

# DATA PROTECTION POLICY (Exams) 2024/25

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
J. Malins/ G. McCluskey	
Date of next review	Oct 2025

## Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	Gareth McCluskey
Exams officer	Jemma Malins
Senior leader(s)	Gareth McCluskey, Zara Peskett, Claire Wright, Jackie Hearty, Sam Southwell, Andy Nash and Steve Livesey
IT manager	Allan Voo
Data manager	Steve Livesey

## Contents

<b>Key staff involved in the policy .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Purpose of the policy .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Section 1 – Exams-related information.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Section 2 – Informing candidates of the information held .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Section 3 – Hardware and software.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Section 4 – Dealing with data breaches.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Section 5 – Candidate information, audit and protection measures .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Section 6 – Data retention periods .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Section 7 – Access to information.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Section 8 – Table recording candidate exams-related information held.....</b>	<b>9</b>

## Purpose of the policy

This policy details how Shenley Brook End School 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.

Students are given the right to find out what information the centre holds about them, how this is protected, how this can be accessed and how data breaches are dealt with.

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 below.

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

- Awarding bodies
- Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ)
- Department for Education
- Local Authorities
- The 5 Dimensions Trust
- Media/Press

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

- hard copy
- email
- secure extranet site(s)
- Sending and receiving information via electronic data interchange (EDI using A2C transportation
- Management Information System (MIS) provided by Arbor

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

## Section 2 – Informing candidates of the information held

Shenley Brook End School ensures that candidates are fully aware of the information and data held.

All candidates are:

- informed via email and electronic communication
- given access to this policy via written request and/or school

Candidates are made aware of the above at the start of a course leading to a vocational qualification or where candidates are following GCE and GCSE qualifications, when the entries are submitted to awarding bodies for processing.

At this point, the centre also brings to the attention of candidates the annually updated JCQ document **Information for candidates – Privacy Notice** which explains how the JCQ awarding bodies process their personal data in accordance with the DPA 2018 and UK GDPR (or law relating to personal data in any jurisdiction in which the awarding body or centre are operating).

Candidates eligible for access arrangements which require awarding body approval using *Access arrangements online* are also required to provide their consent by signing the GDPR compliant JCQ candidate personal data consent form before approval applications can be processed online.

## Section 3 – Hardware and software

The table below confirms how IT hardware, software and access to online systems is protected in line with DPA & GDPR requirements.

Hardware	Date of purchase and protection measures	Warranty expiry
Desktop located in Exams Office – Desktop number SBE0711	February 2020  Desktop has firewall and anti-virus software installed and is checked annually by the IT team.	February 2023 but desktop is maintained and updated by the IT Team.

Software/online system	Protection measure(s)
MIS – Arbor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protected usernames and passwords</li> <li>• Rules for password setting (mix of upper and lower cases and letters and numbers)</li> <li>• Rules for regularity of password changing</li> <li>• Centre administration must approve the creation of new user account and determine access rights</li> <li>• Regular checks to firewall and anti-virus software</li> </ul>
Awarding body secure sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protected usernames and passwords</li> <li>• Rules for password setting (mix of upper and lower cases and letters and numbers)</li> <li>• Rules for regularity of password changing</li> <li>• Centre administration must approve the creation of new user account and determine access rights</li> <li>• Regular checks to firewall and anti-virus software</li> </ul>
Internet browsers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular checks to firewall and anti virus software</li> <li>• Unsafe website are blacklisted and can only be whitelisted with approval of IT team</li> </ul>

A2C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular checks to firewall and anti-virus software</li> <li>• Run latest version</li> <li>• Report any irregularities to IT and awarding body</li> </ul>
-----	---

## Section 4 – Dealing with data breaches

Although data is handled in line with DPA/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:

### 1. Containment and recovery

Greg Cunningham, 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

### 2. 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?

### 3. 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.

### 4. 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/GDPR – will be handled in line with DPA/GDPR guidelines.

An information audit is conducted annually.

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

Protection measures may include:

- password protected area on the centre's intranet
- secure drive accessible only to selected staff
- information held in secure area
- updates undertaken when available (this may include updating antivirus software, firewalls, internet browsers etc.)

## **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/accessible from the Exams Officer on request.

## **Section 7 – Access to information**

(With reference to ICO information <https://ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/schools/exam-results/>)

The 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 Director of Assessment and the Exams Officer in writing/email. ID will be required to confirm the identity of the candidate if 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 the Director of Data and Assessment and/or the 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, is 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**

The centre will take into account any other legislation and guidance regarding sharing information with parents (including non-resident parents), 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](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dealing-with-issues-relating-to-parental-responsibility/understanding-and-dealing-with-issues-relating-to-parental-responsibility)
- School reports on pupil performance  
[www.gov.uk/guidance/school-reports-on-pupil-performance-guide-for-headteachers](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-reports-on-pupil-performance-guide-for-headteachers)

### **Publishing exam results**

Shenley Brook End School will publish exam results to the media or within the centre (e.g. on an honours board) 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 Shenley Brook End School will have a legitimate reason for publishing examination results, consent is not required from students or their parents/carers 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 Chris Holmwood, 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	Information relating to access arrangements.	Candidate name Candidate DOB Gender Data protection notice (candidate signature) 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 [insert] In secure office (SENCo)	Until the deadline for post results appeals has passed or any outstanding appeals/investigations have been concluded.
Alternative site arrangements	Information relating to alternative arrangements.	Candidate names Staff names at alternative site Address of alternative site	Email	Secure username and password	Until the deadline for post results appeals has passed or any outstanding appeals/investigations have been concluded.
Attendance registers copies	Copies of attendance registers	Candidate names Gender	Exams Office MIS	Secure office Secure username and password	Until the deadline for post results appeals has passed or any outstanding appeals/investigations have been concluded.
Candidates' scripts	Candidate scripts return via ATS	Candidate names	Return to Team Leader/Lead Teacher	Secure office	Until the deadline for post results appeals has passed or any outstanding appeals/investigations have been concluded.

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
Candidates' work	Candidate work returned post moderation	Candidate names	Return to Team Leader/Lead Teacher	Secure office	Until the deadline for post results appeals has passed or any outstanding appeals/investigations have been concluded.
Centre consortium arrangements for centre assessed work	Information relating to centre consortium for centre assessed work	Candidate names	Exams office	Secure office	Until the deadline for post results appeals has passed or any outstanding appeals/investigations have been concluded.
Certificates	Candidate certificates issued by exam boards	Candidate names Gender Candidate DOB Candidate results and grades	Exams office	Secure office	Minimum of 12 months
Certificate destruction information	Information about certificates which have been securely destroyed	Candidate names	Exams Office	Secure office	Minimum 5 years
Certificate issue information	Information about certificate which have been issued by exam boards	Candidate names Gender Candidate DOB	Exams Office	Secure office	Minimum 5 years
Conflicts of interest records	Information relating to conflicts of interest	Candidate names Staff names	Exams office Awarding body extranet sites Email	Secure office Password and username (protected)	Until the deadline for post results appeals has passed or any outstanding appeals/investigations have been concluded.
Entry information	Information relating to entries	Candidate names	Exams Office	Secure office	Until the deadline for post results appeals

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
		Candidate UCI Candidate DOB	MIS	Password and username (protected)	has passed or any outstanding appeals/investigations have been concluded.
Exam room incident logs	Information about incidents that have occurred in the exam rooms	Candidate names	Exams office	Secure office	Until the deadline for post results appeals has passed or any outstanding appeals/investigations have been concluded.
Invigilator and facilitator training records	Information relating to the training and facilitating of exams by invigilators	Invigilator names	The Exams Office Website	Password and username (protected)	Until the deadline for post results appeals has passed or any outstanding appeals/investigations have been concluded.
Overnight supervision information	Information relating to overnight supervision of candidates	Candidate names	Exams office	Secure office	Until the deadline for post results appeals has passed or any outstanding appeals/investigations have been concluded.
Post-results services: confirmation of candidate consent information	Information relating to post results services	Candidate names	Exams office	Secure office	Until the deadline for post results appeals has passed or any outstanding appeals/investigations have been concluded.
Post-results services: requests/outcome information	Information relating to post results services	Candidate names	Exams office Awarding body extranet sites	Secure office Password and username (protected)	Until the deadline for post results appeals has passed or any outstanding appeals/investigations have been concluded.

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
Post-results services: scripts provided by ATS service	Information relating to post results services	Candidate names	Exams office	Secure office	Until the deadline for post results appeals has passed or any outstanding appeals/investigations have been concluded.
Post-results services: tracking logs	Information relating to post results tracking logs.		Exams office	Secure office	Until the deadline for post results appeals has passed or any outstanding appeals/investigations have been concluded.
Private candidate information	Information relating to private candidates	Candidate ID Information relating to Access arrangements Candidate names Candidate DOB	Exams Office	Secure Office	Until the deadline for post results appeals has passed or any outstanding appeals/investigations have been concluded.
Resolving timetable clashes information	Information relating to clashes	Candidate names	MIS	Password and username (protected)	Until the deadline for post results appeals has passed or any outstanding appeals/investigations have been concluded.
Results information	Information relating to results	Candidate names Candidates DOB Candidate results	MIS Exams Offices	Password and username restricted to exam and date staff on download days	Indefinitely
Seating plans	Information relating to seating plans	Candidate names	Exams Office	Secure Office	Until the deadline for post results appeals has passed or any outstanding

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
					appeals/investigations have been concluded.
Special consideration information	Information relating to special consideration for candidates	Candidate names Special considerations	Exams office Awarding body extranet sites	Secure office Password and username (protected)	Until the deadline for post results appeals has passed or any outstanding appeals/investigations have been concluded.
Suspected malpractice reports/outcomes	Information relating to suspected malpractice	Candidate names	Exams Office Email Awarding body extranet sites	Secure office Password and username (protected)	Until the deadline for post results appeals has passed or any outstanding appeals/investigations have been concluded.
Transferred candidate arrangements	Information relating to transferred candidates	Candidate names	Exams Office Email Awarding body extranet sites	Secure office Password and username (protected)	Until the deadline for post results appeals has passed or any outstanding appeals/investigations have been concluded.
Very late arrival reports/outcomes	Information relating to very late arrivals and the outcomes	Candidate names	Exams Office Email Awarding body extranet sites	Secure office Password and username (protected)	Until the deadline for post results appeals has passed or any outstanding appeals/investigations have been concluded.