



## MidKent College Exams Policy

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<b>Document Description</b>	<i>The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the planning and organisation of exams are in the best interest of candidates and compliant with JCQ and other awarding body regulations</i>		
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<b>Policy Cross References - This policy should be read in conjunction with any other associated policies, with particular reference to</b>	
<b>Policy Name</b>	<b>Policy Number</b>
Registration and Certification	
Complaints and Appeals	
Non-Examination Assessment	
Exams Continuity Plan	
MidKent College Risk Assessment – Examinations department Word Processor (Exams)	
Coursework, Malpractice and Plagiarism	
Disability (Exams)	
Data Protection	
Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk	
Exams Archiving Policy	

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V2	2021-2022	Revisions to reflect JCQ updates
V3	2022-2023	Revisions to reflect JCQ updates
V4	2023-2024	Revisions to reflect JCQ updates mainly inclusion of Conflict of Interest policy (3.4) and changes of reference to Heads of Department

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## **2 INTRODUCTION**

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It is important that all staff are made aware of the examination process and their role in that process. The Head of Centre is ultimately responsible for the conduct and process within examinations associated with MidKent College. All staff must make sure that systems are followed so student exam success is not jeopardised.

The college will provide opportunities and facilities to support entry to examinations and assessments for all learners who have satisfactorily completed their programme of learning.

The College will ensure that the Internal Quality Assurance procedures provide fair, accurate assessment and will operate a range of agreed processes to ensure that assessment decisions are valid and reliable, and based on authentic and current evidence against specified assessment criteria. The College will also ensure that assessments meet the requirements of Awarding Organisations.

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the College's examination process to read, fully understand and ensure the implementation of this policy.

## **3 SCOPE & AIM OF POLICY**

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This policy applies to all qualifications delivered by the College that are competency-based, or include an element of internal assessment, require internal verification or moderation to support the accuracy and validity of the assessment process.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the planning and organisation of exams are in the best interest of candidates. This includes onscreen assessments and external examinations

The purpose of this policy is also to ensure the operation of an efficient exams system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff. This will make sure that the planning and administration of all external examinations and onscreen assessments gives every student the maximum opportunity to achieve success.

## **4 PROCEDURES**

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### **4.1 REGISTRATIONS**

4.1.1. Registrations will be completed in a timely manner in accordance with the Awarding Bodies entry deadlines. Please refer to the Registration and Certification procedure for further guidance.

### **4.2 EXAM ENTRY**

4.2.1 Entries are to be made via ProSolution Web, Exams Change Requests in a timely manner.

- 4.2.2 The entry can be submitted by the subject tutor or the Curriculum Manager. It is the responsibility of the curriculum staff to ensure that the entry information and coding is correct; students cannot enter themselves.
- 4.2.3 Entries must be received by the Exams Office by the internal deadline date set by the Examinations Office. The Exams Officer will ask tutors to confirm specific unit exam entries in line with externally set exam periods.
- 4.2.4 Exam entries will be made by the appropriate Exams Officer via the relevant Awarding Body method and by the relevant Awarding Body deadline.
- 4.2.5 The Exams Office will accept withdrawals, amendments and changes to entries up to the specific deadline set by the Exams Office. Such deadlines will be communicated to the relevant departments via the Exams Office.
- 4.2.6 Any withdrawals, amendments and changes should be submitted by the Curriculum Manager or Director of Curriculum via ProSolution Web or the Exams helpdesk as instructed by the exams team member.
- 4.2.7 Late entries for nationally timetabled exams may only be accepted with authorisation from the relevant Curriculum Manager.
- 4.2.8 Late entry fees may be charged to the either the department or student in the event of their error.
- 4.2.9 There is no internal limit as to the number of times students are permitted to sit an on-demand external assessment, unit or examination; however, no student is expected to sit the same exam on more than three occasions, even where that is possible with the awarding organisation, without further clarification. If in the event they have not yet passed the assessment, unit or examination and a fourth or higher entry has been requested, an evaluation from the tutor, Curriculum Manager, Director of Curriculum or if required a member of the Senior Leadership Team, should be completed as to whether a student should continue on the programme and be allowed to resit the unit or whether further support is required.
- 4.2.10 Students can only sit a nationally timetabled technical assessment, unit or examination the specified number of attempts permitted by the Awarding Organisation.
- 4.2.11 Teaching staff are responsible for checking entries. Tutors are able to check the examination timetable via the report on ProSolution Web. Detailed lists with a breakdown of entries by name are also available.
- 4.2.12 Statements of Entry will be sent out to students by email, after the entry deadline has passed for a particular series of nationally timetabled written examinations. The email will include a copy of the JCQ Information for Candidates and information regarding the Enquiries about Results/Access to Scripts services that will be available after the release of results.

### **4.3 EXTERNAL ENTRY**

- 4.3.1 The college does not accept entries for external candidates.
- 4.3.2 The college will support those students enrolled at the College and facilitate entries for examinations for qualifications that they are not studying at MidKent College. This is to enhance progression opportunities.

## **4.4 CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY**

- 4.4.1 College staff are responsible for disclosing any close relationships with candidate as defined by the HR conflict of interest disclosure form.
- 4.4.2 The Exams Team will ensure the relevant awarding bodies are informed as early as possible for each exam series of any potential conflicts of interest where:
- A member of centre staff is taking a qualification at the centre which includes internally assessed components.
  - A candidate is being taught or prepared for a qualification which includes internally assessed components by a member of centre staff with a close relationship.
- 4.4.3 The Exams Team is responsible for maintaining clear records that confirm the measures taken/protocols in place to mitigate any potential risk to the integrity of the qualifications affected by the above, and where:
- A member of the Exams Team (including invigilators) has a close relationship with a candidate being entered for exams and assessments at the centre or at another centre.
  - A member of centre staff is taking a qualification at the centre which does not include internally assessed components/units (not including teacher training qualifications).
  - A member of centre staff is taking a qualification at another centre (not including teacher training qualifications).

## **4.5 STUDENT TIMETABLES**

- 4.5.1 Students exam information will be available via ProPortal.
- 4.5.2 Tutors can access timetables via the appropriate ProSolution Web report.

## **4.6 EQUALITY, ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS, REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS AND SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 4.6.1 The Exams Office will arrange alternative exam arrangements when necessary; reasons may include:
- Students with a specific learning difficulty, physical disability, mental health or other medical condition that is likely to affect performance in an examination.
  - Students with a temporary condition or illness which may be of a short duration e.g. a sprained wrist on the writing hand, or it may last for much or all the student's course e.g. upper limb disorder, pregnant/breastfeeding.
  - Any student from a particular religious background that discovers a clash between a religious festival and an exam date may wish to explore whether it is possible to have adjustments made.
- 4.6.2 Exam access arrangements allow students who are unable to sit formal examinations under usual exam conditions as a result of a disability or other learning need, to have the same opportunities to demonstrate their skills and abilities, as other students. This is achieved by minimising the impact of the student's disability or learning difficulty on performance in assessment through adjustments to the exam arrangements, to enable students to demonstrate their knowledge and competence without changing the demands or validity of the

assessment. An access arrangement which meets the needs of a student with disabilities constitutes a 'reasonable adjustment'.

- 4.6.3 Students are encouraged to disclose their disability during application, enrolment and at on-going points during the course.
- 4.6.4 On disclosure students are referred to the Additional Learning Support (ALS) team who will assess the student and subsequently inform the Exams Office of any additional support (access arrangements) required for examinations.
- 4.6.5 Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the ALS team. GCSE and nationally timetabled BTEC applications must be completed by the Specialist Assessors.
- 4.6.6 The Exams Office will arrange each student's needs for each external examination they will take.
- 4.6.7 Should a candidate be too ill to sit an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma or be taken ill during the exam itself, it is the candidate's responsibility to inform the College. Supportive documentation should be supplied where possible.
- 4.6.8 A decision where an exam candidate may be approved separate invigilation within the centre will be made by the Specialist Assessors. The decision will be based on  
*"Whether the candidate has a substantial and long-term impairment which has an adverse effect and the candidate's normal way of working within the centre."*  
[AA 5.16]
- 4.6.9 For those candidates who suffer from anxiety within a large exam room for example, an assessment may be made by the ALS department for accommodation within a small or very small cohort of a maximum of 12 or 4 candidates. If possible and necessary, the exams office is permitted to arrange a separate room on the exam day.
- 4.6.10 For students identified by the ALS team as needing supervised rest breaks, the time recognised as breaks (either within or outside the exam room) will be added as additional time at the end of the exam. For any other student who leaves the exam room under supervision, no additional time will be granted.

## **4.7 TIMETABLING, INVIGILATION AND PREPARING EXAMINATION PACKS**

- 4.7.1 Dedicated invigilators will be used for most exams. Any exceptions must be authorised by the Exams Manager.
- 4.7.2 The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams Manager. Securing the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the HR Department. DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the college.
- 4.7.3 All invigilators will be trained in accordance with JCQ regulations and other specific Awarding Body requirements. The Exams Manager will hold a record of the content of the training undertaken until the deadline for reviews of marking has passed, or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later. The Exams Manager will provide update training as necessary and monitor the performance of invigilators on an annual basis.
- 4.7.4 Internal college staff may be required to invigilate large cohorts of nationally timetabled exams, such as GCSE exams.

- 4.7.5 Internal staff acting as invigilators will be trained in accordance with JCQ regulations or other Awarding Body requirements relevant to the exams being invigilated. The Exams Manager will hold a record of the content of the training undertaken until the deadline for reviews of marking has passed, or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry is completed, whichever is later. The Exams Manager will provide training as required prior to the relevant exam series.
- 4.7.6 Functional Skills Level 1 and 2 assessments require continuous supervision by suitably informed and briefed adults. All FS L1&2 assessments are managed through the Exams Office, dedicated invigilators are scheduled to invigilate and the assessments are timetabled into the designated exam rooms.
- 4.7.7 The number of invigilators allocated to each examination will be decided by the Examinations Office in line with awarding body guidance.
- 4.7.8 College dedicated invigilators will be supplied with a handbook where available.
- 4.7.9 The Exams Officers will allocate all exam rooms. Where they are unable to find suitable accommodation, the Exams Manager must be informed to escalate when necessary.
- 4.7.10 Facilities are responsible for setting up exam rooms; the Exams Officer must log a job for each exam or if appropriate, block of exams, using the college Helpdesk.
- 4.7.11 The Exams Officers will notify the Facilities department of timetabled exam series with prior notice in order to effectively plan necessary grounds and campus maintenance works to be carried out.
- 4.7.12 Any student with a clash of exams will have a personalised timetable. The student will be supervised at all times until completion of papers has occurred.
- 4.7.13 The Exams Office will inform the JCQ Inspection Service using the JCQ Alternative Site form of any alternative sites that will be used to conduct timetabled examination components of the qualifications listed in the JCQ regulations.
- 4.7.14 The Exams Office will ensure that question papers will only be taken to an alternative site where the published criteria for an alternative site arrangement has been met.
- 4.7.15 The Exams Office will prepare the following paperwork ready for the Invigilator:

**Paper Examinations**

Exam front sheet, Invigilation Report and Seating Plan  
Attendance register  
Question papers  
Answer sheets/books  
Candidate slips  
Any other required/specific documents  
Any information/notes to be included on paperwork

**Onscreen assessments and examinations**

Specific documentation which may include:  
Exam front sheet  
Register  
Seating plan grid  
Key codes  
Incident report form

### Other Awarding Body specific documentation

The Invigilator is to print out Exam All Day register to identify which exams are running in the onscreen assessment room and any students that have access arrangements.

The Exams Office will ensure that the invigilator has the correct log-on for each Awarding Body.

4.7.17 Where separate invigilation has been granted to a candidate, a separate invigilator will be allocated to the room. For JCQ exams, if the candidate also requires a reader and/or scribe, a roving invigilator will be put in place to check on the exam room regularly throughout the exam, as per JCQ regulations.

4.7.18 In circumstances whereby a candidate requires the use of a BSL Signer/Interpreter and has been granted separate invigilation within the centre, video recording equipment will be used to record the session, in accordance with JCQ regulations, to safeguard the proceedings. The recording will be kept on file and supplied to the awarding body if requested for verification purposes.

## 4.8 THE EXAMS ROOM

4.8.1 For JCQ exams, the invigilator will conduct the exam in accordance with JCQ guidelines and/or any other specific Awarding Body Regulations.

4.8.2 For non-JCQ exams, the invigilator will conduct the exam in accordance with the relevant Awarding Body Regulations.

4.8.3 Starting the Exam – Paper-based exams

- Check that each student is sitting at the correct desk.
- Students are required to provide their photographic student ID to enable the Invigilator to verify their identity.
- Where it is not possible to verify the identity of a candidate due to the wearing of religious clothing, such as a veil, the candidate will be taken to a private area by a member of staff of the same gender and asked to remove the religious clothing for identification purposes. Once identification has been established, the candidate may replace their clothing, for example, their veil, and proceed as normal to sit the examination.
- The invigilator will check and distribute question papers.
- The invigilator must record the start and end time on the board clearly so that all candidates can see it.
- The invigilator must ensure that attendance sheets are completed accurately including noting any student absences.
- The invigilator must sign the seating plan and any other documentation provided by the Awarding Body.
- The invigilator must check that all candidates have completed the front section of the question paper.

4.8.4 Starting the Exam – Onscreen assessments

- Check that each student is sitting at the correct workstation/desk with laptop.
- Students are required to provide their photographic student ID to enable the Invigilator to verify their identity.
- Where it is not possible to verify the identity of a candidate due to the wearing of religious clothing, such as a veil, the candidate will be taken to a private area by a member of staff of the same gender and asked to remove the religious clothing for

identification purposes. Once identification has been established, the candidate may replace their clothing, for example, their veil, and proceed as normal to sit the examination.

- The invigilator must ensure that attendance sheets are completed accurately including noting any student absences.
- The invigilator must sign the seating plan and any other documentation provided by the Awarding Body.
- NB. The Head of Department, Curriculum Manager or subject tutor should be present at the beginning of onscreen assessments to establish positive student behaviour and ensure that the correct assessments are taken.

#### 4.8.5 Exam Conditions

- Students are under exam conditions at all times whilst in the exam room.
- JCQ rules on candidates' use of mobile phones and all electronic devices apply at all times.
- Students must remove watches and leave them either in their bags or hand them to the invigilator on entry to the exam room.
- The Invigilator is permitted to question any persons entering the exam room.
- Unauthorised material is not allowed in the exam room.
- Food is not permitted in the exam room unless it is required as an approved access arrangement. Clear drink bottles of water are acceptable, provided all labels are removed.
- Students' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.
- Disruptive students are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Invigilators must follow the emergency evacuation plan in the event of an alarm.
- For JCQ exams and in accordance with JCQ regulations, under ICE Section 13, a roving invigilator will be put in place to regularly check exams where the invigilator and student are on a 1:1 basis, or where a room accommodates several access arrangement students, each with 1:1 readers/scribes for example, and no independent invigilator is in place.

#### 4.8.6 Finishing the Exam

- For paper-based exams, the invigilator must collect in papers or booklets in candidate number order.
- The invigilator must collect all materials and hand them to the Exams Officer.
- Exam papers must not be read by subject teachers or removed from the exam room. Papers for nationally timetabled exams will be available for collection 24 hours after the published end time of the exam (if permitted by the Awarding Body).

4.8.7 Absent candidates should phone the student absence line or make their tutor aware as early as possible. For GCSE exams where students are expected to scan themselves in before the exam, chasing phone calls will be made from an hour before the exam for those who have not scanned in. Students who are absent are dealt with in accordance with usual College processes.

## **4.9 INCIDENTS AND MALPRACTICE IN EXAMINATIONS AND ONSCREEN ASSESSMENTS**

4.9.1 The invigilator must report all incidents that occur within an examination to the Exams Office immediately using the appropriate documentation.

- 4.9.2. Students who arrive more than an hour after the published start time for JCQ exams and meet the criteria of a “Very Late Arrival” as specified in the JCQ ICE regulations, are unlikely to be able to sit their exam. In the event that they are permitted to sit, the student must be accompanied to the Exams Office after their exam and warned that their work may not be accepted by the awarding organisation. They will be given the opportunity to write a statement to accompany the JCQ VLA report.
- 4.9.3 Any incidents of malpractice must be reported immediately to the Exams Manager.
- 4.9.4 The Exams Officers must report any concerns regarding the administration of exams and onscreen assessments to the Exams Manager.
- 4.9.5 It is expected that the Exams Officers work with the Exams Manager in accordance with the JCQ regulations and any other specific Awarding Body Regulations.
- 4.9.6 For further guidance please refer to the Coursework, Malpractice and Plagiarism Policy.

#### **4.10 MANAGING BEHAVIOUR**

- 4.10.1 Students are expected to behave in line with their college student contract and in accordance with the JCQ regulations.
- 4.10.2 Students are expected to adhere to exam conditions whilst in the exam room and follow instructions as given by the invigilator and other key college staff.
- 4.10.3 Poor behaviour will not be tolerated and will be considered as malpractice, and may be reported in accordance with JCQ and awarding body procedures.
- 4.10.4 In the event of persistent and unmanageable behaviour, security can be called upon for assistance.

#### **4.11 SUBMITTING EXAM SCRIPTS**

- 4.11.1 The Exams Office must check all scripts have been returned from the exam room against the attendance register.
- 4.11.2 Candidate exam scripts must be despatched in accordance with the Awarding Bodies procedure.
- 4.11.3 Attendance registers and candidate slips will be filed and kept for a minimum of 12 months for paper-based exams. For onscreen exams, attendance registers will be kept for 12 months, with the exception of IMI exam paperwork, which must be retained for 3 years.

#### **4.12 INTERNAL ASSESSMENT AND COURSEWORK**

- 4.12.1 Curriculum areas must make every reasonable effort to assess endorsed components where possible, and according to awarding organisation requirements.
- 4.12.2 Candidates who have to prepare coursework should do so by the required date. The subject tutor should collate and submit the coursework to the Exams Office by the appropriate deadline.
- 4.12.3 It is the responsibility of the subject tutor to inform the students of their marks for all internally assessed work.

4.12.4 The Exams Office will ensure that coursework is despatched in a timely manner upon receipt.

4.12.5 Keeping a record of what has been sent, when and to whom is the responsibility of the Exams Office.

4.12.6 Marks for internally assessed work may be provided to the Exams Office by the tutors. Alternatively, such as for UAL Performing Arts assessments, internally assessed marks may be submitted to the Awarding Body via their secure portal by curriculum staff, notifying the Exams Office when doing so.

4.12.7 In the preparation of coursework, candidates must abide by JCQ Guidelines for JCQ components or Awarding Body regulations for non-JCQ units. Specifically, they must not:

- Submit work which is not their own
- Lend work to other candidates or allow their work to be copied
- Allow other candidates access to, or the use of, their own source material or assist others in the production of coursework
- Include work copied directly from books, the internet or other sources without acknowledgement or attribution
- Submit work typed or word-processed by a third person without acknowledgement

4.12.8 Any incident of malpractice by candidates or members of college staff must be reported as quickly as possible to the Exams Manager. Malpractice will be dealt with under the JCQ Guidelines 'Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments' for JCQ exams or under the Awarding Body regulations for non-JCQ exams.

4.12.9 The management of Non-Examination Assessments\* is covered under a separate policy.

4.12.10 Appeals against internal assessment is covered under the appeals policy.

*\*The NEA policy covers externally set tasks, entry level functional skills and City and Guilds internal exams.*

## **4.13 CERTIFICATION**

4.14.1 All Certification Claims will be processed in a timely manner in accordance with the Awarding Body procedures. Please refer to the Registration and Certification procedure for further guidance.

## **4.14 RESULTS, ENQUIRES ABOUT RESULTS (EARs), ACCESS TO SCRIPTS (ATS) AND CERTIFICATES**

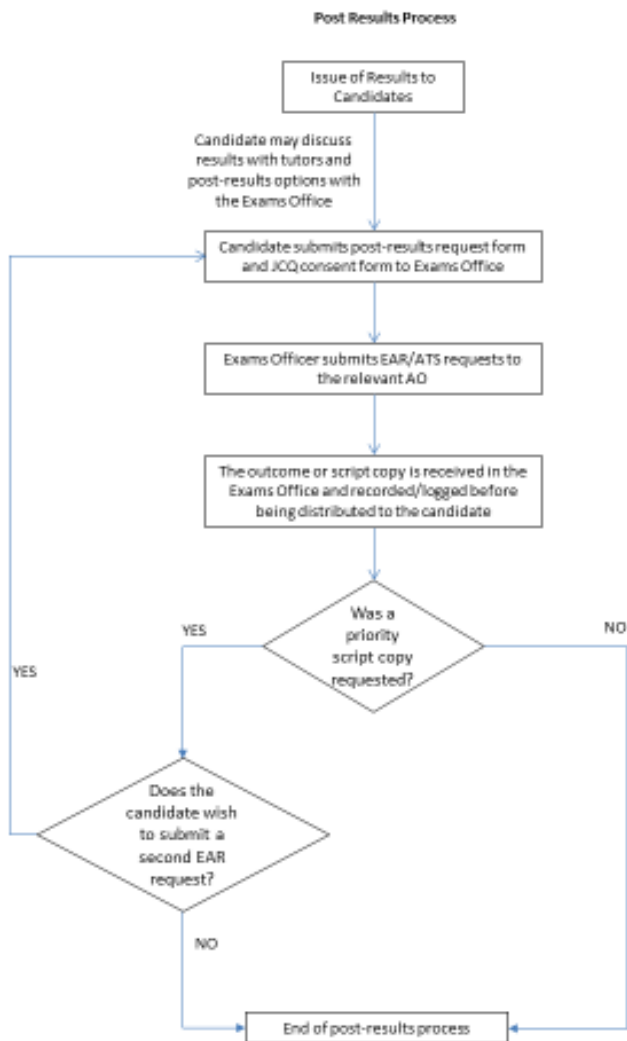
4.14.1 All records of results will be kept for the current academic year and the past 6 years.

4.14.2 Results are available for all teaching staff to communicate via reports on ProSolution Live or via awarding body secure portals.

4.14.3 Result slips are produced electronically for all nationally timetabled written exams and will be emailed to students on the official release to candidates' dates. The Senior Leadership Team may decide to run a results event in person, in which case results slips may be printed and available for collection. In this instance, all uncollected results will be posted out via first class post by 3pm.

- 4.14.4 Should results slips be printed, GCSE results may be collected in person on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so by the candidate via a signed letter and that they provide proof of their identification.
- 4.14.5 EARs for general qualifications may be requested by centre staff (with the student's consent) or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking.
- 4.14.6 The person/department who has requested the EAR is responsible for any fees incurred.
- 4.14.7 If a result is queried, the Exams Officer in conjunction with teaching staff and Senior Management will investigate the feasibility of asking for a review of marking at the centre's expense.
- 4.14.8 After the release of results for general qualifications, candidates may request the return of their script. There may be a charge for this service specified by the relevant awarding body.
- 4.14.9 Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. Consent from the student must be obtained.
- 4.14.10 On the day of results release to candidates for GCSE exams, exams officers and senior staff will be available to discuss post-results services and students options going forward. Wherever possible, a Careers Adviser shall also be available to speak with students.
- 4.14.11 Where a candidate is believed to have been disadvantaged at the time of a nationally timetabled assessment due to circumstances beyond their control, such as illness, bereavement, suffering a major disturbance whilst sitting the exam etc., the relevant Exams Officer shall submit a request for special consideration if permitted for the exam undertaken.
- 4.14.12 Candidates are not required to submit relevant evidence such as doctors notes, hospital letters etc., however it may support the special consideration request if a copy is provided to the Exams Office prior to the request being submitted.
- 4.14.13 Whilst requests for special consideration may be submitted on a candidate's behalf, the Exams Office are not able to pass any further information to the candidate such as the effect of the request or mark adjustments made. This information is not made freely available to Exams Officers by the awarding bodies.

4.14.14 Flowchart of post-results services process:



4.14.15 Certificates will be despatched to the student’s address recorded on the student database within 2 weeks of receipt.

4.14.16 Students are responsible for ensuring that the college holds the correct address for correspondence. In the event that the certificate is despatched to an incorrect address and the college has not been informed of a change of address, the student is liable for any costs associated with a reprint.

4.14.17 If the student’s certificate is returned to the college for any reason it will be held by the Exams Office for 12 months. After this period of time it will be destroyed and any future applications and associated costs for replacement is the responsibility of the student.

4.14.18 The centre is not responsible for the loss or misplacement of certificates after they have left the centre.

4.14.19 Records of certificate despatch will be kept for 1 year.

## **4.15 ARCHIVING**

- 4.15.1 Paperwork relating to registrations, exam entries, certification claims and correspondence will be retained for the period of one calendar year.
- 4.15.2 Copies of results paperwork must be retained for six years, plus the current academic year.
- 4.15.3 Further archiving processes can be found in the Exams Archiving Policy.

## **5 POLICY MONITORING, REVIEW AND EVALUATION**

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A review of this policy will be undertaken by the review date by the policy writer and the Senior Manager responsible. The policy will then be presented to Risk and Audit Committee, the Board of Directors of the subsidiary company and the Full Governing Body for approval.

## **6 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

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This policy has been Equality Impact Assessed and generates no concerns about differential impact. The Equality Impact Assessment is filed on the Quality SharePoint site.

## **7 POLICY DISTRIBUTION**

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A current version of this document is available via SharePoint and on the College website. It does not contain confidential information and can be released to external parties.