



Examinations Policy

2023/24

Interim Review December 2023

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1. Policy Purpose

This Examinations Policy commits the College and its staff to achieving high quality examination and assessment procedures.

This commitment is underpinned by the following three objectives:

- i. A culture of high service standards for all staff and learners is fostered within the College and is integral to each learner's College experience.
- ii. Every member of staff's practice underpins this policy in order to foster and spread the culture of high-quality examinations services for our learners
- iii. All staff members and learner are made aware of the procedures expected to be followed to ensure compliance with External Regulations, thus ensuring that the College is not compromised in any way.

2. ¹

3. Awarding Organisation Registration Registration

The Learner Data Services team are aware of curriculum plans prior to the start of an academic year. Consequently, the Learner Data Services team will work with co-ordinators / managers to confirm specific registration processes before September enrolments informs awarding bodies about learners at the beginning of a programme of study. T

he College has the following process for full-time and part-time registrations:

- i. The Exam team will enrol students with the appropriate awarding body adhering to exam board cut off dates in order to avoid late entry fees to the college.
- ii. ii. The Exam team will run the Enrolled not registered report (ENR) on the 1st working day of every week and this will be sent to relevant staff until 2nd week in November. The confirmation of information which will enable students to be registered on the correct course.
- iii. iii. Confirmation of registrations with any official awarding body will be forwarded to the relevant staff.
- iv. Iv. For some awarding organisations lecturers can check learner registrations online e.g. Edexcel Online.
- v. v. Any withdrawals / transfers will be communicated by the Exam team to the appropriate awarding organisation.
- vi. vi. The Exams Team will not accept late registrations from staff members which is after the Awarding Body Deadline.

If you are unclear about course registrations or any learner registration, please contact the Exam team as soon as possible at exams@kidderminster.ac.uk

4. Examination entries, late entries and retakes

Entries:

- Learners are selected for their examination entries by tutors.
- The centre does not accept entries from private learners.
- The centre acts as an exam centre for other organisations. An appropriate fee will be payable by the organisation to the College depending on the requirements.
- Exam entries are submitted before the exam board deadlines. Online exams must be booked by submitting an exam request form to exams@kiddermminster.ac.uk . Exam request forms are to be found on – All Staff R Drive.All Staff R Drive, or submitting a yearly exam schedule at the start of the year.
- Each examination sitting must have a minimum of five learners to ensure adequate room usage, although learners can be sitting a mixture of subjects and levels.
- Entry for any examination is dependent upon satisfactory attendance that a learner meets the minimum attendance rate of 91%
- Staff undertaking any college agreed qualification within the centre must go through the staff development process and sent to Learner Data Services to obtain approval from the relevant examining board before the entry can be made.

Late entries:

- The deadlines for entries are circulated via tutors and Programme Leaders and on the Examination section of the College website.
- Late entries can be authorised by the Head of department.
- The Exam team will accept entries and entry amendments after the date set by the awarding organisation once these charges have been accepted by the learner or the Head of department.

Retakes:

- Currently enrolled learners are allowed the opportunity of retakes providing unreasonable costs are not incurred by the College.
- Exceptionally, non-enrolled learners may have the opportunity to re-take at the College's discretion. Non-enrolled learners² wanting to retake an examination/assessment will be required

to pay all costs, including room hire, invigilation fees, administration charges, awarding organisation charges, additional learning support costs, etc before re-takes will be processed.

- The College reserves the right not to allow non-enrolled learners the opportunity of a re-take.

5. Examination Fees

- Examination & registration fees are payable at enrolment as outlined in the prospectus or course information sheet, retakes will be subject to a retake fee, normally the cost of the exam entry and a £25 administration fee.
- Reimbursement of fees will not be given to learners who fail to sit an exam or meet the necessary coursework requirements unless medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances is supplied.
- With regard to 16-18 year old learners, who are eligible for free examination fees, the college can impose reasonable conditions on such learners in order for them to qualify for free examination entry, completion of coursework and good attendance being examples.
- The final arbiter in each instance will be the Head of department for the curriculum area where the programme of study is undertaken. Individual disputes regarding fees will be referred to the relevant Head of department.

6. Managing invigilators and examination days³

Managing invigilators

- Where possible, external invigilators are used for all examinations.
- The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Learner Data Exam team.
- Securing the necessary DBS clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of Human Resources
- Invigilators are trained, timetabled and briefed by the Exams Team Leader.
- Invigilators rates of pay are set by payroll.
- Specific invigilation guidance is available in the 'Invigilation and Conduct of all Examinations' document.

Examination days

- The Examinations Office will book all examination rooms after liaison with other users and make the question papers, other exams materials and stationery available for invigilators.
- Question papers will be distributed to subject lecturers after 24 hours **provided these papers do not need to be returned to the awarding organisation.**
- In practical exams, subject lecturers must be present to help with any technical difficulties.
- The Exam team is only able to provide exam materials as supplied by the Awarding Bodies i.e. examination papers and answer books. Additional equipment that may be required, such as calculators, pens etc. must be provided by the learner.
- It is the responsibility of the subject lecturers to advise the learners of materials required at the start of their course.
- Once informed by the Examinations Office, the Estates Department is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms to meet examination standards.

Online examinations/assessments

- All externally set assessment will be undertaken in conjunction with that awarding organisation's instructions and JCQ's guidance, irrespective of location.

- Learner results will be communicated by The exams team who will liaise with the relevant tutor/manager about re-sit opportunities, if required.

7. Emergency Evacuation of Examinations

Specific instructions are available on Emergency evacuation procedure for examinations, this is made available in all rooms used for examinations.

8. Learner behaviour and exam timetable clashes.

Learners

- JCQ rules on learners use of mobile phones and all electronic devices apply at all times during an examination.
- Kidderminster College rules on dress and behaviour apply.
- Learners are required to bring Confirmation of Entry paperwork to the exam.
- Learners are obliged to bring some form of identification i.e. College ID badges to every examination they attend.
- Learners' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.
- Disruptive learners are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines and College Learner Disciplinary Policy.
- For academic exams longer than an hour, learners will not be allowed to leave the room until at least one hour after the published start time. They will not be allowed to return.

Clash learners

- In cases where a learner is timetabled to sit two or more examinations on the same day and at the same time, the Examining Boards may agree to a change to the time of some of the affected learner's examinations. There must be supervision not only during but also between exams. The supervision of learners, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight supervision, where appropriate, is the responsibility of the Exam team.

9. The Equality Act 2010 - reasonable adjustment and special consideration.

The college recognise its duties towards disabled candidates as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010†. This must include a duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, submit applications for reasonable adjustments and make reasonable adjustments to the service the centre provides to disabled candidates.

Reasonable adjustment is agreed at the pre-assessment planning stage and is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty, which places the learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation. Reasonable adjustments must not, however, affect the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes nor must they give the learner an assessment advantage over other learners undertaking the same or similar assessments.

Lecturers refer learners to the Learning Support Manager, who makes necessary arrangements for an assessment and then applies to the awarding bodies for the necessary reasonable adjustments. All approved adjustments are stored in an electronic database which the Exam team check all exam entries against. When confirmation is approved, the Exam team apply these adjustments to student exams.

The Exam team will work closely with invigilators via training updates to ensure all access arrangements approved are applied correctly in examinations.

Please refer to the Access Arrangements Policy and Written Disability Policy.

Special consideration - This is a post-assessment allowance to reflect temporary illness, injury or indisposition that occurred at the time of assessment. Any special consideration granted cannot remove the difficulty the learner faced at the time of assessment and can only be a relatively small adjustment to ensure that the integrity of the assessment is not compromised. Special consideration **cannot** apply to "licence to practice" units within a qualification, or to "licence to practice" qualifications.

The learner approaches the Exams Team Leader with their reason for special consideration together with any paperwork. The Exams Team Leader will complete a special consideration form. This form and any information from the learner is then forwarded within 5 working days to the awarding organisation who will make a decision. The awarding organisation informs the College about the special consideration request. The College will inform the learner of the awarding organisation's decision.

In addition, the College has two specific policies that provide more detailed guidance:

- Provision for learners with specific learning difficulties and disabilities
- Disability Statement

10. Coursework and appeals against internal assessments including controlled assessments

Please refer to the College's Academic Appeals Policy

11. Results, Review of Results (RoRs) and access to scripts (ATS)

Results

- All individual learner statement of results received during the course will be either collected by the learner or posted to their current address unless otherwise advised by the learner. Results will not be given out over the telephone, if a third party is collecting resulting on a learner's behalf written confirmation is required.

Review of Results (RoRs)

- RoRs for general qualifications may be requested by centre staff or learners if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in the marking. Written

- consent must be obtained from the learner prior to an RoR.
- When the centre does not uphold an RoR, a learner may apply to have an enquiry carried out. In this case learners will be charged the appropriate fee from the awarding organisation.
- Consent forms will be available on result days for learners to complete, detailing closing dates for requests.
- Exams Team Leader will process completed consent forms with the appropriate awarding organisation.
- Outcomes of any RoRs will be reported to learner.

ATS (Access to Scripts)

- After the release of results for general qualifications, learners may ask the Exams Team Leader to request the return of their scripts (as set out in the College's Academic Appeals Policy). Consent must be obtained from the learner to apply for access to scripts
- A fee may be payable by the learner for this service.
- A photocopy of the script can be obtained to ascertain whether an ROR should be requested.
- The original script can be requested but no enquiry on results can be made once the original script has been returned.
- Centre staff may request scripts for investigation or teaching purposes. Consent of the learners must be obtained in all cases.
- Consent forms will be available on result days for learners to complete, detailing closing dates for requests.
- Exams Team Leader will send requested scripts to tutor and/or learner.

12. Certification

The Certification Claim is the process of informing an awarding organisation of learner achievement. A key principle of the qualification credit framework is unit achievement. Therefore, learners who have not completed a sufficient number of units to receive the full award can be certificated for the units that they have achieved.

Certification claims for the full award or unit certification are claimed by the Exam Team either through online or paper claims. For full-time and long part-time courses⁴, certification claims must be submitted to Examinations by the second Thursday in July. For other courses, claims can be made at any time of year. Where a learner withdraws / transfers prior to the end of the course, unit achievement may be claimed prior to the end of the academic year.

Certification process:

- Academic results are submitted by course lecturers/programme leaders to the Exam team during the set result collection weeks in late June.

- ii. Results are input / uploaded before the end of July where possible. Late claims can be classed as maladministration.

When certificates are received, the Exam team checks all certificates to ensure accuracy and completeness. Only names of learners that have successfully achieved a unit or qualification should be entered on an awarding organisation's claim form e.g. BTEC SRF. Certificates are posted to learners unless otherwise advised. Certificates/results may be collected on behalf of a learner by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so in writing by the learner.

If a learner reports the non-receipt of a certificate, the Exams team will investigate the situation. If the certificate has been forwarded to the learner by the Exams team, but the learner has not received it, providing the learner has contacted the college within 3 months of the completion of the course, and address held on system is still current, the Learner Data Services team will cover the costs of a replacement. After 3 months, the learner will be responsible for contacting the Awarding organisation, ordering the replacement and covering any costs that may be incurred.

Other related certification points:

- All certificates are automatically posted to learners' home addresses. The College is only obliged to retain unclaimed certificates (i.e. certificates returned to us by the Post Office due to a change of address or inability to deliver) for a period of 12 months. The College is entitled to destroy any unclaimed certificates after a period of 12 months from the date of issue. It is the learner's responsibility to inform the College of any change of address.
- Learners can then request replacement certificates from the awarding bodies (typically this costs approximately £50.00 per certificate).
- The Learner Data Services team will keep all records safely and securely for three years post certification.

13. Assessment Malpractice

Malpractice consists of those acts which undermine the integrity and validity of assessment, the certification of qualifications and / or damage the authority of those responsible for conducting the assessment and certification.

Kidderminster College and / or awarding organisations may impose penalties and/or sanctions on learners or staff where incidents (or attempted incidents) of malpractice have been proven.

Learner Malpractice:

Attempting to, or actually carrying out, any malpractice activity is not permitted by Kidderminster College or any awarding organisation. The following are examples of malpractice by learners; this list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by Kidderminster College or an awarding organisation at its discretion:

- plagiarism by copying and passing off, as the learner's own, the whole or part(s) of another person's work, including artwork, images, words, computer generated work (including Internet sources), thoughts, inventions and/or discoveries whether published or not, with or without the originator's permission and without appropriately acknowledging the source
- collusion by working collaboratively with other learners to produce work that is submitted as individual learner work. Learners should not be discouraged from teamwork, as this is an essential

key skill for many sectors and subject areas, but the use of minutes, allocating tasks, agreeing outcomes, etc. are an essential part of team work and this must be made clear to the learners

- impersonation by pretending to be someone else in order to produce the work for another or arranging for another to take one's place in an assessment/examination/test
- fabrication of results and/or evidence
- failing to abide by the instructions or advice of an assessor, a supervisor, an invigilator, or Awarding organisation conditions in relation to the assessment/examination/test rules, regulations and security
- misuse of assessment/examination material
- introduction and/or use of unauthorised material contra to the requirements of supervised assessment/examination/test conditions, for example: notes, study guides, personal organisers, calculators, dictionaries (when prohibited), personal stereos, mobile phones or other similar electronic devices
- obtaining, receiving, exchanging or passing on information which could be assessment/examination/test related (or the attempt to) by means of talking or written papers/notes during supervised assessment/examination/test conditions
- behaving in such a way as to undermine the integrity of the assessment/examination/test
- the alteration of any results document, including certificates

Kidderminster College's procedure for alleged learner malpractice:

1. Alleged learner malpractice reported to the Exams Team Leader.
2. The Exam Team Leader will inform the Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality, who will investigate with the Learner Service Manager within 5 working days of the incident.
3. The outcome will be communicated to the learner(s) and parents, if applicable, together with any disciplinary action, as outlined in Kidderminster College Learner Disciplinary Policy
4. Serious learner malpractice will be reported to the Principal and awarding organisation within 10 working days of the incident.

Staff Malpractice

The following are examples of malpractice by centre staff. The list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by an Awarding Organisation at its discretion:

- failing to keep any awarding organisation mark schemes secure
- alteration of any awarding organisation mark schemes
- alteration of awarding organisation's assessment and grading criteria
- assisting learners in the production of work for assessment, where the support has the potential to influence the outcomes of assessment, for example where the assistance involves centre staff producing work for the learner
- producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the learner has not generated
- allowing evidence, which is known by the staff member not to be the learner's own, to be included in a learner's assignment/task/portfolio/ coursework
- facilitating and allowing impersonation
- misusing the conditions for special learner requirements, for example where learners are permitted support, such as an amanuensis, this is permissible up to the point where the support has the potential to influence the outcome of the assessment
- failing to keep learner computer files secure
- falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or by fraud
- fraudulent certificate claims, that is claiming for a certificate prior to the learner completing all the requirements of assessment
- failing to keep assessment/examination/test papers secure prior to the assessment/examination/test

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Kidderminster College's procedure for alleged staff malpractice:

1. Alleged staff malpractice reported to the Exam Team Leader.
2. The Exams Team Leader/Learner Data Services team Manager will inform the Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality, the line manager of the staff involved, and Human Resources. An initial investigation will take place in accordance with the College Disciplinary Policy.
3. Serious staff malpractice will be reported to the Principal and awarding organisation within 10 working days of the outcome.

Kidderminster College will take positive steps to prevent or reduce the occurrence of learner malpractice. For example:

- using the induction period and the learner handbook to inform learners of the centre's policy on malpractice and the penalties for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice
 - showing learners the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources, including websites. Learners should not be discouraged from conducting research; indeed evidence of relevant research often contributes to the achievement of higher grades. However, the submitted work must show evidence that the learner has interpreted and synthesised appropriate information and has acknowledged any sources used.
 - introducing procedures for assessing work in a way that reduces or identifies malpractice, e.g. plagiarism, collusion, cheating, etc.
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- These procedures may include:
 - periods of supervised sessions during which evidence for assignments/tasks/coursework is produced by the learner
 - altering assessment assignments/tasks/tools regularly
 - the assessor assessing work for a single assignment/task in a single session for the complete cohort of learners
 - using oral questions with learners to ascertain their understanding of the concepts, application, etc. within their work
 - assessors getting to know their learners' styles and abilities, etc.

In a learner or staff malpractice situation, awarding organisations reserve the right to carry out an independent investigation in full under any circumstances of alleged malpractice relating to a centre and full cooperation from the centre will be expected.

14. Related Policies:

- Assessment and Verification Policy
- Invigilation and the Conduct of Exams
- Equality Statement of Intent
- Protocol for the Registration and Certification of student achievement
- Staff taking qualifications in Centre
- Access Arrangements Policy

- Disability Policy

15. Examinations Policy monitoring arrangements

This policy will be updated by The Exams Team Leader and endorsed by the College Senior Leadership Team annually.

Policy originated by	W. Gilbert
Date of last approval	n/a
Approved by	SLT
Review frequency	Annual
Date of next review / approval	September 2023
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