



# Ada, National College for Digital Skills

## Sixth Form Examinations Policy

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### **Introduction**

This policy applies to all assessments that contribute to accredited qualifications. The policy is also applied to internal assessments where appropriate to ensure that students are familiar with the expectations for externally accredited qualifications.

**Accountability and responsibility**

The Head of Centre (Principal ) is accountable for ensuring that all assessments comply with JCQ guidelines, and awarding bodies' subject-specific instructions. The Principal together with the Exams Officer (and exams office team) and Quality Nominee (BTEC/NVQ courses) are responsible for ensuring safe and secure procedures are in place for all forms of assessment.

All sixth form staff including subject leaders, teachers, support staff and exam invigilators involved in the conduct of assessments for accredited qualifications are responsible for following the examination policy at all times.

**Rules and Regulations**

Rules and regulations for the conduct of exams will be published outside the examination rooms according to JCQ regulations.

All students will receive digital JCQ regulations, and college regulations with final timetables before GCSE, GCE and BTEC exam seasons. All students have the regulations explained verbally before all internal examinations and students will be informed of rules and regulations by team leads and in an assembly by the Chief Invigilator before the exams start.

Rules will be given verbally before each exam by lead/room invigilators. Infringements of rules will be notified to exams staff who will take appropriate action according to JCQ regulations. Teaching staff will be informed by email of the regulations regarding their role in the management of exams as well as trained in all staff CPD sessions.

**Invigilation**

Invigilators will be recruited in accordance with Ada, National College for Digital Skills recruitment procedures. Invigilators will be employed as and when required and all will be asked to work within a three-month period in order to maintain their DBS status. Invigilators will carry out their responsibilities in accordance with JCQ and college regulations. Training will be provided as required and recorded. The chief invigilator will be responsible for the smooth running of all exam venues with the support of teaching staff in getting students into the rooms. The chief invigilator and their team will be responsible, with the exams officer, for the packing of papers and their return to the exams safe. The chief invigilator will be responsible for reporting any issues to the exams officer and Head of Centre and taking any necessary statements from students.

**Security of Examination Materials**

The exams safe keys will only be held by designated exams staff and the Head of Centre. All confidential packages will be kept in reception until the exams staff is informed and can collect them or receive them.

Confidential packages will not be left outside the exams safe . All external examination papers will be kept in secure locked facilities in accordance with JCQ regulations. Papers will be opened in accordance with JCQ regulations.

Sealed completed scripts will be given to reception for collection on the day of the exam or kept secure in the exams safe if the parcel force collection has gone. No papers will be removed from the exam rooms by teaching staff until all completed scripts are packed. Spare papers may be collected from the exams officer.

**Access Arrangements**

Access needs of students will be identified by the SENCO/ SEND specialist in conjunction with teaching staff and other available assessments. Access arrangements will be requested for students by the SENCO in accordance with the SEN register and JCQ regulations.

Access applications will be made online as required by the exams office and SENCO together. Exams office staff will work with other staff to ensure requirements for support are met. A note including the need to share information with exams boards will be added to the Fair Processing Notice sent to parents/carers on admission of their children to the college in accordance with the data protection act.

**Special Considerations**

Students will be informed of the criteria for requesting special considerations prior to the exams and when circumstances arise. Applications for special considerations will be made on the basis of need, with the required evidence, by the exams office.

**Examination courses**

Subject leaders, or the quality nominee, will be responsible for identification and recommendation of suitable accredited courses for delivery to students. All accredited courses must be approved by the Principal prior to any commitment being made to teaching the course.

**Examination entries**

The exams officer is responsible for making all entries for accredited courses. Entries can only be made through the exams officer. Subject leaders will inform the Principal and exams officer of the full details of proposed exams for the following year when requested by email.

Individual entries for all subjects will be made by the exams officer in line with the instructions from the Principal with Subject Leads. The exams officer will ensure entry mark sheets are recorded and stored in the appropriate Google Drive. Full instructions for completion and deadlines will be sent to teaching staff by email.

Any requests for changes to entries must be made by email to the exams officer. Any requests for withdrawal of an entry must be approved by Principal. Entries will be checked and sent to the exam boards within their published deadlines. Re-sit entries can be made in line with the exam board regulations.

Students will make re-sit requests on exams office forms and will need to pay the correct fee before the entry will be made. Deadlines for requests will be published on the exams notice board and by email to staff (teachers, team leads and Pastoral Officers) who will inform students.

Late requests will be accepted on payment of the penalty fees. Staff requests for re-sits may be made through their subject leaders to the Principal. Staff wishing to sit examinations will not be charged fees. Entries from external candidates will normally not be accepted. Other registrations and exam entries such as BTEC and on demand tests are made by the exams office as required.

### **Examination timetables**

Examination timetables are compiled in accordance with dates/sessions determined by the awarding bodies. For practical or other assessments where there is a time frame for the completion of an assessment the timing of these must be agreed with the Principal in conjunction with the exams office to ensure the effective scheduling of these assessments.

Timetables are compiled by the Principal in conjunction with the exams office. These are issued to all students via email and also to parents and carers via email (and with text message reminder). These will be displayed in the college and sent to students, parents and carers via email in a number of End of Week update communications around exam times. Individual statements of entry and provisional timetables are given to students for checking before the entry is sent. Team leads are responsible for the distribution of these to students, ensuring students check them, then collecting them back in to send to the Exams officer.

Due to the narrow curriculum offer at Ada, final personal timetables are NOT given to students prior to the timetabled exams start - they will receive a whole college exams

timetable and delete those exams not applicable to them. Subject leaders and teaching staff are responsible for reminding students of dates and times of exams. Students are informed of how exam clashes are to be managed when they receive their final timetables. Daily notices giving exam times and venues will be published to staff by email and to students on a display board at the college in the foyer near reception. Staff responsible for organising cover will liaise with exams office staff to room the exams appropriately and inform staff of their use. Rooming for accredited exams will take priority over all other activities. Room allocation procedures will be determined by the Principal in conjunction with the exams office.

### **Coursework**

Students are informed that work must be their own and if they intend to use materials from sources directly they must be clearly acknowledged within the work. In the case of BTEC courses, sources must be labelled in italics – students must be able to explain their understanding of the materials, it is not acceptable to lift work and claim it as their own. Students may not complete coursework using AI tools and must also clearly acknowledge if and how these tools have been used in coursework.

Teaching staff are responsible for marking coursework and subject leaders for standardising marking according to exam board criteria. The exams office will pass on all necessary materials for the collection of marks and the dispatch of marks and samples to subject leaders. Subject staff are responsible for sending marks and work to exam boards and moderators on-line if required to do so. Subject leaders are responsible for returning top copies of coursework mark sheets, or copies of marks entered online, to the exams office for dispatch to exam boards by the deadlines set by the exams office.

### **Controlled Assessments**

Subject leaders will ensure that at least 40% of overall assessment (controlled and/or external assessment) is taken in the exam series in which the qualification is certificated, to satisfy the terminal assessment requirement in accordance with the awarding body specification. Subject leaders are responsible for ensuring that assessment tasks meet the requirements of the awarding body specifications, and for applying the relevant control requirements, only permitting assistance to students as the specification allows.

Subject Leaders will obtain confidential materials/tasks set by awarding bodies in sufficient time to prepare for the assessment(s), distribute these to teaching staff as appropriate and ensure that such materials are stored securely at all times. Subject Leaders will standardise internally the marking of all teachers involved in assessing an internally assessed component.

Subject Leaders will ensure that individual teachers understand their responsibilities with regard to controlled assessment.

Subject Leaders will ensure that individual teachers understand the requirements of the awarding body's specification and are familiar with the relevant teachers' notes, and any other subject specific instructions.

Subject leaders will, where appropriate, develop new assessment tasks or contextualise sample awarding body assessment tasks to meet local circumstances, in line with awarding body specifications and control requirements.

Subject leaders will supply to the exams office details of all unit codes for controlled assessments. Teaching staff will understand and comply with the general guidelines contained in the relevant exam board and JCQ publications.

### **Instructions for conducting controlled assessments**

Teaching staff will 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.

Teaching staff will supervise assessments (at the specified level of control) and undertake the tasks required under the regulations, only permitting assistance to students as the specification allows.

Teaching staff will ensure that students and supervising teachers sign authentication forms on completion of an assessment. Teaching staff will mark internally assessed components using the mark schemes provided by the awarding body. Submit marks through the exams office to the awarding body when required, keeping a record of the marks awarded.

Teaching staff will retain candidates' work securely between assessment sessions (if more than one). Teaching staff will, post-completion, retain candidates' work securely until the closing date for enquiries about results. In the event that an enquiry is submitted, retain candidates work securely until the outcome of the enquiry and any subsequent appeal has been conveyed to the centre. Subject Leaders and other teaching staff will ask the SENCO for any assistance required for the administration and management of access arrangements.

### **Examination results**

The exams office is responsible for the publication and distribution of examination results to students.

Students will be notified of procedures for receiving their exam results. The exams office will not publish results to staff or students until authorised by the Principal. The timescale for release of results will meet the awarding body and internal college requirements.

The exams officer will ensure results are 'cashed-in' as required when students complete a qualification. The exams office is responsible for providing examination data to the Principal to fulfil the Ada exams analysis requirements.

### **Post results appeals**

Students will be informed of the post results services and the deadlines for making applications on their results notifications. Requests must be made on the exams office forms and be accompanied by the appropriate fee, returnable on a change of grade.

Staff requests for post results services must be made with the consent of the students and need to be made in writing or by email. Deadlines for requests will be published to staff by email. Results of post results request will be given to students as soon as reasonably possible after receipt from the exam boards.

### **Malpractice, plagiarism and appeals process**

If it is suspected that a student's work is not their own (and has not been sourced) then teaching staff will investigate this, including checking using the internet. If malpractice or plagiarism is suspected the Examinations Internal Assessment Appeals Policy or BTEC Policy (2022) - Malpractice & Appeals Policy, as appropriate will be applied.

Students may make appeals against decisions made for internally verified work in accordance to the Appeals & Complaints Policy.