A person in a grey shirt is sitting at a desk, holding a document that says 'CERTIFICATE'. They are looking at the document. There is a laptop on the desk in front of them. The background is blurred, showing a green plant and a yellow wall.

# **Exams Officer Professional Standards Toolkit**

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

# Exams Officer Professional Standards Toolkit

## Why have the Standards been launched?



**The Exams Officer Professional Standards have been launched to raise the profile of the exams officer role within centres.**

By achieving the Standards each academic year, an exams officer is providing evidence of:

- Their Knowledge & Understanding of regulations, processes/procedures associated with the administration and conducting of examinations/assessments, and the latest information and updates from key stakeholders
- A commitment to develop/acquire the key skills associated with the management, administration and conducting of examinations/assessments
- A responsibility for upholding the integrity and security of examinations/assessments within their centre.

The Standards have also been introduced to address some of the issues arising from the 2024 Exams Officer Survey including data that revealed that:

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

## Who are the Standards intended to support?

### Exams Officers

An exams officer should have access to an effective professional development programme each academic year. The Standards have been devised to provide a framework for exams officers to utilise as part of the annual professional development programme.

### Senior Leaders/Line Managers

Although the ultimate responsibility for ensuring compliance with JCQ and awarding body regulations lies with the head of centre, the day-to-day oversight and management of the examination system is very often devolved to a designated senior leader. A core responsibility of this senior leader is to possess a good working knowledge of the examination system so they can ensure the integrity, and security, of the examination system and provide effective support and supervision for their exams officer.

## Summary

The Exams Officer Professional Standards provide access to:

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

Senior leaders should use the Standards to provide a comprehensive performance management programme for their exams officer, which should be complemented by regular meetings (for example, monthly for new exams officer and half termly meetings for more experienced exams officers), and include an annual appraisal, which should be used to review the centre's processes as well as the exams officer's strengths and areas in need of improvement.

Completion of the Standards by an exams officer provides the head of centre/senior leader with the confidence that their exams officer is prepared to manage and administer examinations/assessments within their centre, in line with JCQ and awarding body regulations and requirements.

The Standards also support an exams officer's career progression and provide a record of successful completion of tasks in the areas of Knowledge & Understanding, Key Skills and Values & Attributes.

## What is contained within the standards?



### Knowledge & Understanding

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

- JCO 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 officer induction

An exams officer and senior leader must agree the areas, and the relevant targets, which the exams 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 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 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 officer role is to ensure that the integrity and security of the examination system is maintained within their centre.

JCO regulations require an exams 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 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 officer to report instances of malpractice when there may be pressure from the head of centre/senior leadership to do otherwise.

JCO 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 JCO regulations and awarding body requirements to ensure the security and integrity of the examinations/assessments”*

# Exams Officer Professional Standards Toolkit

## What is the process for administering and acquiring the standards?

### How long does it take to achieve the Standards?

The Exams Officer Professional Standards renew each academic year.

The timeline to achieve is between September – August. It is the experience and capability of the exams officer, and the targets set, that will determine when the Standards have been satisfactorily achieved and this will be unique to each centre.

1

### Register

Senior leader/line manager can register OR an exams officer can register their senior leader/line manager for an account on the Senior Leader/Line Manager Support website.

This opens up all website resource materials and access to the Standards

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

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

2

### Agree targets

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

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 officer meet on a regular basis to discuss progress against targets (monthly is suggested)

4

### Track progress

Senior leader/line manager, or exams officer on their behalf, registers exams officer progress on the Senior Leader/Line Manager Support website 'Exams Officer Tracker'

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?

5

### Appraisal

Senior leader/line manager, or exams officer, claims the Certificate of Standards when achieved - this can be at an annual appraisal or interim review meeting



# Exams Officer Professional Standards Toolkit

Track exams officers on the sltsupport.org website

**Need Help?**  
Click here to download the Exams Officer professional Standards Toolkit.

Name	Values & Attributes Statement	Knowledge & Understanding	Key Skills	Values & Attributes Agreement	Certificate
Jonathan Bolton (2024/25)	✗ Generate	✗ Track	✗ Track	✗ Track	✗
Amber Giles (2024/25)	✓	✗ Track	✓	✗ Track	✗
Niamh Gregory (2024/25)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Chyou Shen (2024/25)	✓	✗ Track	✗ Track	✗ Track	✗

[Add an exams officer](#)

Track Knowledge & Understanding

Track Key Skills

Generate Certificates

- Here you can view existing, or add new exams officers
- To update or permanently delete the details held for an exams officer, click on their name and follow the instructions
- Each row in the table is an exams officer
- Each column shows their progress towards achieving the Exams Officer Professional Standards certification
- Click the Generate button in the Values & Attributes Statement column to print the declaration statement
- Track progress against each criteria of the Standards as they are completed throughout the year
- A red cross ✗ in a column shows that a step is yet to be completed in full
- A green tick ✓ shows that an exams officer has successfully delivered to the Standards.
- When all criteria is met and progress is complete, as shown by a green tick in each corresponding column, you'll be able to download and print a certificate to award the exams officer

Tick to confirm completion of all three areas of the Standards: **Knowledge & Understanding**, **Key Skills** and **Values & Attributes** to claim your certificate.

# Exams Officer Professional Standards Toolkit

## Case study 1 – An experienced exams 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 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 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 Senior Leader and Line Manager Exam Support website
- Once Emma has achieved her targets, her senior leader/line manager will complete the information on the Senior Leader and Line Manager Exam Support website to acquire the Exams Officer Professional Standards 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 officers offering mentoring support) will be asked to provide feedback

### Achieving the Standards

Once Emma's senior leader/line manager is satisfied that all targets have been achieved, the certificate to confirm completion of the Standards will be requested via the Senior Leader and Line Manager Exam Support website.

# Exams Officer Professional Standards Toolkit

## Case study 2 – A new exams officer

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

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

Mark uses *The Exams Office New Exams 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 Officer Induction and Assessment Module
- Attending new exams 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 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 officer to observe and deliver this in future years

### Key skills

After discussion between the exams 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 officer for the Exams 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 officers offering mentoring support) will be asked to provide feedback



### Achieving Standards

Once the line manager is satisfied that all targets have been achieved, the certificate to confirm completion of the Standards will be requested via the Senior Leader and Line Manager Exam Support website.



# Exams Officer Professional Standards Toolkit

## Key information

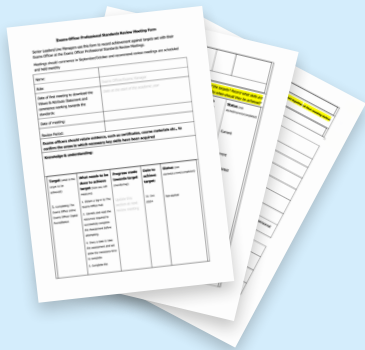
### The senior leader/line manager and exams officer partnership

The partnership that is the senior leader/line manager and the exams officer is a powerful unit.

Exams officers are the professionals within the education sector who play a pivotal role in maintaining the integrity and security of the examination system within each centre.

There should be no doubt that the rigour and commitment with which exams officers manage, administer and conduct examinations and assessments is a significant reason in maintaining the world-leading reputation of UK qualifications and the value placed upon UK general and vocational qualifications across the globe and an absolute reflection of the senior leadership in the centre.

**Progress review template**  
Download the progress review template [www.sltsupport.org](http://www.sltsupport.org)



### The Exams Office Hub



**The Exams Office**  
Supporting Exams Officers

[www.theexamsoffice.org](http://www.theexamsoffice.org)  
• digital accreditation • key documents  
• monthly updates • new exams officer support • conference • training

The National Association of Examinations Officers  
[www.thenaeo.org](http://www.thenaeo.org) • articles • mindfulness and well-being • vacancy map • rewards and awards • CPD and events

**National Association of Examinations Officers** cic

**Exams Training**

[www.examstraining.org](http://www.examstraining.org)  
• training events • new exams officers  
• senior leaders • international training

### Key stakeholder information

- JCQ regulations and documentation [www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk)

### Awarding bodies include:

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

