CENTRE APPROVAL POLICY

Policy Owner: Head Office
Oversight Committee: Examinations & Standards Committee
Final Authority: Grand Council
Applies to: All centres delivering I-PATH examinations (regulated and unregulated)
Review Cycle: Annual or following regulatory change

1. Purpose

This policy sets out how International Performing Arts & Theatre Limited (I-PATH) approves, monitors and maintains Approved Examination Centres to ensure that:

- examinations are delivered in safe, suitable and controlled environments
- assessment integrity, security and candidate welfare are protected
- centres meet I-PATH and Ofqual expectations for assessment delivery
- approval decisions are transparent, proportionate and auditable

2. Definition of an Approved Examination Centre

An Approved Examination Centre is a venue approved by I-PATH for the delivery of examinations in accordance with I-PATH syllabi, handbooks and policies.

Approved Examination Centres are independent entities and are not agents or subsidiaries of I-PATH.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- all new centres seeking approval
- all existing Approved Examination Centres
- face to face examinations
- live video examinations
- recorded video examinations (RVE)

4. Centre Approval Model

I-PATH operates a proportionate, staged centre approval process combining:

- centre self-declaration
- first-session verification
- ongoing examiner and Head Office oversight

This model supports accessibility while maintaining control of standards.

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5. Stage 1 - Centre Approval Application (Self-Declaration)

5.1 Requirement to Apply

Before booking their first examination session, centres must complete a Centre Approval Application Form via the I-PATH website.

The form is a structured questionnaire covering:

- venue suitability
- health & safety arrangements
- safeguarding arrangements
- accessibility and inclusion considerations
- examination space and facilities
- staff presence and responsibilities
- compliance with I-PATH policies

By submitting the form, the centre confirms that the information provided is accurate and that the venue meets I-PATH requirements.

5.2 Initial Approval

Initial approval is granted on the basis of the centre's self-declaration, subject to verification at the first examination session.

A unique Centre Number is issued following approval.

6. Stage 2 - First Examination Session Verification

6.1 Face to face or Live Video Examinations

At the first ever examination session held at a centre:

- the I-PATH Examiner will be shown the examination venue
- the examiner will confirm whether the venue:
    - is suitable for examination delivery
    - provides appropriate space, safety and privacy
    - aligns with I-PATH expectations

The examiner's feedback is formally reported to Head Office.

6.2 Recorded Video Examinations (RVE)

Where a centre's first examination session is delivered via Recorded Video Examination (RVE):

- the centre or teacher must provide a video recording of the venue
- the recording must show:

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- the examination space
- entry and exit points
- general layout and suitability

This video must be submitted as part of the first exam entry submission and reviewed by Head Office and/or the examiner.

6.3 Outcome of Verification

Following verification, I-PATH may:

- confirm full Approved Examination Centre status
- request remedial actions
- impose conditions
- suspend or withdraw approval where suitability requirements are not met

7. Ongoing Monitoring and Review

Centre approval is ongoing, not permanent.

Monitoring may include:

- examiner feedback
- review of incidents or concerns
- malpractice or safeguarding reports
- complaints or appeals
- periodic checks by Head Office

Where concerns arise, I-PATH may require:

- additional evidence
- a further venue review
- temporary suspension of approval
- termination of centre status

8. Responsibilities of Approved Examination Centres

Approved Examination Centres must:

- comply with all I-PATH policies, syllabi and handbooks
- ensure a safe, secure and appropriate examination environment
- ensure safeguarding, health & safety and equality obligations are met
- cooperate with examiners and Head Office
- notify I-PATH promptly of material changes to venue or circumstances

9. Withdrawal or Suspension of Approval

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I-PATH reserves the right to:

- suspend approval temporarily
- withdraw approval permanently

where a centre:

- fails to meet required standards
- breaches I-PATH policies
- compromises assessment integrity or candidate welfare
- no longer has an associated I-PATH Teacher Member

Decisions are documented and may be reviewed by the Examinations & Standards Committee.

10. Records and Audit

I-PATH maintains records of:

- centre approval applications
- verification outcomes
- examiner feedback
- decisions relating to approval status

Records are retained in line with regulatory and data protection requirements and may be shared with awarding organisations as required.

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