

OCTOBER 2024

A SUMMARY OF THE MAIN CHANGES WITHIN THE ICE DOCUMENT

A key role for existing exams officers at the start of the academic year is to identify JCQ regulation changes within its various documents.

In addition to being aware of the changes within the [Instructions for conducting examinations](#) (ICE) document, centres should also note the additional clarification which has been provided concerning the role and responsibilities of the member of the senior leadership team with responsibility for examinations and assessments (within [General Regulations for Approved Centres](#)), and the expectations of the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (within [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments](#)).

General Regulations for Approved Centres

Although the focus of this article is the changes within ICE, particular attention should also be paid to the following new sections which have been added to the *General Regulations for Approved Centres* document:

- Resilience and contingency arrangements
- Cyber security – including a requirement for centres to provide training for authorised staff on the importance of creating strong unique passwords, keeping all account details secret and awareness of all types of social engineering/phishing attempts

Access arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments

There is a concise summary of the changes within the *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments* document [within this document produced by Patoss](#) which is available on the JCQ website. Exams officers may be particularly interested in the following:

- The role and responsibilities of the SENCo and assessor, particularly in the decision-making process
- Additional advice and guidance relating to supervised rest breaks
- The award of 25% extra time for Art examinations
- Additional centre-delegated arrangements
- Additional arrangements which can now be approved via Access Arrangements Online (AAO), include listening to music/white noise due to a substantial impairment, timetable variation on the day of the exam for a candidate with a disability, and a decision on access to a mobile phone for medical purposes (previously this was an automatic referral)
- The inclusion of vocational and technical qualifications within the AARA document and AAO, including BTEC Firsts, BTEC Level 2 Technicals, BTEC Nationals, BTEC Tech

Awards, Functional Skills (AQA and Pearson specifications), T Levels (Pearson specifications)

Who should read the JCQ documents?

The table below highlights the various documents, and which members of staff should be aware of the contents within each of these documents.

JCQ document	Exams officer	Head of centre	Senior leader	SENCo	Teacher
General Regulations for Approved Centres	✓	✓	✓		
Instructions for conducting examinations/ Instructions for the conducting Functional Skills assessments (English and Mathematics)	✓	✓	✓		
Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments			✓	✓	
Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A guide to the special consideration process	✓	✓	✓		
Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments		✓	✓		✓
Instructions for conducting coursework		✓	✓		✓
Post-Results Services	Not specified in the document				
A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes	✓	✓	✓		

Instructions for conducting examinations

It is testament to the professionalism and dedication of exams officers that there has been a relatively seamless return to the conducting of examinations since the pandemic. A strong grasp of the regulations in association with a comprehensive invigilator training programme has ensured a return to the high levels of compliance in the management, administration and conducting of examinations as witnessed prior to 2020. This is reflected in the relatively minor and minimal changes within ICE.

Below are a selection of the changes within ICE for 2024/2025, however, exams officers are reminded that as part of their role, they are required to read the document in its entirety and be aware of **all** the key changes as summarised in the Introduction.

A new format

One of the most significant changes is the new format in which ICE is now available to centres. ICE has been updated and improved so that it is now available in an interactive format which is also:

- easier to read
- easier to locate specific information
- more user-friendly, particularly for exams officers who are new to the role

Centres also have access to a print version of ICE.

Unauthorised items in the examination room

Smart glasses and 'any other smart devices' have been added to the list of unauthorised items which cannot be taken into the examination room.

Formal examination conditions

There is a reminder that:

- Candidates are under formal examination conditions from the moment they enter the room in which they will be taking their examination(s) until the point at which they are permitted to leave
- Candidates must not talk to, attempt to communicate with or disturb other candidates once they have entered the examination room. If they do, this must be reported to the relevant awarding body. It should be noted that if all candidates leave the examination room at the end of the examination at the same time (for example there are no candidates remaining in the examination room who have arrived late, or have extra time, or are taking another examination which is longer in duration), although they should leave without talking or communicating with other candidates, failure to do so does not need to be reported to the relevant awarding body as no other candidate(s) has been disturbed in the taking of their examination
- There is also a reminder that candidates must not open the question paper until the examination begins and if they do, this must be reported to the relevant awarding body

Contingency sessions

The awarding body contingency sessions for examinations taking place in summer 2025 are:

- 11 June (pm)
- 25 June

At this stage, centres should remind candidates that, regardless of their personal exam timetable, they should be available for these contingency sessions. If a candidate's examination(s) are moved to either/both of these sessions, and the candidate is unavailable

due to a pre-booked holiday, this will not be an acceptable reason for missing their re-arranged examination(s).

Leaving the examination room

The regulations now state that candidates may only leave the examination room temporarily where necessary (or where supervised rest breaks have been granted by the SENCo). The centre must ensure that candidates who leave the room temporarily do not have access to unauthorised materials.

Centres must be aware that candidates who decide not to hand in unauthorised materials at the start of the examination may use these when temporarily leaving the examination room, for example to visit the toilet. As it is very difficult to identify such items which may be concealed on a candidate's person, centres must restrict the instances of leaving the examination to where this is absolutely necessary.

Invigilator announcement

When asking candidates to check the day, date, time, subject, unit/component and tier on the front of their question paper, invigilators must also announce that candidates are required to put up their hand if they think that they have been given the wrong question paper. This will help to ensure that all candidates are taking the correct question paper and for any errors to be identified before the start of the examination.

Warning to candidates poster

The *Warning to candidates* poster in Appendix 4 has been re-designed, however, the wording/content of the poster has not changed from previous exam series.

Centres may continue to use their existing versions of the *Warning to candidates* poster or use the new candidate friendly re-designed version (as illustrated in ICE Appendix 4).

The re-designed version and the version used in previous exam series are both available to download from the JCQ website (in the [Exam Room Posters section](#)).

The contents of this article were correct at the time of publication (September 2024)