



**PensMeadowSchool**

*Living, Growing, Learning*

# External Accreditation policy

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## **Disclaimer**

Pens Meadow School makes every effort to ensure that the information in this document is accurate and up-to-date. If errors are brought to our attention, we will correct them as soon as practicable.

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## **Purpose**

The purpose of this accreditation policy is to ensure the planning and management of accreditation at Pens Meadow School is conducted efficiently and in the best interests of learners; and to ensure the operation of an efficient system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the centre's accreditation processes to read, understand and implement this policy.

Where references are made to JCQ regulations/guidelines, further details can be found at [www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk).

## **Responsibilities**

The Head of Centre (Head Teacher):

- Has overall responsibility for the school as an approved centre and advises on appeals and complaints
- Will support all staff involved in accreditation to ensure clear systems are followed and adhered to
- Is responsible for reporting all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice
- Will share a malpractice policy with all staff

The Accreditation Officer (Deputy Head teacher):

- Manages the administration of accreditation in conjunction with the school administration staff
- Advises the senior leadership team (SLT), teachers, and other relevant support staff on annual accreditation timetables and procedures as set by the various awarding bodies.
- Ensures that learners and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the accreditation timetable that will affect them.
- Checks with teaching staff that the necessary assessments are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries.
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely submission of learner's assessments.
- Administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ publication.
- Tracks, dispatches, and stores assessments.
- Arranges for dissemination of certificates to learners.
- Considers the needs of the pupils when organising assessments.

Heads of Department (TLR P16): **Curriculum Manager:**

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of learners
- Accurate completion of entry and all other assessments and adherence to deadlines as set by the Accreditation Officer.
- Arranging appropriate moderation opportunities to ensure all the above are complete (internal and external).

Teachers:

- Supplying information on entries assessments as required by the **head of department Curriculum Manager** and/or Accreditation Officer.
- Raising any concerns over learners' who may struggle to access assessments.
- Providing the Accreditation Officer with sufficient evidence to substantiate the learners 'normal way of working'.

### **Qualifications**

The Qualifications offered at Pens Meadow School are decided by heads of department in liaison with teachers, the senior leadership team and the Head Teacher.

The types of qualifications offered are:

OCR Life and Living Entry Level 1 and 2

**Functional Skills**

**ASDAN Awards**

**Aim Awards** Entry 1 and 2

**ASDAN Transition Challenge**

### **Registrations procedure**

All students who attend Pens Meadow Post 16 have a special educational need or disability. A placement at Pens Meadow can only be agreed if an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) is in place. This document contains a range of information about a student including first name, surname, date of birth, postcode and ULN. An EHCP is a legal document issued by the local authority.

At the beginning of each academic year each student's parents or carers are required to complete a student update form confirming the personal information that is held within school.

### **Recognition of Prior Learning policy**

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and transfer of credit exist to enable students to avoid duplication of learning and assessment. Students may claim RPL or transfer of credit against a whole unit or several units. A maximum of 70% of a qualification can normally be achieved through equivalency (credit transfer). At least 30% should be gained through new learning.

#### *Credit Transfer*

This allows for previously accredited achievement from within the Qualification and Credit Framework (QCF) to count towards another qualification, where it is allowed as an equivalency within the new qualification, or where the student has already achieved unit(s) belonging to that qualification. This

is possible when the rules of combination for the qualification allow for equivalent units or the learner has completed units from within the qualification previously.

The potential for a learner to undertake RPL or credit transfer relies on the teacher or assessor carrying out effective initial assessment of learners to establish their previous qualifications and experience. At Pens Meadow this forms part of the transition discussions with previous teachers from feeder secondary schools. Eligibility will be checked by the teacher/assessor.

1. The Learner will provide evidence of qualifications and units achieved (not required where previous credit achievement was from AIM Awards) Evidence: Original certificates  
2. The Course Tutor/Assessor must complete an RPL and Credit Transfer Form, have it countersigned by the Internal Verifier and submit it to their AIM Awards Customer Support Officer Evidence: RPL and Credit Transfer Form  
3. Verified signed copies of the certificates should be presented alongside the RAC as evidence to the EV or Approved Internal Verifier for final approval Evidence: Verified copies of certificates, RAC

Recognition of Prior Learning is a process of assessing and validating learning or achievement that has not been certificated or accredited previously towards the qualification being studied. Qualification achievement from outside the QCF can be submitted via an RPL claim (Exemption). RPL is a negotiated process between learner and Assessor and the learner must provide evidence of prior work, learning or achievement to fully satisfy the assessment criteria.

### **Equality Legislation**

All centre staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of any equality legislation. The centre will comply with the legislation, including making reasonable adjustments to the service that they provide to learners in accordance with requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies, and JCQ. This is the responsibility of the SLT and Accreditation Officer.

### **Disability Statement**

A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has substantial or long term adverse effects on their ability to carry out every day activities (Equality Act 2010).

At Pens Meadow School we are committed to the provision of equal opportunities for all students, staff and parents as outlined in the Equality Act 2010. The Disability Statement in relation to accreditation aims to ensure that every student who has additional needs will be supported.

To ensure we meet our commitments we follow the following statements:

- All work rooms are accessible.
- There is an appropriate toilet near or in all of these areas.
- Emergency evacuation procedures are appropriate for all learners and risk assessments are carried out as appropriate.
- All areas have had internal risk assessments carried out.
- Any specialised equipment will be provided
- Any complaints made by learners or parents/carers should be directed in the first instance to the Accreditation Officer who will initiate an enquiry.

### **Access Arrangements**

As an SEN school, all of our pupils will have an Education Health Care Plan (EHC Plan) and so will need access arrangements in place to complete tasks/assessments. Such arrangements are clearly detailed in Section E of the plan.

### **Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations**

#### **Reasonable Adjustments**

These are adjustments made to an assessment for a qualification so as to enable a learner to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding. The nature of any reasonable adjustment depends on the learners particular requirements, the qualification and assessment methods and may not be appropriate if the learners particular difficulty directly effects performance in the attributes being assessed.

#### **Special Considerations**

This is consideration given to a learner who has temporarily experienced an illness or injury, or some other event outside of their control which has had or is reasonably likely to have had an effect on their ability to take an assessment or on their level of attainment.

#### **Initial Assessment of Learners**

Pens Meadow School ensures that learners are provided with the correct information and advice on their chosen qualification and that the qualification will meet their needs. We assess the suitability of each potential learner and make appropriate professional judgments about the learner's potential to successfully complete the assessments and achieve the qualification at the chosen level. This process is carried out in conjunction with KS4 staff, Connexions and parents.

As part of this process we may identify that a learner will require support or reasonable adjustments to be made to enable them to be assessed fairly. In some cases we may identify that the learner may not be able to demonstrate attainment because their particular difficulty directly effects performance in the attributes being assessed.

#### **Reasonable adjustments for non-examined qualifications**

For qualifications with internally assessed assessments that are not taken under examination conditions learners may provide evidence that they meet the specified assessment criteria in any way that is valid, unless the qualification or unit requires a certain type of evidence.

For these types of qualifications reasonable adjustments will be identified, chosen, approved and implemented by teachers, with approval by our Internal Verifier.

Reasonable adjustments at Pens Meadow School that can be made for these types of qualifications include:

- changing the assessment method, for example from a written assessment to a spoken assessment
- adapting assessment materials, such as providing materials in Communicate in Print
- providing assistance during assessment, such as use of Makaton or a reader or a scribe
- using assistive technology, such as use of AAC, adapted keyboards
- assessment material in enlarge format
- use of ICT to present responses

For all reasonable adjustments we ensure that the adjustments made:

- enable the learner to meet the specified criteria at the required level
- do not give the learner an unfair advantage
- meet the requirements of the specifications regardless of the process or method used
- are as rigorous as assessment methods used with other learners
- are able to be moderated or verified
- are appropriate for the learners and their normal way of working

### **Malpractice**

Malpractice is defined as any deliberate activity, neglect, default or other practice that compromises the integrity of the assessment process, and/or the validity of certificates. Malpractice may include a range of issues from the failure to maintain appropriate records or systems to the deliberate falsification of records in order to claim certificates.

Failure to deal with identified issues may in itself constitute malpractice.

The head of centre in consultation with accreditation officer are responsible for investigating suspected malpractice. Please refer to the Malpractice Policy.

### **Complaints and Appeals Procedure**

This procedure confirms Pens Meadow School's compliance with JCQ's General Regulations for Approved Centres 2017-2018, 2019-2020 section 5.7 that the centre has in place "...a written complaints and appeals procedure which will cover general complaints regarding the centre's delivery or administration of a qualification."

It also confirms Pens Meadow School's compliance with JCQ's General Regulations for Approved Centres 2017-2018, 2019-2020 section 5.14 5.13 that the centre has in place "a written internal appeals procedure to manage disputes when a learner disagrees with a centre decision not to support a clerical check, a review of marking, a review of moderation or an appeal..."

### **Grounds for complaint**

A learner (or his/her/parent/carer) may make a complaint on the grounds below (this is not an exhaustive list).

### **Teaching and learning**

- Quality of teaching and learning
- Teacher without adequate training/subject matter expertise utilised on a long-term basis
- Teacher lacking knowledge of new specification/incorrect core content studied/taught
- Core content not adequately covered
- Inadequate feedback for a learner following assessment(s)
- The taking of an assessment, which contributes to the final grade of the qualification, not conducted according to the JCQ/awarding body instructions
- The marking of an internal assessment, which contributes to the final grade of the qualification, not undertaken according to the requirements of the awarding body (complainant should refer to the centre's internal appeals procedure)
- Centre fails to adhere to its internal appeals procedure

### Access arrangements

- Learner not assessed by the centre's appointed assessor
- Learner not involved in decisions made regarding his/her access arrangements where appropriate
- Learner did not consent to personal data being shared electronically (by the non-acquisition of a signed Data Protection Notice)
- Adapted equipment put in place failed during assessment
- Approved access arrangement(s) not put in place at the time of assessment
- Appropriate arrangements not put in place at the time of assessment as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment

### Entries

- Learner not entered/entered late for a required assessment
- Learner entered for a wrong assessment
- Learner entered for a wrong tier of entry

### Results and Post-results

- Learner request for return of work after moderation and work not available/disposed of earlier than allowed in the regulations
- Learner (or parent/carer) unhappy with a result
- Learner (or parent/carer) unhappy with a centre decision not to support a review of moderation or an appeal

### Complaints Procedure

If a learner (or his/her parent/carer) has a general concern or complaint about the centre's delivery or administration of a qualification he/she is following, Pens Meadow School encourages him/her to try to resolve this informally in the first instance. A concern or complaint should be made in person, by telephone or in writing to the Accreditation Officer or the Head of Centre, depending on the nature of the complaint.

If a complaint fails to be resolved informally the learner (or his/her parent/carer) is then at liberty to make a formal complaint.

### How to make a formal complaint

- A complaint should be submitted in writing by completing a **complaints form**.
- Forms are available below and on request from the school office.
- Completed forms should be returned to the Accreditation Officer.
- Forms received will be logged by the centre and acknowledged within 5 working days

### How a formal complaint is investigated

- The Head of Centre will further investigate or appoint a member of the senior leadership team (who is not involved in the grounds for complaint and has no personal interest in the outcome) to investigate the complaint and report on the findings and conclusion.
- The findings and conclusion will be provided to the complainant within 2 working weeks

### Appeals

Following the outcome, if the complainant remains dissatisfied and believes there are clear grounds, an appeal can be submitted.

- Any appeal must be submitted in writing by again completing a complaints form
- Forms received will be logged by the centre and acknowledged within 5 working days
- The appeal will be referred to the Chair of Governors for consideration
- The Chair of Governors will inform the appellant of the final conclusion in due course.