

# Examinations Policy & Procedures

Version 1

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## **Linked policies:**

- Internal Verification Policy
- Complaints and Appeals Policy
- Academic Appeals Policy
- Student Handbook
- Data Privacy Notice and Consent Policy
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## **External reference points**

- Office for the Independent Adjudicator Good Practice Framework Sep 2015
- Core Practice Q6: The provider has fair and transparent procedures for handling complaints and appeals which are accessible to all students
- Data Protection Act 1998, 2018. Article 51 GDPR

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## 1. Preamble

The College policy on Examinations is informed by the Joint Council for Qualifications and provides all the information staff and students would need to administer or sit an examination, including responsible persons, examination locations and facilities, safe custody and security of examinations, invigilation, examination conduct, and reasonable adjustments for disabilities and special needs. These examination procedures are designed to be used as a general guide for any examinations that the College may deliver.

This policy covers any examination that any UKG student, or person that attends a UKG premise for the purpose of examination, is required to sit, including external papers or examination papers that the College has developed itself. Examinations do not include assessments of coursework, which are covered in the Assessment Policy.

## 2. Aims

This policy ensures that any examination the College is responsible for delivering is administered fairly and reliably, according to expectations and standards of the relevant awarding bodies, as well as the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). The College has the following examination aims:

- To ensure that any examinations conducted by UKG are fair and reliable.
- To ensure that staff and students understand the role and what is expected of them in relation to examinations
- To meet the expectations and standards of relevant awarding bodies, and the JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations (ICE).

## 3. Objectives

- To provide clear instructions on how examinations are to be invigilated
- To ensure that exams are held in secure locations so that they cannot be viewed by any unauthorised person prior to taking the exam
- To ensure that staff responsible for examinations make reasonable adjustments for students with special needs or disabilities if required
- To provide clear instructions on expected conduct during examinations and the potential penalties for misconduct
- To provide relevant information for online examinations

## 4. Responsibilities

The Exams Officer and Invigilators will be appointed by the Managing Director.

### 4.1. The Exams Officer is responsible for:

- Managing the administration of all exams at the UKG study centre(s)
- Advising tutors and other relevant support staff about exam timetables and application procedures as set by the relevant awarding body or organisation (e.g. Pearson or university partner)
- Administration of all examinations, including liaison with the Awarding Body (AB), ensuring that all exams are conducted in accordance with deadlines and regulations
- Production and distribution to staff and candidates of a calendar, schedule for all exams
- Remaining on-site at all times when exams are taking place
- Liaising with the Tutor and Quality and Standards Manager.
- Appointing, instructing and guiding Invigilators for all exams at the campus
- Reporting to the Assessment Committee and Academic Board on Examinations
  
- The Exams Officer is also responsible for ensuring that all candidates attend the campus and that the rooms for exams are appropriately prepared as follows:
  - Suitable arrangements for heating, lighting, ventilation and exclusion of unwanted noise.
  - No visible material which might be helpful to candidates displayed in the exam room.
  - Each candidate can see an accurate clock in the exam room.
  - All relevant exam information including any AB requirements and the start and end times of the examination adequately displayed for all candidates to see.
  - The seats are arranged so that they are a minimum distance of 1.25 m (centre-centre) apart, all candidates face the same direction and are not able to see each other's work even by accident.
  - Each candidate should have their own suitably sized desk and chair and must sit in a prearranged order.
  - A map of the room with each candidate's position should be recorded.
  - The same rules above apply to candidates who may be in a different room due to a disability or additional support needs.

#### **4.2. Invigilators are responsible for:**

- Reporting to the Exams Officer at the campus at an agreed time before the examination begins.
- Collecting and checking exam papers and other exam material from the Exams Officer before the start of each exam.
- Maintaining the integrity of the exam.
- Distributing exam papers within the exam room in accordance with the seating plan
- Completing the exam register.
- Recording the details of each exam in the exam logbook including full reports on any exceptional circumstances or incidents of malpractice.
- Collecting all exam papers and scripts in the correct order at the end of each exam and returning them safely to the Exams Officer.
- Upholding the rules and guidance for Invigilators as outlined by the Exams Officer.

#### **4.3. Candidate Responsibilities**

- Checking their own exam timetables and attending all scheduled exams on time.
- Informing the Exams Officer if they wish to be withdrawn from a particular exam.
- Understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration, authenticating internally produced work as their own.

### **5. Exam Location**

Examinations may be conducted at the following campus:

#### **Head Office**

UK Graduate, 73 Greenfield Road, First Flr, London E1 1EJ

## 6. Safe Custody of Examination Materials

When examination materials arrive, they must be checked carefully to ensure:

- There are no discrepancies between what is required and what is received
- There is no damage to the materials rendering them unfit for use
- There is no evidence of a breach of security

### 6.1. Examinations Security

When any examinations are delivered to the College, the Reception staff are responsible for ensuring that they are handed to the Exams Officer (EO) as soon as possible. The Reception staff must hold onto the delivery until the EO collects them and signs for them.

There must be an allocated exam storeroom with storage cabinets at the College. If the storeroom has windows and is on the ground floor, effective security bars (e.g. Metal bars) should be fitted. Currently the College is on the first floor so metal bars are not required. The door itself needs to be very solid with strong hinges and a key. Examination papers must be locked up in a strong, fireproof and non-portable metal cabinet in the exam storeroom. The following members of staff are authorised to have access to the Exam Storeroom:

- Managing Director
- Exams Officer
- Operations Manager

No other stakeholder is permitted to enter the storeroom unsupervised. If security is breached, or if there is a fire, robbery, damage or disclosure of exam contents that has not been authorised, the Exams Officer must be informed.

The stored examination papers cannot be opened any sooner than four hours before the start of the exam unless otherwise instructed. Once opened, the examination papers should be carefully secured and should not be allowed to leave the premises.

## 7. Invigilation Arrangements

The Exams Officer must ensure that all the Invigilators have DBS, appropriate qualifications, experience and training to invigilate. The Invigilator is responsible for remaining in the exam room and making sure the candidates do not breach any rules during the examination. The Invigilator cannot be a relative of any of the candidates.

The Exams Officer will provide Invigilators with training prior to the examination. Invigilators are not permitted to carry out activities during the examination and Invigilators cannot talk about anything to each other. Candidates may only talk to the Invigilator about information required to complete the examination correctly. Invigilation must meet the following requirements:

- There must be at least one Invigilator for up to 30 candidates
- Invigilators can take breaks if another one replaces them
- If an Invigilator is alone, they must have quick access to support from other relevant staff if needed including the Exams Officer.
- The Invigilator must be able to see every candidate clearly when they are taking the exam
- Invigilators must know these guidelines and should read out the key rules to candidates before the exam begins
- The Invigilator must take a register before the exam starts and must check the identities of each candidate, asking for proof of ID if in any doubt
- The Invigilator must try to deal with problems that may arise during the examination
- Exam question papers should be handed to the Exams Officer and taken to the exam storeroom and locked away after the exam has ended.

Invigilators and the Exam Officer may need to use their discretion if a situation arises that could not have been predicted during the exam. The main guiding principle should be that any decision taken by the Invigilator should ensure that candidates have not been placed at a disadvantage and should be recorded in the exam room logbook.

Invigilators must be in the examination room at least 30 minutes before the exam starts to make sure that the room is prepared before the candidates arrive. Invigilators must be vigilant. They should not just sit down the whole time but walk around the room once in a while as long as they do not disturb the students. As they walk around, they should examine what students have on their desks. Invigilators must ensure that all examination question and answer papers are collected at the end of the exam and passed to the Exams Officer to be stored in the exam storeroom.

## 8. Examination Conduct

- Candidates must follow the instructions they receive from the Invigilator
- Candidates should show the Invigilator their proof of identity upon request.
- If a candidate needs to ask the Invigilator something e.g. to use the bathroom, they should raise their hand.
- The Exams Officer should be told if there is any doubt about a candidate's identity.
- Candidates can enter the exam no more than 15 minutes before the exam starts.
- Candidates who have arrived one hour late will be allowed to sit the exam and the Invigilator will need to record their time of arrival.
- Candidates who arrive later than one hour late will not be able to sit the exam.
- Candidates should not leave the room before the exam ends, unless they have permission from the Invigilator.
- Candidates should remain silent throughout the exam. If a candidate talks to another candidate, they may be disqualified.
- Candidates may not eat or drink anything other than water during the exam unless for medical reasons.
- Any items that a candidate has with them such as a bag, books, phone or any other electronic device must be left in a designated place in the room until the candidate finishes the exam and leaves.
- The College will not tolerate any form of cheating, and candidates who are caught cheating will be disqualified and reported to the Awarding Body.

### 8.1. Academic Misconduct

Candidates, Invigilators and the Exams Officer should familiarise themselves with the College's Academic Misconduct Policy. Any candidate found to have committed malpractice by the Invigilator must be reported to the Exams Officer, who can take the decision to disqualify and expel a candidate from the room, especially if they are causing disruption affecting other students. All candidates who have been disqualified by the Exams Officer must be referred to the Managing Director together with a report and all evidence such as witness statements. See the section on Academic Misconduct below and the College's full Academic Misconduct Policy for further details.

### 8.2. Finishing Exams

- Candidates will be warned when it is 5 minutes before the exam ends.
- Candidates who arrive late may be allowed extra time at the end to make up the lost time as long as they started the exam within 1 hour of the exam starting.
- The Invigilator must ensure that the candidates have completed any cover pages to the examination papers when they hand them in.
- When all scripts have been collected, the candidate must leave the exam room.
- The Invigilator should organise all the exam papers at the end in the order of the attendance register then hand them with the attendance register, room map and any logbook notes about exceptional circumstances or misconduct if relevant to the Exams Officer.



### **8.3. Reasonable Adjustments for Disability & Special Considerations**

According to the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and the Equalities Act, the College is legally required to ensure that there are reasonable adjustments in place to provide access and special considerations for candidates with disabilities or additional support needs who wish to take exams.

### **8.4. Access Arrangements**

Upon disclosure, a student with additional support needs or disabilities will be referred to a qualified expert. The Quality and Standards Manager will find out from the qualified expert which candidates require disability or additional support arrangements in order to study and take exams. The Quality and Standards Manager will pass this information to the Exams Officer, who will take reasonable steps to ensure that candidates with additional support needs and disabilities will be able to take the exams. If required, the Exams Officer will submit completed access arrangement applications to the Awarding Body.

The Exams Officer needs to ensure that rooms and equipment provide reasonable access to candidates with additional support needs or disabilities. In some cases, a candidate may be provided with a separate room in which to take the exam and the invigilation of such candidates will be arranged by the Exams Officer.

## 9. Administration

The Exams Officer is responsible for ensuring:

- All the examination papers are correctly ordered and labelled.
- The attendance register is completed accurately.
- Examination papers are sealed in envelopes if they need to be sent to examiners for marking.
- Examination papers are sent to markers/assessors no longer than one day after the exam was taken.
- Examination papers are locked up in the storeroom if left overnight.
- Seating plans, registers, room maps and logbook exam details are also stored until the results have been received.

### 9.1. Examination Materials and Equipment

Apart from pens or pencils, any materials and equipment needed to take an exam will be provided by the College such as paper, computer or calculator.

Any materials or equipment not needed by candidates for the exam must be left outside the exam room or handed over to the Invigilator to hold at the front desk of the exam room until the candidate completes the exam and leaves.

### 9.2. Online Examination

The College may deliver and invigilate some of its examinations online. In such cases, there must be one Invigilator for every candidate. The following rules and guidelines will apply:

- The examination will be invigilated online via Zoom or Microsoft Teams.
- The Invigilator will arrange an online meeting 10 minutes before the start of the exam.
- The student will show the Invigilator a passport with name and photograph so that the Invigilator can check candidate identification.
- The Invigilator will give an overview of the examination paper: number of questions, and time allowed.
- The Invigilator will share their screen with the examination tasks on it.
- The examination will be recorded.
- Each examination paper will be divided into separate parts, with each part being no longer than 60-minute and with a 15-minute break between them.
- The candidate will scan/ photograph each paper at the end of each part and email written work to the Invigilator.
- In case of technical issues, the Invigilator and the student will be on a video call via WhatsApp until the issues are resolved.
- If the issues last longer than 15 minutes, the examination will be cancelled, and a new date arranged.

## 10. Additional guidelines for the candidate:

Candidates should ensure that they have all the Invigilator's details (email address and telephone number) in case of technical problems with the online platform.

Although the examination will be administered online, all College policies and procedures that govern how exams are to be conducted in physical classrooms still apply. For details of these please refer to the section in this policy on Examination Processes, the Academic Misconduct Policy and Student Disciplinary Policy.

The candidate must have enough paper and writing materials to complete the exam. In general, a good choice of paper would be:

- A4 letter or similar size format
- Feint-ruled (preferably wide) with margins
- White (or minimally coloured)
- Non-reflective

Use *only* dark ink (preferably black or blue) and write on white or lightly coloured paper for high contrast. Keep left and right margins clear to help examiners mark the work. At the top of each page, write a distinct page number and, where relevant, a specific question number. This will help when the work is ordered and scanned/photographed, and thus help examiners mark the work. When scanning/taking photographs of answers, make sure that the answers are:

- Scanned in the correct order
- Oriented properly
- Legible (e.g. scans are not blurred, and all fine detail can be sufficiently magnified for reading)
- Complete (e.g. relevant work has not been accidentally cropped out)