Awarding Organisation, certificates are posted out first class post to students within one working week.  Work-Based Learning certificates are passed to the Work-Based Learning Office to be put in the Student's progress file. Project based certificates are distributed to relevant programme co-ordinators and a record kept on file.

Any errors on the certificate should be reported to the Examinations Officer promptly by the student.

If the certificate is returned to the College by the Post Office it is kept for 12 months and then shredded, a record of all shredded certificates must be kept.

Certificates may be withheld if there are any outstanding fees. This information is communicated to the Examinations Officer by the Finance Department.

Replacement certificates can be ordered and paid for by the student. Replacement Certificates requested via the relevant Awarding Organisation website.

## 14 Achievement Data

The Examinations Officer is responsible for keying results on to EBS, the College's Learner Management System (LMS).

Results can only be keyed from official Awarding Organisation results listings.

Results are keyed promptly on receipt from the Awarding Organisation.

A copy of the Awarding Organisation official results and a copy of the keyed information are sent to the tutor to be verified.

Any discrepancies must be dealt with promptly.

The Further Education Leavers Survey (FELS) Achievement Data is returned to DfE mid-October.

## 15 Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration

The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) publishes instructions each year on Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration. It is the responsibility of the Head of Centre and Examinations Officer to familiarise themselves with the contents of this booklet.

It is the responsibility of the Student Engagement Officer to liaise with the Examinations Officer about the arrangements for candidates with Special Needs or support requirements.

The Student Engagement Officer provides the Examinations Officer with a written request (Form SLDD5 - Request for Additional Exams Support) as soon as possible after the student has been assessed and provides the evidence of eligibility.

The Examinations Officer will ensure requests for special arrangements and special considerations are made to reach the Awarding Organisation by the stipulated dates.

Replies from Awarding Organisation will be copied to the Student Engagement Officer.

It is the responsibility of the Course Tutor to notify the Examinations Officer of any special particular needs or requirements for their students when they are making exam entries.

The Examinations Officer will arrange any requirements permitted by the Awarding Organisation.

## 16 Use of Anonymous Examination Numbers

The College will use anonymous examination numbers for some examinations.

Please refer to Procedure for the Use of Anonymous Examination Numbers. Available on SWC Gateway.

## 17 Security of Examination Materials

All question papers and other examination materials are kept securely at all times in accordance with the JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations.

Examinations Officers and Invigilators maintain confidentiality at all times in respect of examination materials.

Examinations Officers operate a clear desk policy (please refer to the College's Clear Desk Policy) and all examination related material is stored in lockable storage cupboards and filing cabinets.

## 18 Anonymous Marking

It is good practice to annotate coursework and examination scripts, to assist in feedback and the moderation process. A mark sheet may be used. Course teams may have marking conventions which should be followed.

Written examinations are subject to 'anonymous marking'. Anonymity is lifted after the marking process is complete before meetings of Boards of Examiners and progress boards. While anonymous marking is not always feasible for coursework, it is encouraged where appropriate and practicable. Course teams are expected to have their own methods for safeguarding student anonymity during the process, but it should be lifted when internal marking is complete for the purpose of student feedback.

## 19 Complaints Procedure

Students wishing to make a complaint should initially approach the member of College staff most directly involved. Complaints can also be made in writing using the College Customer Complaints and Compliments Policy and Procedure.

## 20 Promotion and Review

The College will ensure that adequate resources are made available to promote this policy effectively and is committed to reviewing this policy every three years.

**Signed Chief Executive**

**Date**   08.03.23

**Signed Chair of the Board of Governors**

**Date**   08/03/2023

## **Related Documentation**

| Title | Location | Owner |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| JCQ Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments & Special Considerations | https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration | Joint Council for Qualifications |
| BTEC Registrations Process | Gateway | Examinations Co-Ordinator |
| City & Guilds Registration Process | Gateway | Examinations Co-Ordinator |
| Examination Guidelines for Students | Available on Gateway and emailed to Students at start of each academic year.<br><br>Copy to Student Services. | Examinations Co-Ordinator |
| Staff Guidelines for Conducting Computer Based Examinations or Assessments | Gateway | Examinations Co-Ordinator |
| South West College Clear Desk/Screen Policy | Gateway | Head of Services |
| South West College Complaints & Compliments Procedure | Gateway | Quality & Assurance Manager |
| South West College Higher Education Academic Assessment Appeals Policy and Procedure | Gateway | CfE Manager for Higher Education |

*Examinations Policy V5.0 - Effective from 08/03/2023*

## **Change Log**

| Location | Change from deletion/addition | Change to |
|---|---|---|
| All | Changed to new template<br><br>Awarding Body<br><br>EBS – added where reference made to the Colleges MIS/LMS system | Awarding Organisation |
| 1 | DfE returns | ..collation of Department for the Economy (DfE) returns |
| 2 | Policy Scope added | |
| 3 | Definitions and Abbreviations table updated | |
| 4 | Policy Aim added | |
| 5.1 | '…and is the registered Head of Centre with NJN/JCQ.' - added | |
| 5.2 | Added - Ensure all results are claimed in accordance with Awarding Organisation guidance in a timely manner and within awarding organisation deadlines.<br><br>Ensuring students are exam ready for 'on demand exams' and essential skills exams, so that they are not entered more times than necessary, in line with value for money principles. | |
| 5.3 | Added - Students requiring access arrangements for examinations should make Student Services aware at the beginning of the academic year in order to ensure appropriate evidence is provided so approval can be sought and arrangements put in place for exams. | |
| 5.4 | '..within the Data Services section' – deleted and 'and for monitoring /overseeing compliance with Awarding Organisation requirements' - added | |
| 7 | Any enrolment errors or omissions are dealt with by the MIS department before entries/registrations can be processed to ensure student's details are correct.<br><br>Added – 'The Examinations Officer will provide confirmation of registrations to the Course co-ordinators for their course files on completion, unless already available via secure access.' | Any enrolment errors or omissions should be raised and dealt with by the MIS team before entries / registrations can be processed to ensure student's details are correct. Tickets can be logged via the SWC Service Desk. |
| 9 | Added – 'Course Co-ordinators should refer to the College BTEC Registration Procedure and the College City & Guilds Registration Procedure for more information.'<br><br>Students complete an Examination Entry Form at the Examinations Office and are receipted for payment. Monies are recorded in Cash-up Receipt book and cash-up forwarded to Finance on a daily basis. | Examination Entry Forms are available from the exam office. Students should collect the form confirming resit fees, complete form and take to finance for payment. The payment receipt should be recorded on the examination entry form, which the student should return to the Examinations Office for processing. |

*Examinations Policy V5.0 -  Effective from 08/03/2023*

| Location | Change from deletion/addition | Change to |
|---|---|---|
| 11 | Deleted – '..the MIS Support Officer with responsibility for room timetabling'<br><br>Deleted – 'Interserve' and Centre Administrator (Strabane Centre)'. | '…MIS on the SWC Service Desk' |
| 12 | Added – '…and BTEC'.<br>Deleted – 10am | 9.30am |
| 13 | Added – 'Project based certificates are distributed to relevant programme co-ordinator and record kept on file.'<br><br>24 months<br><br>Added – ' . a record of all shredded certificates must be kept.'<br><br>Will<br><br>Replacement certificates can be ordered and paid for by the student using the Awarding Body website. | 12 months<br><br><br><br>'may'<br><br>Replacement certificates can be ordered and paid for by the student. Replacement Certificates requested via the relevant Awarding Organisation website. |
| 15 | Student & Learning Support Officer<br><br>Added - 'support', 'and provides the evidence of eligibility' and 'exam'<br><br>Deleted – 'and to the student'. | Student Engagement Officer |
| 16 | Added – 'Available on SWC Gateway' | |
| 17 | Added – 'in respect of examination materials' | |

## Communication

| Who needs to know (for action) | All Curriculum Staff |
| --- | --- |
| | Exams Staff |
| Who needs to be aware | All Staff |

## Communication Plan

| Action | By Whom | By When |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Upload onto Gateway | Risk & Compliance Officer | On approval and signing |
| Circulation to key staff | Exams Co-ordinator | On approval and signing |

## Document Development

Details of staff who were involved in the development of this policy:

| Name | Role |
|------|------|
| Carol Anne Deeny | Centre for Excellence for Further Education & Learner Management |
| Lesley Black | Examinations Co-ordinator |

Details of staff, external groups or external organisations who were consulted in the development of this policy:

| Name | Organisation | Date |
|------|--------------|------|
| Quality & Assurance Manager | SWC | |
| Assistant Chief Executive | SWC | |
| Student Services Manager | SWC | |

Approval Dates

| Approved by | Date |
|-------------|------|
| Governing Body | |

**Document History**

| Issue no. under review | Date of review: | Persons involved in review | Changes made after review. Yes/No If yes refer to change log | New Issue No. | If changes made was consultation required? | If changes made was Equality Screening required? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | Dec 2022 | CfE Manager FE & LM / Exams Co-ordinator | Yes | V5.0 | Internal consultation | 9 January 2023 |
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