Joint Council for Qualifications CIC

Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (Vocational and Technical Qualifications)

1 September 2025 to 31 August 2026

This document covers the following qualifications:
- AQA Applied General qualifications
- BTEC qualifications (BTEC Firsts, BTEC Technicals, BTEC Nationals, BTEC Tech Awards)
- CCEA Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational qualifications
- City & Guilds Level 2 and Level 3 Technical qualifications
- NCFE Alternative Academic Qualifications
- NCFE CACHE Level 1/2 Technical Awards
- NCFE Level 1/2 Technical Awards
- OCR Level 1/Level 2 Cambridge Nationals (Technical Awards)
- OCR Level 3 Cambridge Advanced Nationals (Alternative Academic Qualifications)
- T Levels (Technical qualifications)
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational Awards
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational Awards (Technical Awards)
- WJEC Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualifications
- WJEC Level 3 Applied Certificates, Diplomas and Extended Diplomas

For the attention of heads of centre, senior leaders and subject leaders

The Joint Council for Qualifications has written these instructions for the setting, supervision, authentication, marking, internal standardisation and external moderation of non-examination assessments (Vocational and Technical Qualifications) in examination centres.

These instructions are for use in:

AQA Applied General qualifications

BTEC qualifications (BTEC Firsts, BTEC Technicals, BTEC Nationals, BTEC Tech Awards)

CCEA Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational qualifications

City & Guilds Level 2 and Level 3 Technical qualifications

NCFE Alternative Academic Qualifications

NCFE CACHE Level 1/2 Technical Awards

NCFE Level 1/2 Technical Awards

OCR Level 1/Level 2 Cambridge Nationals (Technical Awards)

OCR Level 3 Cambridge Advanced Nationals (Alternative Academic Qualifications)

T Levels (Technical qualifications)

WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational Awards

WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational Awards (Technical Awards)

WJEC Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualifications

WJEC Level 3 Applied Certificates, Diplomas and Extended Diplomas

These instructions are additional to any guidelines or regulations that an individual awarding body may issue. If there is conflict between the awarding body's guidelines or regulations and these instructions, the awarding body's guidelines and subject-specific instructions will take precedence.

These instructions are applicable from 1 September 2025.

It is the responsibility of each subject leader within the centre to familiarise themselves with the contents of this document.

Centres should note that any reference to 'JCQ' or 'Joint Council for Qualifications' within this document should be read as JCQ[CIC] or the Joint Council for Qualifications[CIC].

Contents

Introduction

Throughout these instructions, a 'centre' is an institution approved by an awarding body. The head of a school, the principal of a college or the chief officer of an institution approved as a centre is known as the 'head of centre'.

The head of centre is responsible to the awarding bodies for ensuring that non-examination assessments are conducted and marked in accordance with these instructions.

If a situation arises which is not covered by these instructions, please contact the awarding body for advice. Where there are subject-specific instructions printed in a specification, they take precedence over the instructions in this document.

These instructions apply to the setting, supervision, authentication, marking, internal standardisation and external moderation/verification of non-examination assessment in Vocational and Technical Qualifications.

The term 'teacher' covers anyone (regardless of employment status) who is responsible for supervising and/or assessing candidates' work.

Centres **must** send all correspondence relating to non-examination assessments directly to the awarding body concerned and not to the moderator (unless the awarding body indicates otherwise).

Centres are reminded that **any breach of the regulations for the setting, supervision, authentication and marking of non-examination assessment may constitute malpractice (which includes maladministration)**, as defined in the JCQ document *Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures*. This document is available on the JCQ website: **http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice**

1. Task setting

1.1   Non-examination assessment components assess candidates' knowledge, understanding and skills that may not readily be assessed by timed written papers. Non-examination assessment will take many different forms. Evidence of participation that may be appended to the candidate's final work may include printouts, copies of presentations, charts, photographs, letters, artefacts, videos, recordings or transcripts of interviews, CDs or DVDs. This diversity will be reflected in any subject-specific requirements that have been issued by the awarding body.

1.2   Teachers must ensure the correct non-examination assessment material is used for each assessment series. For certain vocational and technical qualifications (including TechnicalAwards), the material will be replaced each series or year, and teachers should contact the awarding body for subject specific advice and guidance, if in doubt.

1.3   Teachers must only use non-examination assessment tasks and documentation for delivery to their candidates. Any attempt to use the non-examination assessment materials for commercial gain, or any breach of the confidentiality of those materials, will be treated as malpractice.

1.4   The centre should ensure that candidates are clear about the marking/assessment criteria which they are expected to meet in their work. Specifications explain the criteria in detail. However, candidates may require some further explanation or interpretation before they fully understand the nature of the knowledge, understanding and skills which they are expected to demonstrate. Any explanation or interpretation given by teaching staff **must** be general and not specific to a candidate's work.

2. Marking, revision, redrafting and interim review of work

2.1 When marking non-examination assessments, teachers **must not** give credit to any additional assistance given to candidates beyond that which is permitted in the awarding body's specification. Teachers must refer to the specification for guidance on what is deemed additional assistance and what is and is not permitted.

2.2 Candidates are free to revise and redraft a piece of work without teacher involvement before submitting the final piece. Candidates should be advised to spend an appropriate amount of time on the work, proportional to the marks/grades/credits available. Teachers **must** adhere to any requirements in the awarding body's specification for supervising candidates when producing work for assessment.

2.3 Where drafting is inherent in the knowledge, understanding and skills being tested, subject-specific guidance and exemplification will indicate its role in relation to the type of writing being undertaken and any interim assessment allowed in these circumstances. This guidance may extend to the way in which evidence of redrafting is provided for subsequent internal standardisation or external moderation/verification purposes.

2.4 **Once work is submitted for final assessment, it must not be revised. Adding or removing any material to or from work after it has been presented by a candidate for final assessment will constitute malpractice.**

2.5 Where work is submitted in digital format, there may be instances where the collation of the electronic work does not attract any marks. In this case, the collation and submission may be done by the teacher instead of the candidate.

2.6 If a candidate requires additional assistance to demonstrate aspects of the assessment, the teacher **must** award a mark which represents the candidate's unaided achievement. The authentication statement **must** be signed and information given on the relevant form.

2.7 Teachers **must** always keep 'live' work secure and confidential whilst in their possession. **The sharing of 'live' work with other candidates or posting candidates' work on social media by teaching staff will constitute malpractice.**

3. Presentation and submission of work

3.1 All work submitted for assessment **must** be the candidate's own work. Written material should, wherever possible, be word processed or handwritten using black ink.

3.2 Where appropriate, work submitted may also include printouts/copies of presentations, charts, artefacts, photographs, letters, videos, recordings or transcripts of interviews. If videos or photographs/images of candidates are included as evidence of individual participation or contribution, the head of centre must obtain the written consent, at the beginning of the course, of each visible candidate (and, where necessary, the candidate's parent/carer). Candidate consent must allow for the sharing of images with centre staff, awarding body staff and examiners/moderators, as per the awarding body's privacy notice.

3.3 Valuable illustrative materials should not normally be included with the work sent for moderation or external marking. A note should be attached to the work confirming that the material was part of the original submission. Photographs of the material may be included if appropriate.

If valuable or fragile illustrative materials have been sent for moderation or external marking, awarding bodies recommend that centres insure such material against damage or loss from the time of its despatch until its return to the centre.

The awarding bodies accept no liability for the loss of, or damage to, work that occurs during the moderation/verification process or during despatch, transit or storage, or for problems that occur during the creation, submission and moderation/verification of work in an electronic format.

NB Candidates should be advised not to include any items of real or sentimental value, e.g. photographs or certificates.

3.4 Where candidates produce work electronically, their work **must** be backed-up regularly and stored securely on the centre's IT system. Centres should consider the contingency of candidates' work being backed-up on two separate devices, including one off-site back-up. The centre **must** implement appropriate information security arrangements (which will include protection against corruption and cyber attack, such as firewall protection and virus scanning software).

3.5 Centres should take precautions to ensure that the package in which the work is despatched is robust and securely fastened. Centres should also consider encrypting any sensitive digital media to ensure the security of the data stored within it. Centres **must** refer to awarding body guidance to ensure that the method of encryption is suitable.

3.6 For postal moderation or external marking purposes, typed or written work should be submitted on appropriately sized paper in a plain cover or folder, **together** with the cover sheets provided by the awarding body. The cover **must** be marked clearly with the candidate's name and number, the centre number, the specification title or code and the component/unit title or code. Bulky covers or folders **must not** be included. If the work is word processed, the candidate **must** ensure that their centre number, candidate number and the component/unit code appear on each page as a header or footer.

3.7 Where candidates' work is to be submitted electronically, either directly to an awarding body's digital platform or to an examiner/moderator, centres must follow the awarding body's instructions.

4. Acknowledgement of sources

4.1 In many subjects, candidates may use source material, including the internet and AI tools, when completing their work. However, candidates **must not** copy such material and claim it as their own work.

4.2 If candidates use material from a source or generated from a source which is not their own work, they **must** indicate the particular part/element/phrase and state where it came from. Candidates **must** give detailed references even where they paraphrase the original material.

A reference from a printed book or journal should show the name of the author, the year of publication and the page number. For example: (Morrison, 2000 p29).

For material taken from the internet, the reference should show the date when the material was downloaded and **must** show the precise web page, not the search engine used to locate it. This can be copied from the address line. For example:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/october/28/
newsid_2621000/2621915.stm downloaded 5 February 2026

Where computer-generated content has been used (such as from an AI chatbot), the reference **must** show the name of the AI tool used and should show the date the content was generated. For example: ChatGPT 3.5 (https://openai.com/blog/chatgpt/), 25/01/2026. Candidates should also reference the sources used by the AI tool in generating the content.

Candidates must retain a copy of the question(s) and computer-generated content for reference and authentication purposes in a non-editable format (such as a screenshot) and provide a brief explanation of how it has been used. This must be submitted with the candidate's work for final assessment so that the teacher can review the work, the AI-generated content and how it has been used. If this is not submitted and the teacher suspects the candidate has used AI tools, they will need to consult the centre's malpractice policy for the next steps and assure themselves that the work is the candidate's own. Further guidance on how this can be done is set out in the JCQ document *Plagiarism in Assessments*. The document can be found on the JCQ website:

http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice

Centres must also refer to the support materials for teachers and students via the same link, including AI Use in Assessments: *Your Role in Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications*, JCQ-AI-information-sheet-for-teachers-1.pdf and JCQ-AI-poster-for-students-2.pdf

4.3 Candidates may be required to produce a bibliography which lists the full details of publications used to research and support their work, even where these are not directly referred to, for example: Curran, *J. Mass Media and Society* (Hodder Arnold, 2005).

5. Malpractice

5.1 Candidates **must not**:

- submit work which is not their own;

- make their work available to other candidates through any medium;

- allow other candidates to have access to their own independently sourced material;

- assist other candidates to produce work;

- use AI tools, books, the internet or other sources without acknowledgement or attribution;

- misuse AI tools;

- submit work that has been word processed by a third person without acknowledgement;

- include inappropriate, offensive or obscene material.

These prohibitions mean that candidates **must not** publicise their work by posting it on social media or by any other electronic means. They **must** be made aware of the JCQ document *Information for candidates – Social Media:*
https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/information-for-candidates-documents

Candidates are not prohibited from lending books or other resources to one another, provided these are not used as part of their own independently sourced material.

5.2 If irregularities in non-examination assessment are discovered **prior** to the candidate signing the declaration of authentication (see paragraph 6.1), this should be dealt with under the centre's internal procedures and does not need to be reported to the awarding body. The only exceptions to this are where the offence relates to a breach of the conditions of the assessment, e.g. possession of notes, communication with other candidates or where the awarding body's confidential assessment material has been breached. In such a case, the suspected malpractice **must** be reported to the awarding body, as per the instructions in paragraph 5.3 below.

Details of any work which is not the candidate's own **must** be recorded on the authentication form supplied by the awarding body or in another appropriate place.

5.3 If irregularities in non-examination assessment are identified by a centre **after** the candidate has signed the declaration of authentication, the head of centre **must** submit full details of the case to the relevant awarding body immediately. Guidance is provided in the JCQ document *Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures*. The document and Form JCQ/M1 can be found on the JCQ website:

http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice

5.4 Centres **must** have a published internal appeals procedure in place, relating to internal assessment decisions, which is made widely available and accessible to all candidates. The procedure **must** cover appeals against decisions to reject a candidate's work on the grounds of malpractice or not being able to confidently authenticate the candidate's work.

A centre may place its internal appeals procedure on the school/college website or, alternatively, the document may be made available to candidates upon request.

5.5 Where the awarding body receives a report of suspected malpractice in non-examination assessment they will, where necessary, ask the head of centre (or another appropriate person) to conduct a full investigation into the alleged malpractice and report their findings. Guidance is provided in the JCQ document referred to in paragraph 5.3.

5.6 Awarding bodies reserve the right to submit candidates' work to third party IT service providers to detect potential and suspected malpractice. Any submissions will protect the identity of the candidate.

5.7 Heads of centre and appropriate senior leaders **must** ensure that those members of teaching staff involved in the direct supervision of candidates are aware of the potential for malpractice.

Teaching staff must be reminded that failure to report allegations of malpractice or suspected malpractice constitutes malpractice in itself.

Teaching staff **must**:

- be vigilant in relation to candidate malpractice and be fully aware of the published regulations;
- escalate and report any alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice to the head of centre or directly to the awarding body, following the centre's whistleblowing procedures where relevant.

6. Authentication procedures

6.1 **It is the responsibility of the centre** to ensure each candidate signs a declaration when submitting their work to their teacher for final assessment. This **must** take place as soon as the candidate has completed the assessment. Electronic signatures are acceptable. This is to confirm that the work is their own and that any assistance given and/or sources used have been acknowledged.

Teachers **must not** assess work which has not been properly authenticated. All work must be properly authenticated prior to submission to the awarding body.

Centres **must** record a mark of **'O'** (zero) if the candidate cannot confirm the authenticity of work submitted for assessment.

6.2 Teachers **must** confirm that all of the work submitted for assessment was completed under the required conditions and that they are satisfied the work is solely that of the individual candidate concerned. If they are unable to do so, the work **must not** be accepted for assessment.

All teachers **must** sign the declaration of authentication after the work has been completed. Electronic signatures are acceptable. Failure to sign the authentication statement may delay the processing of the candidate's results.

6.3 Centres should refer to the awarding body's specification to determine whether or not candidates' work must be completed under direct supervision.

6.4 Even if the awarding body's specification does not require direct supervision, teachers must take steps to ensure that candidates' work can be authenticated.

6.5 In most centres, teachers are familiar with candidates' work through class and homework assignments. Where this is not the case, teachers should take steps to ensure they can confidently authenticate candidates' work. This could include candidates completing some work under direct supervision and/or regular discussions with teachers regarding their work.

6.6 If teachers have reservations about signing the authentication statements, due to concerns regarding copying/plagiarism (including the use of AI tools) or collusion, the following points of guidance should be followed.

Minor concerns but within the guidelines of the awarding body's specification

- If it is believed that a candidate has received additional assistance and this is acceptable within the guidelines for the relevant specification, the teacher should award a mark which represents the candidate's unaided achievement.

  The authentication statement must be signed and information given on the relevant form.

Some concerns which are not within the guidelines of the awarding body's specification

- If it is believed that a candidate has received additional assistance that is not within the guidelines of the awarding body's specification (this may have been necessary to enable the candidate to progress), the work should either be omitted or no credit is given for the work.

  The authentication statement must be signed and information given on the relevant form.

Major concerns which are not within the guidelines of the awarding body's specification

- If the teacher is unable to sign the authentication statement of a particular candidate, then the candidate's work cannot be accepted for assessment. A mark of **'0'** (zero) should be recorded for internally-assessed work.

If malpractice is suspected in any of the above scenarios, a member of the senior leadership team **must** be consulted about the procedure to be followed (see paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3).

7. Marking of internally-assessed work

7.1 When marking work, teachers **must** pay close attention to the requirements of the specification. Teachers should note that it is their responsibility to award marks in accordance with the marking/assessment criteria detailed in the awarding body's specification and associated subject-specific documents. Teachers **must** show clearly how the marks have been awarded in relation to the marking/assessment criteria. The centre's marks **must** reflect the relative attainment of all the candidates.

Teachers must not use AI tools as the sole or primary means of marking candidates' work. Any use of AI should be complementary to the human marking process.

7.2 Centres **must** make every effort to avoid situations where a candidate is assessed by a person who has a close personal relationship with the candidate; for example, members of their family (which includes step-family, foster family and similar close relationships) or close friends and their immediate family (e.g. son/daughter).

Where this cannot be avoided, the centre **must** declare the possible conflict of interest to the relevant awarding body and submit the marked work for moderation, whether or not it is part of the moderation sample. Further details are given in section 5 of the JCQ document *General Regulations for Approved Centres*. The document is available in PDF format on the JCQ website:

http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations

7.3 Candidates' work must be dated by teachers to reflect when it was marked.

8. Annotation

8.1 When work is marked, it **must** be annotated to show clearly how credit has been awarded.

8.2 Subject to any further guidance contained in awarding bodies' specifications, one of the following approaches should be adopted:

- summary comments either on the work (usually at the end) or on a cover sheet;
- key pieces of evidence flagged throughout the work by annotation, either in the margin or in the text;
- a combination of the above.

8.3 Indications as to how marks have been awarded should:

- be clear and unambiguous;
- be appropriate to the nature and form of the work;
- facilitate the standardisation of marking within the centre;
- enable the moderator to check the application of the marking/assessment criteria to the marking.

8.4 Where appropriate to the type of work, the evidence to support the marks awarded should indicate:

- where the marking/assessment criteria have been met, e.g. by writing key phrases from the criteria (such as 'awareness of values', 'selects information', 'uses a variety of techniques') at the appropriate point in the work;
- any planning and processing not undertaken individually and should provide details of any assistance or prompting given to the candidate.

8.5 Where the moderator believes the submitted evidence does not justify the mark/grade awarded to a candidate, the mark may be subject to adjustment or the awarding body may contact the centre for further action or information.

9. Jointly-produced work

9.1 The awarding body's specification will say whether candidates can work together when undertaking tasks. However, candidates **must** provide an individual response as part of any outcome.

Where an assignment may be undertaken as part of a group, each candidate **must** write up their own account of the assignment. Even if the information the candidates have is the same, the description of how the information was obtained and the conclusions drawn from it **must** be in each candidate's own words.

It **must** be possible to determine the contribution made by individual candidates.

10. Quality of language/written communication

10.1 Candidates should use both clear communication and presentation in their work. Specifications will state whether quality of language will be assessed.

11. Standardisation of marking within centres

11.1 To help set the standard of marking within the centre, reference and archive materials should be used, including exemplar material provided by the awarding body or, where available, work in the centre from the previous year.

11.2 It is useful to complete a trial marking exercise before marking candidates' work. Teachers should mark the same relatively small sample of completed work to allow for the comparison of marking standards. The exercise can take place at appropriate stages during the course and has three beneficial effects: it helps to bring about greater comparability in the marking standards; it may identify at an early stage any teachers whose standards are out of line with that of their colleagues; and it may alleviate a heavy marking load at the end of the course.

11.3 Where the work for a component/unit has been marked by more than one teacher in a centre, internal standardisation of marking **must** be carried out. One of the following procedures should normally be used:

either a sample of work which has been marked by each teacher is re-marked by the teacher who is in charge of internal standardisation;

or all the teachers responsible for marking a component/unit exchange some marked work (preferably at a meeting led by the teacher in charge of internal standardisation) and compare their marking standards.

Where standards are found to be inconsistent, the relevant teacher(s) should adjust their marks or reconsider the marks of all candidates for whom they were responsible. The new marks should be checked by the teacher in charge of internal standardisation.

11.4 Following completion of the marking and internal standardisation, the work **must** be securely retained by the centre and not returned to the candidates until after the closing date for reviews of moderation for the series concerned or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later.

11.5 Centres **must** retain evidence that internal standardisation has been carried out.

12. Submission of marks/grades for internally-assessed components

12.1 Awarding bodies will publish deadlines for the submission of marks/grades.

12.2 Any documentation supplied by the awarding bodies must be completed in accordance with the instructions given and returned by the date specified. Unless instructed otherwise, centres should submit their marks electronically.

Centres must carefully check the marks/grades they are submitting to an awarding body to minimise errors.

Marks/grades for all candidates, not just the sample submitted, must be checked by the centre for both addition and transcription errors before submission

12.3 Where a centre has been affected by circumstances beyond its control it may, **in exceptional cases**, be possible to grant a short extension of no more than ten calendar days. This is at the discretion of the awarding body. The centre **must** contact the awarding body as soon as possible to request such an arrangement.

It is important that centres are aware that the timely release of results will be put at risk if the deadlines for the submission of marks/grades and samples are not adhered to.

Failure to meet awarding body deadlines may be considered maladministration and investigated as such.

Awarding bodies **will not** accept late marks/grades where there are concerns as to the integrity of the marks.

12.4 Where centres submit their marks/grades electronically, the awarding body may also require a copy of the marks to be submitted to the moderator, along with any other documentation needed.

12.5 The centre **must** inform candidates of their centre-assessed marks/grades, as a candidate can request a review of the centre's marking **before marks/grades are submitted to the awarding body**.

Any review must be undertaken before marks/grades are submitted to the awarding body.

- Sufficient time **must** be given to candidates to allow them to review copies of material, as necessary, and reach a decision.

- The centre **must** also allow sufficient time for the review to be carried out, to make any necessary changes to marks/grades and to inform the candidate of the outcome, all before the awarding body's deadline.

- The review **must** be carried out by an assessor who has appropriate competence, has had no previous involvement in the assessment of that candidate and has no personal interest in the review.

- The reviewer **must** ensure that the candidate's mark/grade is consistent with the standard set by the centre.

Centres **must** also make it clear to candidates that any centre-assessed marks/grades are subject to change through the moderation process.

Centres **must** inform the awarding body if they do not accept the outcome of a review.

The awarding bodies have produced a set of Frequently Asked Questions which may be found within the *Notice to Centres – Informing candidates of their centre assessed marks*:

https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/non-examination-assessments

13. Incomplete work

13.1 Where candidates are required to produce several distinct pieces of work which are assessed separately, a candidate who fails to complete all parts of the work should be credited with the marks/assessment criteria for the task(s) carried out, unless the specification says otherwise. In some subjects, the tasks may be interdependent and teachers should follow the instructions in the specification when assessing incomplete work.

13.2 A candidate who fails to submit any work **must** be recorded as absent, and **not** awarded a mark of **'O'** (zero), when marks are submitted.

A candidate who fails to submit work will receive a partially-absent subject grade in a multi-component qualification.

13.3 If none of the work is worthy of credit, a mark of **'O'** (zero) must be awarded.

14. Applications for special consideration

14.1 For further information on special consideration, please refer to the JCQ document *A guide to the special consideration process*:

https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance

15. Lost work

15.1 If a candidate's work has been lost within the examination centre and, despite every effort, it cannot be found or it has been accidentally destroyed, the circumstances **must** be reported immediately to the awarding body. Please refer to the awarding body's guidance on how to report lost work.

15.2 The awarding body will consider whether it is appropriate to accept a mark for an internally-assessed component/unit where there is no available evidence of attainment. This might occur in the following circumstances:

- The centre **must** be able to verify that the work was done in accordance with the awarding body's specification.

- The loss **is not** a consequence of negligence on the part of the candidate.

- If only part of the work is lost, further guidance must be sought from the relevant awarding body.

- If the work was marked **before** it was lost or damaged, marks **must** be submitted in the usual way. Further guidance must be sought from the relevant awarding body before the deadline for the submission of internally-assessed marks.

- If the work **was not** marked before it was lost or damaged, an estimated mark may be submitted for consideration by the awarding body.

16. External moderation

16.1 The purpose of moderation is to bring the marking of internally-assessed components in all participating centres to an agreed standard. All centres are required by awarding bodies to submit to moderation, as described below.

16.2 In most cases, the centre submits a sample of work to the moderator. For certain components, however, the moderator may visit the centre to moderate the sample of work.

16.3 Different procedures may apply where work is ephemeral (i.e. there is no permanent end product).

16.4 By the date specified, each centre **must** submit to the awarding body:

- details of marks/grades awarded;
- confirmation that internal standardisation has been carried out as required;
- any other documentation that the specification or the awarding body requires.

16.5 The awarding body (or the moderator on behalf of the awarding body) normally specifies the candidates whose work is required for moderation by name/number. The sample should include work from across the range of attainment at the centre.

It is the responsibility of centres to ensure that moderators receive the correct samples of work to review.

16.6 For visiting moderation, a visit is arranged for a date and time convenient to both the centre and moderator.

16.7 During the moderation process, the moderator assesses the sample work using the published marking/assessment criteria in the specification.

16.8 The moderator marks/grades are compared with the centre marks/grades for the sample of work. If the differences between the moderator marks/grades and the centre's marks/grades exceed the specified tolerance, adjustments may be applied to the centre's marks/grades.

16.9 If further evidence of the centre's marking is required, the awarding body may request some or all of the remaining work, which **must** have been kept securely and be available.

16.10 If the moderator significantly disagrees with the centre's rank order (perhaps because internal standardisation has not been carried out effectively), the awarding body may ask the centre to reconsider its marks/grades. Alternatively, the moderator's marks/grades may be applied to all candidates in the centre and, in some circumstances, a charge may be made.

17. Feedback to centres

17.1 Following moderation, the final marks are provided to centres electronically with the results. Feedback forms from the moderator are made available to centres, either in hard copy format or electronically, and may provide advice on the following:

- how appropriate the tasks were (where set by the centre) and the coverage of the assessment objectives – e.g. did the tasks allow candidates to access the full range of marks available?

- the accuracy of the centre's marking against the criteria and in relation to the agreed standard for the component/unit – were there inaccuracies within the marking range? Was the marking of the assessments unduly harsh or generous?

- the efficiency of the centre's administration – were the assessments conducted and submitted within the requirements of the specification? Were the assessments submitted on time?

- the quality of the evidence for assessment and how improvements may be made for future series.

17.2 The advice given on the feedback forms will be constructive, objective and supported by fact or judgement. It will be sufficiently detailed to explain any differences between the centre's assessments and the agreed standard for the component/unit. It should enable centres to take remedial action, where necessary, before the next submission of internally-assessed work.

17.3 Comments on the accuracy of a centre's assessments may be made even if no adjustment is applied. For example, if the difference between the moderator marks and the centre marks is only just within the specified tolerance, the moderator will normally provide advice on the standard of marking.

18. Externally-assessed work

18.1 In some specifications, work is externally assessed. The work of all candidates and, where required, the authentication statements, **must** be sent by a specified date to an awarding body/examiner for marking.

19. Retention of candidates' work

19.1 Moderators will return work directly to centres where instructed to do so by the awarding body. Assessments submitted electronically **will not** normally be returned to centres.

19.2 **Centres are required to retain candidates' marked work securely, whether or not it was part of the moderation sample, until all possibility of a review of moderation has been exhausted or until any appeal, malpractice investigation or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later.** Where retention is a problem, because of the nature of the work, some form of evidence (e.g. photographic, audio or media recording) **must** be available.

Centres are requested to keep a record of those candidates (candidate name and number) whose work is included in the sample sent to or seen by moderators. This information may be required if there is a review of moderation at a later date. In the case of work stored electronically within the centre, protection against corruption and cyber attacks must also be considered.

19.3 An awarding body will retain exemplar work for archive and standardisation purposes. For information on copyright, please see paragraphs 6.12 to 6.15 of the JCQ document *General Regulations for Approved Centres*:

http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations

20. Centre consortium arrangements

20.1 Where candidates from different centres have been taught and are assessed together, centres **must** inform the awarding body of the relevant internally-assessed components/units and the centres involved. Centres in such an arrangement are referred to as a consortium.

20.2 The centres in the consortium **must** nominate a consortium co-ordinator who will liaise with the awarding body on behalf of all the centres.

20.3 Consortium co-ordinators **must** complete Form JCQ/CCA *Centre consortium arrangements for centre assessed work*, which is accessible via the Centre Admin Portal (CAP), for each examination series and for each specification with one or more internally-assessed components/units that has been taught jointly.

Co-ordinators **must** submit the form by the published deadline.

20.4 The centres **must** carry out internal standardisation of the marking of work across the consortium.

20.5 The awarding body will allocate the same moderator to each centre in the consortium, and the candidates will be treated as a single group for the purpose of moderation.

20.6 If a consortium requests a review of moderation, the work **must** be available from **all** the centres in the consortium, as it is the original sample that is reviewed.

Where a specification is taught at a centre but some candidates are taught and assessed at another centre, the centre must inform the awarding body.

21. Reviews of moderation

21.1 Centres can request a review of moderation (Service 3) to ensure that the marking/assessment criteria have been fairly, reliably and consistently applied. **This service is not available if the centre's marks have been accepted without change by an awarding body.**

21.2 The review of moderation:

- is a process in which a second standardised moderator reviews the work of the first standardised moderator. The second moderator sees the original marks and any annotations made by the first moderator to gain a full and clear understanding of whether the marking/assessment criteria have been applied as intended;

- is a process to ensure that the first moderator has made an accurate judgement on the centre's ability to mark the work to the agreed national standard;

- is undertaken on the original sample of candidates' work;

- includes feedback similar to that provided following the original moderation (if centre marks are reinstated, feedback may not be provided).

The moderator undertaking a review of moderation must consider the marks given by the previous moderator and can only make a change to the outcome of moderation if an error occurred in the initial moderation process.

21.3 A review of moderation **will not** be undertaken upon the work of an individual candidate or the work of candidates not in the original sample (unless there was a fault in the selection of the original sample, e.g. insufficient candidates included).

21.4 The work submitted for a review of moderation:

- **must** be despatched to the moderator within three working days following the receipt of instructions from the awarding body. Failure to meet this undertaking may delay the outcome of the review of moderation or result in the review of moderation being cancelled;

- **must** be the original work submitted for moderation;

- **must** have been kept under secure conditions;

- **must not** have been returned to the candidates.

21.5 An equivalent sample may be requested by the awarding body where the original sample of candidates' work has been lost.

21.6 Externally-assessed work will be treated as examination scripts. Centres should request a review of marking (Service 2) or a priority review of marking (Priority Service 2), as appropriate to the level of the qualification.

21.7 For further information on reviews of marking and reviews of moderation, please refer to the JCQ document *Post Result Services, Information and guidance for centres*.

This document is available on the JCQ website:

http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/post-results-services

22. Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments

22.1 When choosing specifications, candidates **must** be made aware of the skills which they will be required to demonstrate. If they choose a specification where they **will not** be able to demonstrate attainment in all parts of the assessment, they will be unable to gain all of the available credit.

22.2 It is possible for awarding bodies to agree arrangements so that candidates with disabilities can access the assessment(s). **These arrangements must be made in advance of examinations and assessments**. Centres should refer to the JCQ document *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*:

http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration

22.3 Centres **must** ensure that, where work is marked by teachers, credit is only given for skills demonstrated by the candidate working independently. Access arrangements **must not** undermine the integrity of the qualification.

Appendix 1: Information for candidates – non-examination assessments (effective from 1 September 2025)

This notice has been produced on behalf of:
AQA, CCEA, City & Guilds, NCFE, OCR, Pearson and WJEC

This document tells you about some things that you **must** and **must not** do when you are completing your work.

When you submit your work for marking, the awarding body will normally require you to sign an authentication statement confirming that you have read and followed the regulations.

If there is something that you do not understand, you **must** ask your teacher.

Preparing your work – good practice

If you receive help and guidance from someone other than your teacher, you **must** tell your teacher. They will then record the assistance given to you.

If you worked as part of a group on an assignment, for example undertaking field research, you **must** write up your **own account** of the assignment. Even if the information you have is the same, you **must** describe **in your own words** how that information was obtained. You **must draw your own conclusions from the data**.

You **must** meet the deadlines that your teacher gives you. Remember – your teachers are there to guide you. Although they cannot give you direct assistance, they can help you to sort out any problems before it is too late.

Take care of your work and keep it safe. **Do not** leave it lying around where your classmates can find it. **Do not** share it with anyone, including posting it on social media. You must always keep your work secure and confidential. If it is stored on the computer network, keep your password secure. Collect all copies of your work from the printer and destroy those you do not need.

Do not be tempted to use any prepared or generated online solutions and try to pass them off as your own work – this is cheating. Electronic tools used by awarding bodies can detect this sort of copying.

You **must not** write inappropriate, offensive or obscene material.

Research and using references

In some subjects you will have an opportunity to do some independent research into a topic.

The research you do may involve looking for information in published sources, such as textbooks, encyclopedias, journals, TV, radio and on the internet.

You can demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of a subject by using information from sources, or generated from sources, which may include the internet and AI tools. Remember, though, information from these sources may be incorrect or biased. You **must** take care how you use this material – you **cannot** copy it and claim it as your own work.

Using information from published sources (including the internet) as the basis for your assignment is a good way to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of a subject. You **must** take care how you use this material though – you **cannot** copy it and claim it as your own work.

> The regulations state that:
>
> 'the work which you submit for assessment **must** be your own';
>
> 'you **must not** copy from someone else or allow another candidate to copy from you'.

When producing a piece of work, if you use the same wording as a published source, you **must** place quotation marks around the passage and state where it came from. This is known as **referencing**. You **must** make sure that you give detailed references for everything in your work which is not in your own words. A reference from a printed book or journal should show the name of the author, the year of publication and the page number. For example: Morrison, 2000, p29.

For material taken from the internet, your reference should show the date when the material was downloaded and **must** show the precise web page, not the search engine used to locate it. This can be copied from the address line. For example: http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/october/28/newsid_2621000/2621915.stm, downloaded 5 February 2026.

Where computer-generated content has been used (such as an AI chatbot), your reference **must** show the name of the AI tool used and should show the date the content was generated. For example: ChatGPT 3.5 (https://openai.com/blog/chatgpt/), 25/01/2026. You should also reference the sources used by the AI tool in generating the content.

You **must** retain a copy of the question(s) and computer-generated content for reference and authentication purposes in a non-editable format (such as a screenshot) and provide a brief explanation of how you used it. This **must** be submitted with your work for final assessment so that your teacher can review the work, the AI-generated content and how it has been used.

You may be required to include a bibliography at the end of your piece of written work. Your teacher will tell you whether this is necessary. Where required, your bibliography **must** list the full details of publications you have used in your research, even where these are not directly referred to. For example: Curran, J. *Mass Media and Society* (Hodder Arnold, 2005).

If you copy the words, ideas or outputs of others and do not show your sources in references and a bibliography, this will be considered as cheating.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism involves taking someone else's words, thoughts, ideas or outputs and trying to pass them off as your own. It could also include AI-produced material. **Plagiarism is a form of cheating which is taken very seriously.**

Don't think you won't be caught; there are many ways to detect plagiarism.

- Markers can spot changes in the style of writing and use of language.

- Markers are highly experienced subject specialists who will be very familiar with work on the topic concerned. They may have read the source you are using or even marked the work you have copied from.

- Internet search engines and specialised computer software can be used to match phrases or pieces of text with original sources and to detect changes in the grammar and style of writing or punctuation.

Sanctions for breaking the regulations

If it is discovered that you have broken the regulations, one of the following sanctions will be applied:

- you will be awarded zero marks for your work;

- you will be disqualified from that component for the examination series in question;

- you will be disqualified from the whole subject for that examination series;

- you will be disqualified from all subjects and barred from entering again for a period of time.

The awarding body will decide which sanction is appropriate.

REMEMBER – IT'S YOUR QUALIFICATION, SO IT NEEDS TO BE YOUR OWN WORK.