

A person in a grey shirt is holding a white certificate. The certificate has the word 'CERTIFICATE' in large, bold, purple letters and the word 'ACHIEVEMENT' in smaller, bold, purple letters below it. The person is holding the certificate with both hands, and their face is partially visible in the background. The background is blurred, showing some greenery and a wooden table.

Exams Manager/Officer Professional Standards Toolkit

**Easy to follow guide to
achievement and certification**

Exams Manager/Officer Professional Standards Toolkit

The Exams Manager/Officer Professional Standards



The **Exams Manager/Officer Professional Standards** have been developed to raise the profile of the exams manager/officer role and support effective professional development within centres.

By completing the Standards each academic year, an exams manager/officer provides evidence of:

- **Knowledge and Understanding** – knowledge of the regulations, processes and procedures relating to the administration and conduct of examinations and assessments, together with the latest information and updates from key stakeholders.
- **Key Skills** – a commitment to developing and maintaining the skills required to effectively manage, administer and conduct examinations and assessments.
- **Values and Attributes** – a commitment to upholding the integrity and security of examinations and assessments within the centre.

The Standards were developed in response to findings of a survey which highlighted that:

- **50.6%** of exams managers/officers undertake an additional role
- **24%** do not have access to an annual appraisal
- **18.7%** do not receive appropriate training and support to facilitate the effective delivery of examinations and assessments and ensure compliance with JCQ regulations

Who are the Standards intended to support?

Exams Managers/Officers

Every exams manager/officer should have access to an effective professional development programme each academic year. The Standards provide a structured framework that can be incorporated into this programme, supporting continuous development and providing a record of achievement.

Senior Leaders/Line Managers

Although the head of centre has ultimate responsibility for compliance with JCQ and awarding body regulations, day-to-day oversight of the examination system is often delegated to a designated senior leader.

Senior leaders should have sufficient knowledge of the examination system to provide effective oversight, support and supervision, and to ensure the integrity and security of examinations and assessments.

Summary

The Exams Manager/Officer Professional Standards provide access to:

- Certificated evidence of competence in fulfilling the exams manager/officer role
- Relevant and quality professional development for new and experienced exams managers/officers
- Support for senior leaders in devising a performance management programme

The Standards can be used as part of a comprehensive performance management programme for the exams manager/officer, supported by regular meetings and an annual appraisal. These should provide opportunities to review the centre's examination processes, recognise strengths and identify areas for development.

Completion of the Standards provides senior leaders and the head of centre with evidence that the exams manager/officer is appropriately prepared to manage and administer examinations and assessments in accordance with JCQ and awarding body regulations and requirements.

The Standards also support **career progression and professional recognition**, providing a record of successful completion across the three areas of **Knowledge and Understanding, Key Skills, and Values and Attributes**.

Exams Manager/Officer Professional Standards Toolkit

What is contained within the standards?



Knowledge & Understanding

An exams manager/officer must decide the areas in which they need to develop their Knowledge & Understanding for the current academic year. These may include:

- JCQ regulations (including an update on changes for the current academic year)
- Awarding body processes/procedures
- Key dates/deadlines
- Qualification information
- Management Information System information and updates
- Centre-specific processes (if new to the role or centre)
- New exams manager/officer induction

An exams manager/officer and senior leader must agree the areas, and the relevant targets, which the exams manager/officer will focus upon over the current academic year.

A discussion should also take place over how these targets will be achieved, for example:

- Face-to-face training
- Online training
- Peer support
- Personal research
- Networking
- [other methods]

Progress against these targets should be measured at regular intervals during the academic year and the success/completion criteria agreed.



Key Skills

There are a range of skills which an exams manager/officer must acquire/develop to undertake their role successfully. These include:

- Time management
- People management
- Contingency planning/risk management
- Prioritising tasks/workload/multitasking
- Problem solving
- Communication skills
- Handling difficult conversations
- Presentation skills
- Decision making
- Managing deadlines
- Working collaboratively

A senior leader and exams manager/officer should meet to discuss which skills should be focused upon (the recommendation is three skill areas), the method(s) for developing/acquiring these skills, and how successful completion/acquisition will be measured.



Values & Attributes

A key element of the exams manager/officer role is to ensure that the integrity and security of the examination system is maintained within their centre.

JCQ regulations require an exams manager/officer – with support, supervision and effective line management from a member of their senior leadership team – to ensure that the integrity and security of examinations and assessments is maintained throughout an examination series within their centre.

To ensure that an exams manager/officer meets this requirement, a Values & Attributes statement must be signed each academic year as part of the Standards. This statement also commits an exams manager/officer to report instances of malpractice when there may be pressure from the head of centre/senior leadership to do otherwise.

JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres state that:

"The head of centre is the individual who is accountable to the awarding bodies for ensuring that the centre is always compliant with the published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements to ensure the security and integrity of the examinations/assessments"

Exams Manager/Officer Professional Standards Toolkit

What is the process for administering and acquiring the standards?

The Exams Manager/Officer Professional Standards are renewed each academic year, with the achievement period running from **September to August**.

The time required to complete the Standards will vary between individuals and centres. The exams manager/officer's experience and capability, together with the professional development targets set, should determine when the Standards have been satisfactorily achieved.

What skills are required to support the achievement of the targets?

Record what skills are required, what will be undertaken, how will they be measured and by when should they be achieved

1

Register

Exams managers/officers can register for the Standards on The Learning and Skills website

2

Agree targets

Senior leader/line manager and exams manager/officer meet to agree targets and download the Values & Attributes statement

Targets should be agreed together and be achievable, and realistic, within the timescale set

Targets should be specific, and progress should be measurable between review meetings

Record the targets. What has gone well or not so well?

What progress has been made and what changes, improvements, or focus would you like to see for the next review?

3

Regular meetings

Senior leader/line manager and exams manager/officer meet on a regular basis to discuss progress against targets and the Standards criteria (monthly is suggested)

4

Track progress

Exams managers/officers can track their progress within The Learning and Skills Office website

6

Certificate

Once downloaded, the certificate should be signed by the senior leader/line manager to confirm that the individual has successfully completed the Standards

5

Appraisal

A meeting should take place between the exams manager/officer and their senior leader/line manager to confirm that all targets have been achieved.

Once this confirmation has been received, the exams manager/officer can claim/download their certificate from The Learning and Skills Office website

Exams Manager/Officer Professional Standards Toolkit

Case study 1 – An experienced exams manager/officer

Emma has been in post at her current centre for five years.

As an 11-18 centre, a range of qualifications are delivered to students including GCE, GCSE and vocational qualifications including BTECs and Cambridge Nationals. Emma also serves as the Assistant Data Manager.

Knowledge & Understanding

- Keeping up-to-date with JCQ regulation changes for the current academic year by researching the JCQ website and relevant documentation and attending a training event
- Completing The Exams Office online Exams Manager/Officer Digital Accreditation
- To understand any updates that may have been applied to the Management Information System (MIS) used within the centre
- To attend local exams manager/officer network meetings
- To research awarding body websites to keep abreast of the latest information/updates
- To deliver training for invigilators internally following the use of an external trainer in previous years
- To reduce the number of late entry fees

Key Skills

After discussion between Emma and her senior leader/line manager, it was agreed that the following skills would be acquired/developed over the course of the academic year via attendance at face-to-face training events (if available), online training, peer support, shadowing colleagues:

- People management
- Contingency planning/risk management
- Handling difficult conversations
- Effective decision making

Values & Attributes

The contents of the Values & Attributes statement were discussed/signed during an initial meeting at the start of the academic year.

Senior leader/line manager meetings

Emma agrees the following meeting agendas/content with her line manager:

- Emma and her senior leader/line manager agree to meet every half term
- During the first meeting of the academic year, Emma's targets are agreed/set relating to her Knowledge & Understanding and key skills, and the content of the Values & Attributes statement is discussed, agreed and signed. It is also agreed how Emma will achieve her targets over the course of the academic year. Emma's senior leader/line manager will register her for the current Standards
- Emma's progress against her targets is assessed at each meeting and approval given (if required) by her senior leader/line manager for her to attend training events, network meetings, conferences, complete online training etc. Her senior leader/line manager will record her progress on The Learning and Skills Office website
- Once Emma has achieved her targets, she confirms this on The Learning and Skills website and claims/downloads her certificate.

Monitoring targets

- Progress and achievement against targets will be monitored during each meeting
- Training needs will be discussed/arranged during each meeting and/or as they become available
- External contacts (e.g. invigilator trainer, local exams manager/officers offering mentoring support) will be asked to provide feedback

Achieving the Standards

Emma presents her certificate to her senior leader/line manager for signature to confirm completion of her targets

Exams Manager/Officer Professional Standards Toolkit

Case study 2 – A new exams manager/officer

Mark has been appointed as exams manager/officer at his local school.

He has no previous experience of the exams manager/officer role and therefore has little knowledge of the examination system or how qualifications are structured.

Mark uses *The Exams Office New Exams Manager/Officer – Task completion checklist* to confirm the tasks he will complete during the first week, first month and first three months in post.

Knowledge & Understanding

- Completing The Exams Office online New Exams Manager/Officer Induction and Assessment Module
- Attending new exams manager/officer training event(s)
- Completing an internal centre-based induction (e.g. key staff, processes etc.)
- Completing The Exams Office online invigilator training to acquire an understanding of JCQ regulations and the invigilator role
- To understand the Management Information System (MIS) used within the centre
- To attend local exams manager/officer network meetings
- To acquire an understanding of the examination system and structure of qualifications
- To research JCQ and awarding body websites
- To arrange training for invigilators – this may be via an external trainer for the exams manager/officer to observe and deliver this in future years

Key skills

After discussion between the exams manager/officer and line manager, it was agreed that the following skills would be acquired/developed over the course of the academic year via attendance at face-to-face training events (if available), online training, peer support, shadowing colleagues:

- Time management
- Prioritising tasks/workload
- Presentation skills

Values & Attributes

The contents of the Values & Attributes statement were discussed/signed during one of the meetings which took place during the first month in post.



Senior leader/line manager meetings

Mark agrees the following meeting agendas with his line manager:

- On his first day in post to set short term targets (first week) and for the line manager to register the exams manager/officer for the Exams Manager/Officer Professional Standards via the Senior Leader and Line Manager Exam Support website
- At the end of the first week to review the first week in post and set targets to the end of the first month
- At the end of the first month to review the first month in post and set targets for the first three months in post/to the end of the first term
- At the end of the first half term to discuss progress to date, identifying issues, pastoral care etc.
- At the end of the first term to review the first three months in post and set targets for the remainder of the academic year
- Every half term to review targets, discuss progress to date, identifying issues, pastoral care etc.

Monitoring targets

- Progress and achievement against targets will be monitored during each meeting
- Training needs will be discussed/arranged during each meeting and/or as they become available
- External contacts (e.g. invigilator trainer, local exams managers/officers offering mentoring support) will be asked to provide feedback



Achieving Standards

Once Mark has achieved his targets, he confirms this on The Learning and Skills website and claims/downloads his certificate. The certificate is then presented to his senior leader/line manager for signature to confirm completion of his targets

Exams Manager/Officer Professional Standards Toolkit

Key information

The senior leader/line manager and exams manager/officer partnership

The partnership between the senior leader/line manager and the exams manager/officer is a powerful and essential one. Together, they provide the leadership, oversight and professional support needed to maintain the integrity and security of the examination system within the centre.

Exams managers/officers are highly skilled professionals who play a pivotal role in the effective management, administration and conduct of examinations and assessments. Their expertise, rigour and commitment are fundamental to maintaining the world-leading reputation of UK qualifications and the value placed on UK general and vocational qualifications across the globe.

The effectiveness of the examination system within a centre is also a reflection of the commitment and support provided by its senior leadership. By working in partnership, senior leaders and exams managers/officers can ensure that examinations and assessments are delivered to the highest standards and in full compliance with regulatory requirements.



The Learning and Skills Office offers a CPD platform which provides **Key Skills** training in the following:

- Contingency planning
- Effective decision making
- Presentation skills
- Time management
- Communication skills
- Handling difficult conversations
- Managing deadlines
- People management
- Prioritising tasks
- Problem solving
- Working collaboratively



www.theexamsoffice.org

- Digital Accreditation
- Key Documents
- Monthly Updates
- New Exams Manager/Officer Support
- Conference
- Training
- Training Events
- New Exams Officers
- Senior Leaders
- International Training

The National Association of Examinations Officers
www.thenaao.org • articles • mindfulness and well-being • vacancy map • rewards and awards • CPD and events

**National
Association of
Examinations
Officers^{CTC}**

Key stakeholder information

- JCQ regulations and documentation **www.jcq.org.uk**

Awarding bodies include:

- AQA **www.aqa.org.uk**
- OCR **ocr.org.uk**
- Pearson **qualifications.pearson.com**
- WJEC/Eduqas
www.wjec.co.uk / www.eduqas.co.uk
- NCFE **www.ncfe.org.uk**
- Cambridge International Education
www.cambridgeinternational.org
- City & Guilds **www.cityandguilds.com**

Qualification specific includes:

- GCE and GCSE information
See Ofqual Guide Student Guide
- BTEC information
See the Pearson website and A guide for learners and parents
- Cambridge Nationals and Cambridge Technicals information
See the OCR website (Cambridge Nationals and Cambridge Technicals)