

Policy for scheduling of examinations in international centres

Document summary

Because our exams are sat by students around the world, we create a schedule of start times across the different global time zones to keep exam content confidential. This policy explains our approach to achieving this and is published as information for centres administering Pearson exams, students taking our exams, parents of students and any other relevant stakeholders.

Contents

Pearson Education Ltd – our mission and values	3
1. Scope of policy	4
2. Policy statement	4
3. Regulatory references	5
4. Review date	5
5. Version control	6

Pearson Education Ltd – our mission and values

Our purpose is simple: to help people realize the life they imagine through learning. We believe that every learning opportunity is a chance for a personal breakthrough. That's why our c. 18,000 Pearson employees are committed to creating vibrant and enriching learning experiences designed for real-life impact. We are the world's lifelong learning company, serving customers in nearly 200 countries with digital content, assessments, qualifications, and data. For us, learning isn't just what we do. It's who we are. Visit us at [pearsonplc.com](https://www.pearsonplc.com).

We are regulated by the UK qualifications regulators Ofqual (England), CCEA Regulation (Northern Ireland) and Qualifications Wales (Wales). Our regulatory policies are integral to our approach and articulate how we meet regulatory requirements. These policies are designed to support centres and students and set out clearly our approach to the design, delivery, and award of Pearson qualifications and services.

1. Scope of policy

- 1.1 This policy applies to **Pearson Edexcel GCSE, International GCSE, GCE and International Advanced Level (IAL) qualifications** delivered outside of the United Kingdom.
- 1.2 These principles apply to other Pearson qualifications involving exam assessment, where relevant.

2. Policy statement

- 2.1 The confidentiality of exam content is vital to ensure all users of our qualifications can have confidence in the validity and fairness of the assessment process and the results.
- 2.2 We analyse entry data to identify subjects that are commonly taken in combination by candidates, so that we can minimise exams in those subjects being scheduled on the same date. This aims to keep the number of students with exam clashes to a minimum.
- 2.3 As our exams are sat by students worldwide, we must also create a schedule of start times across the different time zones to keep exam content confidential. For series-based exams, all students around the world will sit the same exam on the same date. We'll try to schedule the start time of exams in a way that doesn't create an excessive administrative or logistical burden for schools, parents, and students. However, in most cases the exam start times for students outside the UK will need to be scheduled to ensure all students taking an exam are sitting that exam at the same time as students in the UK, which in some cases may mean students having to complete exams at times outside of the normal school day. Schools and students should ensure they can accommodate the exam start times for their time-zone before starting the teaching and learning leading to those exams.
- 2.4 Our aims in setting the start times of exams are:
 - To prevent the possibility of exam content being shared between individuals before all students have completed the exam.
 - To have clear exam start times for each session that are applied consistently in each time zone.
 - To limit the number of exams for which exam centres must arrange supervision of students before or after exams as far as possible.
 - To limit the number of hours between the first and last exam of each day, as far as possible.

- To ensure that exam centres know the rules that need to be applied, so that they can plan the logistics of each exam series with confidence.
- To consider the needs of the students and ensure that the timing of exams does not disadvantage them or create a barrier to achievement.

2.5 Guidance on the timing of exams in each time zone can be found on our [International exam start times](#) webpage. You will need to use our international examination start time documents for your region alongside the [Find your exam date](#) information for international centres.

2.6 We monitor whether these rules are followed and will act where there is evidence they are not being applied appropriately. Centres and candidates will be subject to our procedures for dealing with malpractice and maladministration if necessary.

3. Regulatory references

2.7 UK regulators require all awarding organisations to establish and maintain their compliance with regulatory conditions and criteria. As part of this process, policies and guides that relate to Pearson's status as an awarding organisation will reference any conditions and criteria that they address.

2.8 This policy addresses the following regulatory criteria and conditions:

Qualification regulator or relevant governing body	Regulatory rule or guidance document	Regulatory condition or criteria
Ofqual	General Conditions of Recognition	G4.1

4. Review date

3.1 This policy will be reviewed in November 2026.

5. Version control

Version	Changes	Date
3.9	Dates and version control updated.	16 th October 2025