



EXAMINATION STORAGE AND MANAGEMENT POLICY

1. KEEPING QUESTION PAPERS AND OTHER EXAMINATION MATERIALS SECURE

- 1.1. The following instructions apply to all confidential materials to ensure the integrity and security of the examinations. This includes question papers in any format.
- 1.2. Awarding bodies must be informed immediately if the security of the question papers or confidential supporting instructions is put at risk. This includes any natural disaster, fire, theft, loss, damage or other circumstance which places the existing accommodation or secure storage of examination materials at risk.
- 1.3. Blackburn Gould will ensure that it can demonstrate the receipt, secure movement and secure storage of question papers and confidential materials.
- 1.4. All envelopes and boxes containing confidential materials must be signed for by the Head of Centre. A log will be kept at in the Head of Centre's office to record the receipt of all confidential materials. Each awarding body's deliveries and the number of boxes received will be logged.
- 1.5. The JCQ has produced Materials Receipt Logs for centres to use for this purpose. These can be found at:
<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations/ exams-materials-receipt-log---at-the-point-of-delivery-to-the-centre>
and
<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations/ exams-materials-receipt-log---exams-officer>
- 1.6. The head of centre will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place so that confidential examination materials are only handed over to authorised members of staff. Care must always be taken to ensure the security of materials.
- 1.7. On receipt, the question paper packets, still in their despatch packaging, must be moved immediately to the office of the Executive Director for checking and transfer to the Exams Safe. Only the Executive Director and the Head of Centre shall have access to the Executive Director's office during the period any examination material is on site.
- 1.8. Examination materials must only be accessed in accordance with the awarding body's specific instructions.
- 1.9. Modified question papers may arrive separately from the main despatch of question papers.

2. CHECKING QUESTION PAPER PACKETS

- 2.1. When question paper packets are removed from the despatch packaging they must be checked carefully. The question paper packets must be checked against the awarding body's despatch note and the centre timetable or entries. Checking must take place as soon as possible on the day the question papers are received by the Head of Centre and the Executive Director together. If this is not possible, e.g. due to a late delivery or the unavailability of authorised members of staff, the material still in its despatch packaging must be transferred immediately into the secure storage facility until it can be checked. The checking must take place no later than the next working day and must be undertaken in the Executive Director's office.
- 2.2. Following the checking, question paper packets should be arranged in timetable order to reduce the possibility of opening a packet at the wrong time and must then be immediately locked in the secure storage.
- 2.3. The awarding body must be informed immediately if there are any problems, e.g.
 - it appears that the parcel or one of the packets has been opened during transit and therefore there may have been a breach of security;
 - there are any differences between the material received and the despatch/ delivery note;
 - the material has been significantly damaged in transit or upon opening;
 - the material appears not to meet the centre's requirements;
 - the material has been received in error.

3. CONDITIONS FOR STORING QUESTION PAPERS AND ANY OTHER CONFIDENTIAL MATERIAL DISTRIBUTED TO CENTRES

- 3.1. **Question papers and pre-release materials issued by the awarding bodies will always be stored at the centre's registered address in a secure room (the Executive Directors Office on the 3rd Floor) within a secure security cabinet.** During examination periods the Executive Director's office will be completely restricted to all and used solely for the purpose of administering secure examination materials. There will be always only two keyholders during the year including periods when there are no examinations taking place. The secure security cabinet can only be assessed by the Executive Director and the Head of Centre.
- 3.2. ***The National Centre Number Register Team, ncn@ocr.org.uk, which is administered by OCR on behalf of the JCQ awarding bodies AQA, CCEA, OCR, Pearson and WJEC, and any other awarding body that Blackburn Gould is accredited by, must be informed no later than 6 weeks prior to a centre moving to a new address or relocating the secure storage facility. As a result of this notification a centre inspection will take place.***
- 3.3. The centre's secure storage facility must have the capacity to hold up to three weeks of question papers and any other confidential material.
- 3.4. The centre's secure storage facility must only contain current and 'live' confidential material. Past examination question papers, internal school tests and mock examinations must not be kept in the centre's secure storage facility.
- 3.5. Mock examinations and internal school tests may be stored in the secure room but must always be kept separately from 'live' awarding body material and be clearly identified.
- 3.6. Question papers must always be kept in their sealed packets.

- 3.7. Examination stationery, e.g. answer booklets and formula booklets, must be stored in the secure room. Although it is good practice to store this material in the secure storage facility, it is not mandatory.
- 3.8. If the volume of question papers is too great for the secure storage in one room, additional rooms must be used within the centre. These additional rooms must also meet the requirements for secure storage.
- 3.9. The secure storage facility will be required to comply with the guidelines as laid out by the JCQ and set out in page 5 of the document ***Instructions for Conducting Examinations***.
[file:///C:/Users/ConsultancyTeam/Downloads/ICE_21-22_FINAL%20\(2\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/ConsultancyTeam/Downloads/ICE_21-22_FINAL%20(2).pdf)
- 3.10. Encrypted question papers received via email or downloaded from an awarding body's secure extranet site on the day of an examination and subsequently printed, must be stored as indicated within section 3.
- 3.11. The integrity and security of the electronic question paper must be maintained during the downloading, printing and collating process. Printing must be carried out in an area that can be controlled to prevent unauthorised personnel accessing live assessment materials. Only authorised members of centre staff must have access to electronic question papers

4. REMOVING QUESTION PAPERS FROM SECURE STORAGE

- 4.1. To avoid potential breaches of security, care must be taken to ensure that the correct question paper packets are opened. The Executive Director in addition to the Head of Centre, must check the day, date, time, subject, unit/component and tier of entry, if appropriate, immediately before a question paper packet is opened. This check must be recorded using the JCQ approved template.
- 4.2. Unless there is a need to split question paper packets for different examination rooms or facilitate access arrangements, they must be only opened in the designated examination room(s).
- 4.3. Question paper packets should be taken to the designated examination room(s) as close to the start of the examination as possible. They must not be removed from the centre's secure storage facility and taken to the designated examination room(s) 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. Care must always be taken to ensure the security of the question papers.
- 4.4. Where a candidate requires a question paper on coloured paper and/or enlarged from A4 to A3, it is strongly recommended that a non-interactive electronic (PDF) question paper is ordered via Access arrangements online. The use of a PDF copy of the question paper will ensure better print quality and reduce the possibility of human error when collating and stapling.
- 4.5. Alternatively, the centre may open the question paper packet in the secure room within 90 minutes of the awarding body's published starting time for the examination. Prior permission is not required.
- 4.6. Where confidential materials such as live assignments need to be opened in advance of the examination and held for use over an extended period, strict precautions must be taken to safeguard them after they have been opened or downloaded from an awarding body's secure extranet site:
 - They must only be issued at the time of the assessment and must be collected at the end of the assessment session;
 - they must not be removed from the centre and when not in use must be kept secure under the conditions described in section 3;
 - each copy must be checked prior to the examination to ensure that it is clean and free from pen or pencil annotations or amendments;

- live assessment material must not be used as practice material for any qualifications.

5. ACCESS ADJUSTMENTS (INCLUDING COMPUTER READER)

- 5.1. Where a candidate requires a computer reader (and approval for the arrangement has been granted by Access arrangements online), it is strongly recommended that a non-interactive electronic (PDF) question paper is ordered via Access arrangements online or accessed via the awarding body's secure extranet site. Printing directly from a PDF of the question paper will ensure better print quality and reduce the possibility of human error when collating and stapling.
- 5.2. Alternatively, the centre may open the question paper packet in the secure room within 90 minutes of the awarding body's published starting time for the examination. Prior permission is not required. Where an awarding body has granted approval for a Language Modifier, he/she may have access to the question paper 60 minutes prior to the awarding body's published starting time for the examination in order to prepare.
- 5.3. If as part of the access arrangements a candidate is provided with a Communication Professional and/or a Live Speaker, the Communication Professional may have access to the question paper 60 minutes prior to the awarding body's published starting time for the examination to prepare. The Live Speaker may have access to the transcript of the Listening examination 60 minutes prior to the awarding body's published starting time for the examination to prepare.

A reader and/or a scribe is not allowed access to the question paper prior to the starting time for the examination to prepare