




Data Protection Policy (Exams)

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Reviewed by	Academic Standards, SEND and Educational Trips Committee

Signed: 
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Chair of Governors

Dated: 11.12.2025

Signed: 
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Principal

Dated: 11.12.2025

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Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	Francis Galbraith
Exams Manager	Jodi Henderson
Exams Manager line manager (Senior Leader)	Sarah Thomas
Data Protection Officer	Harriet Stringer – School Data Managed
IT Technician	Mark Chisnall
Data manager	Luisa Spinelli

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how Goldington Academy, in relation to exams management and administration, ensures compliance with the regulations as set out by the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) and UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

The delivery of examinations and assessments involve centres and awarding bodies processing a significant amount of personal data (i.e. information from which a living individual

might be identified). It is important that both centres and awarding bodies comply with the requirements of the UK General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018 or law relating to personal data in any jurisdiction in which the awarding body or centre are operating.

In JCQ's General Regulations for Approved Centres (section 6.1), reference is made to 'data protection legislation'. This is intended to refer to UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and any statutory codes of practice issued by the Information Commissioner in relation to such legislation.

It is the responsibility of the centre to inform candidates of the processing that the centre undertakes. For example, that the centre will provide relevant personal data including name, date of birth, gender to the awarding bodies for the purpose of examining and awarding qualifications.

All exams office staff responsible for collecting and sharing candidates' data are required to follow strict rules called 'data protection principles' ensuring the information is:

- used fairly and lawfully
- used for limited, specifically stated purposes
- used in a way that is adequate, relevant and not excessive
- accurate
- kept for no longer than is absolutely necessary
- handled according to people's data protection rights
- kept safe and secure

To ensure that the centre meets the requirements of the DPA 2018 and UK GDPR, all candidates' exam information – even that which is not classified as personal or sensitive – is covered under this policy.

Section 1 – Exams-related information

There is a requirement for the exams office(r) to hold exams-related information on candidates taking external examinations. For further details on the type of information held please refer to [Section 5 – Candidate information, audit and protection measures](#).

Candidates' exams-related data may be shared with the following organisations:

- Awarding bodies
- Joint Council for Qualifications
- Department for Education

This data may be shared via one or more of the following methods:

- hard copy
- email
- secure extranet site(s) – AQA Centre Services; OCR Interchange; Pearson Edexcel Online; WJEC Portal;
- a Management Information System (MIS)
- sending/receiving information via electronic data interchange (EDI)
- using A2C (<https://www.jcq.org.uk/about-a2c>) to/from awarding body processing systems
- Go4Schools

This data may relate to exam entries, access arrangements, the conduct of exams and non-examination assessments, including controlled assessments and coursework special consideration requests and exam results/post-results/certificate information.

Section 2 – Informing candidates of the information held

Goldington Academy ensures that candidates are fully aware of the information and data held.

All candidates are informed:

- via a letter upon registration
- a section in the exams handbook for students
- given access to this policy via the centre website

Candidates are made aware of the above at the start of their course of study leading to an externally accredited qualification.

Materials which are submitted by candidates for assessment may include any form of written work, audio and visual materials, computer programs and data (“Student Materials”). Candidates will be directed to the relevant awarding body’s privacy notice if they require further information about how their Student Materials may be used by the awarding body.

Candidates eligible for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments which require awarding body approval will be informed that an application for access arrangements will be processed using *Access arrangements online*, complying with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Candidates involved in suspected or alleged malpractice will be informed that their personal data will be provided to the awarding body (or bodies) whose examinations/assessments are involved, and that personal data about them may also be shared with other awarding bodies, the qualifications regulator or professional bodies, in accordance with the JCQ document *Suspected Malpractice – Policies and Procedures*.

Candidates will be informed:

- that awarding bodies may be required to provide a candidate’s personal data to educational agencies, such as DfE, Welsh Government, Department of Education (Northern Ireland), ESFA, regulators, HESA, UCAS, Local Authorities and the Learning Records Service (LRS)
- that their personal data may be provided to a central record of qualifications approved by the awarding bodies for statistical and policy development purposes
- of the processing that the centre undertakes, for example, that the centre will provide relevant personal data, including name, date of birth and gender, to the awarding bodies for the purpose of examining and awarding qualifications

Candidates may obtain access to their personal data, such as examination results by applying to the appropriate awarding body’s data protection officer.

Candidates are also referred to the centre’s privacy notice which explains:

- why Goldington Academy needs to collect personal data
- what it plans to do with it
- how long it will keep it
- whether it will be sharing it with any other organisation

Section 3 – Hardware and software

The table below confirms how IT hardware is protected in line with DPA 2018 & GDPR requirements.

Hardware	Protection measures	Warranty expiry
Desktop computer	Desktop PC running MS Windows 10	Mixed

Hardware	Protection measure(s)
Desktop computer	<p>PC only accessible via authorised user account and connected to secured school network infrastructure.</p> <p>Anti-virus installed and running to scan and update schedule.</p> <p>Data stored centrally on networked servers.</p> <p>Data is not stored on the local hard disk of the PC.</p> <p>Network protected from external threats via a Fortinet Firewall complying with all relevant Firewall standards.</p> <p>Data is backed up daily using Veeam backup solution.</p>

Section 4 – Dealing with data breaches

Although data is handled in line with DPA 2018/GDPR regulations, a data breach may occur for any of the following reasons:

- loss or theft of data or equipment on which data is stored
- inappropriate access controls allowing unauthorised use
- equipment failure
- human error
- unforeseen circumstances such as a fire or flood
- hacking attack
- 'blagging' offences where information is obtained by deceiving the organisation who holds it
- cyber-attacks involving ransomware infections

If a data protection breach is identified, the following steps will be taken:

Containment and recovery

The Data Protection Officer will lead on investigating the breach.

It will be established:

- who needs to be made aware of the breach and inform them of what they are expected to do to assist in the containment exercise. This may include isolating or closing a compromised section of the network, finding a lost piece of equipment and/or changing the access codes
- whether there is anything that can be done to recover any losses and limit the damage the breach can cause. As well as the physical recovery of equipment, this could involve the use of back-up hardware to restore lost or damaged data or ensuring that staff recognise when someone tries to use stolen data to access accounts

- which authorities, if relevant, need to be informed

Assessment of ongoing risk

The following points will be considered in assessing the ongoing risk of the data breach:

- what type of data is involved?
- how sensitive is it?
- if data has been lost or stolen, are there any protections in place such as encryption?
- what has happened to the data? If data has been stolen, it could be used for purposes which are harmful to the individuals to whom the data relates; if it has been damaged, this poses a different type and level of risk
- regardless of what has happened to the data, what could the data tell a third party about the individual?
- how many individuals' personal data are affected by the breach?
- who are the individuals whose data has been breached?
- what harm can come to those individuals?
- are there wider consequences to consider such as a loss of public confidence in an important service we provide?

Notification of breach

Notification will take place to enable individuals who may have been affected to take steps to protect themselves or to allow the appropriate regulatory bodies to perform their functions, provide advice and deal with complaints.

Evaluation and response

Once a data breach has been resolved, a full investigation of the incident will take place. This will include:

- reviewing what data is held and where and how it is stored
- identifying where risks and weak points in security measures lie (for example, use of portable storage devices or access to public networks)
- reviewing methods of data sharing and transmission
- increasing staff awareness of data security and filling gaps through training or tailored advice
- reviewing contingency plans

Section 5 – Candidate information, audit and protection measures

For the purposes of this policy, all candidates' exam-related information – even that not considered personal or sensitive under the DPA 2018/GDPR – will be handled in line with DPA 2018/GDPR guidelines.

An information audit is conducted regularly (see Goldington Academy's ['Data Protection Policy'](#)).

The table below details the type of candidate exams-related information held, and how it is managed, stored and protected

Protection measures may include:

- secure drive accessible only to selected staff
- information held in secure area

Section 6 – Data retention periods

Details of retention periods, the actions taken at the end of the retention period and method of disposal are contained in the centre's **Exams Archiving Policy** which is available on the Goldington Academy website and on the T:/

Section 7 – Access to information

With reference to ICO information <https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/schools/exam-results/>

The UK GDPR gives individuals the right to see information held about them. This means individuals can request information about them and their exam performance, including:

- their mark
- comments written by the examiner
- minutes of any examination appeals panels

This does not however give individuals the right to copies of their answers to exam questions.

Requesting exam information

Requests for exam information can be made to Jodi Henderson, Exams Manager in writing or email. ID will need to be confirmed if a former candidate is unknown to current staff.

The GDPR does not specify an age when a child can request their exam results or request that they aren't published. When a child makes a request, those responsible for responding should take into account whether:

- the child wants their parent (or someone with parental responsibility for them) to be involved; and
- the child properly understands what is involved.

The ability of young people to understand and exercise their rights is likely to develop or become more sophisticated as they get older. As a general guide, a child of 12 or older is expected to be mature enough to understand the request they are making. A child may, of course, be mature enough at an earlier age or may lack sufficient maturity until a later age, and so requests should be considered on a case by case basis.

A decision will be made by head of centre as to whether the student is mature enough to understand the request they are making, with requests considered on a case by case basis.

Responding to requests

If a request is made for exam information before exam results have been published, a request will be responded to:

- within five months of the date of the request, or
- within 40 days from when the results are published (whichever is earlier).

If a request is made once exam results have been published, the individual will receive a response within one month of their request.

Third party access

Permission should be obtained before requesting personal information on another individual from a third-party organisation.

Candidates' personal data will not be shared with a third party unless a request is accompanied with permission from the candidate and appropriate evidence (where relevant), to verify the ID of both parties, provided.

In the case of looked-after children or those in care, agreements may already be in place for information to be shared with the relevant authorities (for example, the Local Authority). The centre's Data Protection Officer will confirm the status of these agreements and approve/reject any requests.

Sharing information with parents

Goldington Academy will take into account any other legislation and guidance regarding sharing information with parents including non-resident parents and a local authority (the 'corporate parent'), as example guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) regarding parental responsibility and school reports on pupil performance:

- **Understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility**
www.gov.uk/government/publications/dealing-with-issues-relating-to-parental-responsibility/understanding-and-dealing-with-issues-relating-to-parental-responsibility (Updated 24 August 2023 to include guidance on the role of the 'corporate parent', releasing GCSE results to a parent and notifying separated parents about a child moving school)
- **School reports on pupil performance**
www.gov.uk/guidance/school-reports-on-pupil-performance-guide-for-headteachers

Publishing exam results

When considering publishing exam results, Goldington Academy will make reference to the ICO (Information Commissioner's Office) <https://ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/schools/exam-results/> Can schools give my exam results to the media for publication?

If Goldington Academy makes the decision to publish exam results to the media or within the centre (e.g. on an honours board) it will do so in line with the following principles:

- Refer to guidelines as published by the Joint Council for Qualifications
- Act fairly when publishing results, and where people have concerns about their or their child's information being published, taking those concerns seriously
- Ensure that all candidates and their parents/carers are aware as early as possible whether examinations results will be made public and how this will be done
- Explain how the information will be published. For example, if results will be listed alphabetically, or in grade order

As Goldington Academy will have a legitimate reason for publishing examination results, consent is not required from students or their parents/carers or guardians for publication. However, if a student or their parents/carers have a specific concern about publication of their results, they have the right to object. This objection must be made in writing to Sarah Thomas, Assistant Headteacher, who will consider the objection before making a decision to publish and reply with a good reason to reject the objection to publish the exam results.

Section 8 – Table recording candidate exams-related information held

For details of how to request access to information held, refer to section 7 of this policy (**Access to information**)

For further details of how long information is held, refer to section 6 of this policy (**Data retention periods**)

Information type	Information description (where required)	What personal/sensitive data is/may be contained in the information	Where information is stored	How information is protected	Retention period
Access arrangements information	Any hard copy information kept by the SENDCo relating to an access arrangement candidate.	Candidate name Candidate DOB Gender Diagnostic testing outcome(s) Specialist report(s) (may also include candidate address) Evidence of normal way of working	Access Arrangements Online MIS Lockable metal filing cabinet	Secure user name and password In secure area solely assigned to SEND	DOB of pupil plus 25 years.
Attendance registers copies	Attendance register for each exam session	Candidate name Candidate exam number Candidate UCI number	Exams secure room	In secure area solely assigned to exams	After the deadline for RoRs or appeal.*
Candidates' scripts	Exam scripts completed that day during an exam Any unwanted copies of scripts returned to the centre through the Access to Scripts (ATS) service.	Candidate name Candidate exam number Candidate UCI number	Exams secure room Where teachers are using completed scripts for teaching and learning – they must be stored securely when not being used.	In secure area solely assigned to exams Lockable cabinet	After the deadline for RoRs or appeal.*

Candidates' work	Non-examination assessment work	Candidate name Candidate exam number Candidate UCI number	To be stored safely and securely along with work that did not form part of the moderation sample (including materials stored electronically)	Written: in secure area within department Electronic: in secure area on Network (password protected)	After the deadline for RoRs or appeal.*
Certificates	Candidate certificates issued by awarding bodies.	Candidates name	In lockable filing in exams office	In secure area solely assigned to exams	2 years
Certificate destruction information	A record of unclaimed certificates that have been destroyed.	Candidates name	In lockable filing in exams office	In secure area solely assigned to exams	4 years
Certificate issue information	A record of certificates that have been issued to candidates.	Candidates name	In lockable filing in exams office	In secure area solely assigned to exams	4 years
Conflicts of Interest records	A record of staff with a conflict of interest	Staff name	In lockable filing in exams office	In secure area solely assigned to exams	After the deadline for RoRs or appeal.*
Entry information	A record of candidates entered into public examinations	Candidates name Candidate DOB Candidate gender	Paper copies: In lockable filing in exams office Electronic: On MIS (password protected)	In secure area solely assigned to exams	After the deadline for RoRs or appeal.*
Exam room incident logs	Logs recording any incidents or irregularities in exam rooms for each exam session.	Candidate name Candidate exam number Candidate UCI number	Exams secure room	In secure area solely assigned to exams	After the deadline for RoRs or appeal.*

Invigilator and facilitator training records	A record of the content of the training given to invigilators	Invigilator name Invigilator DOB	In lockable filing in exams office	In secure area solely assigned to exams	After the deadline for RoRs or appeal.*
Overnight supervision information	JCQ form Timetable variation and confidentiality declaration for overnight supervision for any candidate eligible for these arrangements.	Candidate name Candidate exam number Candidate UCI number Candidate contact details	Exams secure room	In secure area solely assigned to exams	After the deadline for RoRs or appeal.*
Post-results services: confirmation of candidate consent information	Hard copy or email record of required candidate consent	Candidate name Candidate exam number Candidate UCI number	In lockable filing in exams office	In secure area solely assigned to exams	6 months after the deadline for RoRs or appeal.*
Post-results services: requests/outcome information	Any hard copy information relating to a post-results service request (RoRs, appeals, ATS) submitted to an awarding body for a candidate and outcome information from the awarding body.	Candidate name Candidate exam number Candidate UCI number	In lockable filing in exams office	In secure area solely assigned to exams	6 months after the deadline for RoRs or appeal.*
Post-results services: scripts provided by ATS service	Copies of exam scripts (or an electronic image of the script) returned to the centre by the awarding body or copies downloaded by the centre where the awarding body provides online access to scripts.	Candidate name Candidate exam number Candidate UCI number	Downloaded to secure network	In secure area solely assigned to staff member	Until no longer required
Post-results services: tracking logs	Logs tracking to resolution all post-results service requests submitted to awarding bodies	Candidate name Candidate exam number Candidate UCI number	In lockable filing in exams office	In secure area solely assigned to exams	After the deadline for RoRs or appeal.*

Resilience arrangements: Evidence of candidate performance	Mock papers	Candidate name Candidate exam number	To be stored safely and securely in departments	Written: in secure area within department Electronic: in secure area on Network (password protected)	After the deadline for RoRs or appeal.*
Resolving timetable clashes information	Any hard copy information relating to the resolution of a candidate's clash of timetabled exam papers or a timetable variation.	Candidate name Candidate exam number Candidate UCI number	In lockable filing in exams office	In secure area solely assigned to exams	After the deadline for RoRs or appeal.*
Results information	Broadsheets of results summarising candidate final grades by subject by exam series.	Candidate name Candidate exam number Candidate UCI number	In lockable filing in exams office	Data Managers Office	Records for current year plus previous 6 years to be retained as a minimum.
Seating plans	Plans showing the seating arrangements of all candidates for every exam taken.	Candidate name Candidate exam number Candidate UCI number	Exams secure room	In secure area solely assigned to exams	After the deadline for RoRs or appeal.*
Special consideration information	Any hard copy information relating to a special consideration request and supporting evidence submitted to an awarding body for a candidate	Candidate name Candidate exam number Candidate UCI number Candidate DOB Information relating to personal circumstances	In lockable filing in exams office	In secure area solely assigned to exams	After the deadline for RoRs or appeal.*
Suspected malpractice reports/outcomes	Any hard copy information relating to a suspected or actual malpractice investigation/report submitted to an awarding body and outcome information from the AB.	Personal information relating to the person(s) involved in the malpractice (staff, students, invigilators, members of public)	In lockable filing in exams office	In secure area solely assigned to exams	Records for current year plus previous 6 years to be retained as a minimum.

Transferred candidate arrangements	Any hard copy information relating to a transferred candidate arrangement. Applications submitted online via CAP.	Candidate name Candidate exam number Candidate UCI number Candidate DOB	In lockable filing in exams office	In secure area solely assigned to exams	To be retained until the transfer arrangements are confirmed by the AB
Very late arrival reports/outcomes	Any hard copy information relating to a candidate arriving very late to an exam. Reports submitted online via CAP.	Candidate name Candidate exam number Candidate UCI number Candidate DOB	Exams secure room	In secure area solely assigned to exams	After the deadline for RoRs or appeal.*

* To be retained until after the deadline for RoRs or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later.[Reference [ICE 6](#)]