SOP Template: Exam Paper Preparation, Printing, and Secure Storage Procedures

This SOP details the **exam paper preparation, printing, and secure storage procedures**, covering steps such as exam content verification, secure document formatting, controlled printing processes, strict access control during and after printing, and secure storage protocols to prevent unauthorized access. The guidelines ensure the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of exam materials throughout the preparation and administration phases.

1. Purpose

To establish standardized procedures for the secure preparation, printing, and storage of exam papers to uphold the integrity and confidentiality of assessments.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all personnel involved in the creation, handling, printing, and storage of exam papers within the institution.

3. Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Exam Coordinator	Oversees the entire process, ensures policy compliance, and manages secure storage.
Exam Authors	Prepare and submit exam content for review and approval.
Printing Personnel	Handle secure printing and initial boxing/sealing of printed exam papers.
Security Staff	Control access to printing and storage areas and monitor custody of exam materials.

4. Procedures

1. **Exam Content Preparation & Verification**
   - Exam authors prepare draft exam paper following the provided template.
   - Submit the draft to Exam Coordinator for verification of content, accuracy, and formatting.
   - Establish a review committee for double-checking questions, answers, and marks allocation.
   - Apply version controls and watermark drafts as "Confidential - Draft".
   - Once approved, all digital files are encrypted and password protected.
2. **Secure Document Formatting**
   - Final exam papers are formatted according to institutional guidelines (font, layout, header/footer with confidentiality notice).
   - Remove author identifiers to maintain anonymity.
   - Store final files in a secure, access-controlled digital folder.
3. **Controlled Printing Procedures**
   - Printing is scheduled and performed in a secured area with restricted access (e.g., access logs or biometric entry).
   - Only authorized personnel may handle printing devices; no unauthorized individuals permitted during printing.
   - Printers must not retain digital copies post-printing-immediately erase memory buffers.
   - Count printed copies; log and sign off the number of prints.
4. **Post-Printing Handling**
   - Printed exam papers are immediately sealed in tamper-evident envelopes or boxes.
   - Each batch is labeled and logged (exam code, number of copies, date/time, handler signature).
5. **Secure Storage Protocols**
   - Store sealed materials in a designated, access-controlled, and monitored secure storage room (e.g., CCTV, biometric locks).
   - Maintain an access log detailing date, time, and staff entering/exiting storage area.
   - Regularly inspect seals for tampering; record inspection results.
   - Only Exam Coordinator or appointed individuals may authorize withdrawals, with written log.
6. **Disposal of Surplus and Obsolete Materials**
   - Shred or incinerate draft and surplus papers under supervision, with destruction log signed by witnesses.
   - Purge/destroy obsolete electronic files using industry-standard methods.

7. **Incident Response**
    - Immediately report any suspected compromise or unauthorized access to Exam Coordinator and Security.
    - Initiate internal investigation and document full incident details.

5. Records & Documentation

- Exam preparation and approval logs
- Access control logs (print room and storage area)
- Printing and print count logs
- Seal and inspection records
- Incident reports (if any)

6. Review & Audit

This SOP shall be reviewed annually and after every assessment cycle or security incident to ensure continued effectiveness and compliance with best practices.