

# Exam Policy

October 2021-2023

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## 1. **Purpose**

1.1. The purpose of this exam policy is:

1.1.1. to ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interest of candidates.

1.1.2. to ensure the operation of an efficient exam system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.

1.2. It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the centre's exam processes to read, understand and implement this policy. This exam policy will be reviewed annually. This exam policy will be reviewed by the head of centre, senior leadership team, exams officer and the trustees.

## 2. **Exam Responsibilities**

2.1. The Head of centre has overall responsibility for the school as an exam centre:

2.1.1. advises on appeals and re-marks.

2.1.2. is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments.

2.2. The Exams office manager / exams officer manages the administration of external and internal exams and analysis of exam results:

2.2.1. advises the senior leadership team, subject and class tutors and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various exam boards.

2.2.2. oversees the production and distribution to staff, trustees and candidates of an annual calendar for all exams in which candidates will be involved and communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events.

2.2.3. ensures that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exam timetable that will affect them.

2.2.4. consults with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

2.2.5. provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries.

2.2.6. receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts and ensures that scripts are dispatched as per the guidelines.

2.2.7. administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration using the JCQ Access arrangements and special considerations regulations and Guidance relating to candidates who are eligible for adjustments in examinations.

2.2.8. identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.

- 2.2.9. accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
  - 2.2.10. line manages the senior exam invigilator in organising the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams.
  - 2.2.11. prepares and presents reports to the SLT showing results achieved in relation to expected grades and comparable data for previous years, indicating where future procedural improvements might be made.
  - 2.2.12. submits candidates coursework marks, tracks despatch and stores returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
  - 2.2.13. arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any appeals/re-mark requests.
  - 2.2.14. maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.
  - 2.2.15. Hold a contingency plan for exams administration.
- 2.3. Deputy Heads:
- 2.3.1. organisation of teaching and learning.
  - 2.3.2. external validation of courses followed at key stage 4 / post-16.
- 2.4. Heads of department/school/curriculum:
- 2.4.1. guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries.
  - 2.4.2. involvement in post-results procedures.
  - 2.4.3. accurate completion of coursework mark sheets and declaration sheets.
  - 2.4.4. accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer.
- 2.5. Member of SLT with Careers Responsibility:
- 2.5.1. guidance and careers information.
- 2.6. Teachers:
- 2.6.1. following of access arrangements provided by SENCO.
  - 2.6.2. submission of candidates' names to heads of department/school/curriculum.
  - 2.6.3. Signing declaration sheets.
- 2.7. LSA Co-ordinator/SENCO:
- 2.7.1. administration of access arrangements.

- 2.7.2. identification and testing of candidates, requirements for access arrangements.
  - 2.7.3. process any necessary applications to gain approval.
  - 2.7.4. Working with the exam officer to provide access arrangements.
  - 2.7.5. provision of additional support with spelling, reading, mathematics, dyslexia or essential skills, hearing impairment, English for speakers of other languages, IT equipment to help candidates achieve their course aims.
- 2.8. Lead invigilator/invigilators:
- 2.8.1. collection of exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam.
  - 2.8.2. collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the exams office.
- 2.9. Candidates:
- 2.9.1. confirmation and signing of entries.
  - 2.9.2. understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.
  - 2.9.3. Ensuring that the conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ regulations.

### **3. The Statutory Tests and Qualifications Offered**

- 3.1. The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the heads of department and Deputy Headteacher responsible for curriculum.
- 3.2. The types of qualifications offered are GCSE, Technical Awards and Level 2 certificates.
- 3.3. The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found online. If there has been a change of specification from the previous year, the exams office must be informed by 06 November by the Head of Department.
- 3.4. Decisions on whether a candidate should not take an individual subject will be taken in consultation with the candidates, parents/carers, head of year, heads of subject and the deputy head.
- 3.5. At Key Stage 3: All candidates will take English, mathematics and science. The school will consider the use of intervention or booster strategies in connection with any candidates who are unlikely to attain the minimum level.
- 3.6. At Key Stage 4: All candidates will be entitled, and enabled, to achieve an entry for qualifications from an external awarding body.

### **4. Exam Seasons and Timetables**

- 4.1. There are internal data captures each year scheduled on the staff calendar. External exams are scheduled in the summer term. All internal exams are held under appropriate conditions by the Heads of Department. Which exam series are used in the centre is decided by the heads of department and the senior leadership team.
- 4.2. Once confirmed, the exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for internal exams and external exams.

## 5. **Entries, Entry Details and Late Entries**

- 5.1. Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the heads of department and the subject teachers. Candidates, or parents/carers, can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal. The centre does accept entries from external candidates.
- 5.2. Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department via email. Late entries are authorised by the exams officer and Senior Leadership Team.

## 6. **Exam Fees**

- 6.1. The centre will pay all normal exam fees on behalf of candidates. Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the centre.
- 6.2. Candidates or departments will not be charged for changes of tier, withdrawals made by the proper procedures or alterations arising from administrative processes provided these are made within the time allowed by the awarding bodies.

## 7. **Equalities Act 2010, Special Needs and Access Arrangements**

- 7.1. Equalities Act: All exam centre staff must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.
- 7.2. Special Needs: A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the SENCO. The SENCO will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs who are embarking on a course leading to an exam, and the date of that exam. The SENCO can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates can be granted during the course and in the exam.
- 7.3. Access Arrangements: All are in accordance with JCQ Access Arrangements document. Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the SENCO. Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the exams officer. Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the SENCO with the exams officer. Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the SENCO with the exams officer. A statement detailing the centres criteria for awarding students the use of word processors for examinations is held by the centre.

## 8. **Estimated Grades**

- 8.1. The heads of department will submit estimated grades to the exams officer when requested by the exams officer.

## 9. **Managing Invigilators and Exam Days**

- 9.1. External invigilators will be used for some internal exams and all external exams. The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the senior leaders. Securing the necessary DBS clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the centre administration. DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre. Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the exams office. Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the headteacher.
- 9.2. The exams officer will book all exam rooms after liaison with other users and make the question papers, other exam stationery and materials available for the invigilator. Site management is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms. The lead invigilator will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines. Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates but must not advise on which questions are to be attempted.
- 9.3. In practical exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.
- 9.4. Exam papers must not be read by subject teachers or removed from the exam room before the end of a session. Papers will be distributed to heads of department 24hrs after the end of the exam session.
- 9.5. A relevant subject teacher may be available to read out any subject-specific instructions and start the exam, if required.

## 10. **Candidates, Clash Candidates and Special Consideration**

- 10.1. The centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and all electronic devices apply at all times. Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.
- 10.2. Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- 10.3. Candidates may leave the exam room for a genuine purpose requiring an immediate return to the exam room, in which case a member of staff must accompany them.
- 10.4. The exams officer will attempt to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of an exam and deal with them in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- 10.5. Clash Candidates: The exams officer will be responsible as necessary for supervising escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays.
- 10.6. Special Consideration
  - 10.6.1. Should a candidate be ill before an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be taken ill during the exam itself or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, the exams officer, or the exam invigilator, to that effect.
  - 10.6.2. The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within three days of the exam, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor.
  - 10.6.3. The exams officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

## 11. **Coursework and Appeals Against Internal Assessments**

### 11.1. Coursework

- 11.1.1. Controlled Assessment will be conducted in accordance with the controlled assessment policy.
- 11.1.2. Candidates who have to prepare coursework should do so by the end of the deadlines set by the head of department.
- 11.1.3. Heads of department will ensure all controlled assessment is ready for despatch at the correct time. The exams officer will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom.
- 11.1.4. Marks for all internally assessed work and estimated grades are provided to the exams office by the heads of department.

### 11.2. Appeals Against Internal Assessments

- 11.2.1. The centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure on this subject, which is available from the exams office. The main points are:
  - appeals will only be entertained if they apply to the process leading to an assessment. There is no appeal against the mark or grade awarded
  - candidates may appeal if they feel their coursework has been assessed unfairly, inconsistently or not in accordance with the specification for the qualification
  - appeals should be made in writing as early as possible and at least by 30 June to the head of centre (or other nominee) who will decide whether the process used conformed to the necessary requirements
  - the head of centre's findings will be notified in writing, copied to the exams officer and recorded for awarding body inspection.

## 12. **Results, Enquiries About Results (EARs) and Access To Scripts (ATS)**

### 12.1. Results

- 12.1.1. Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days either in person at the centre or by completing a form to give consent to a nominated person.
- 12.1.2. Arrangements for the school to be open on results days are made by the exams officer.
- 12.1.3. The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the senior leader.

### 12.2. EARs

- 12.2.1. EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking.
- 12.2.2. If a result is queried, the exams officer, teaching staff and head of centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark at the centre's expense.

- 12.2.3. When the centre does not uphold an EAR, a candidate may apply to have an enquiry carried out. If a candidate requires this against the advice of subject staff, they will be charged.

### 12.3. ATS

- 12.3.1. After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of papers within three days' in receipt of the results. Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained.

- 12.3.2. GCSE re-marks cannot be applied for once a script has been returned.

## 13. **Certificates**

- 13.1. Certificates are presented in person. Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so, ID will be required.
- 13.2. Replacement certificates are only issued if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred. The centre retains certificates for one year.



## Emergency Evacuation Procedure for Examinations

The invigilator must take the following action in an emergency such as a fire alarm or a lock down alert

- Stop the candidates from writing, make a note of the time
- Collect the attendance register in order to ensure all candidates are present once evacuated
- Advise all candidates to leave all question papers and scripts in the exam room
- Evacuate the examination in line with Health & Safety procedure
  - Exams in the sports hall – assemble in the Merryfields car park exiting through the emergency exit at the back of the sports hall
  - Exams in D7 – assemble on the green by the bike area exiting through reception
  - Exams held away from the school site should evacuate candidates to an area a safe distance away from building
- Candidates should remain in silence
- Ensure the candidates are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room to ensure there is not a discussion about the examination
- Make a note of how long the interruption lasted
- When safe to do so upon returning to the examination room allow the full working time set for the examination
- If there are only a few candidates, consider the possibility of taking the candidates (with question papers and scripts) to another place to finish the examination
- Make a full report of the incident, including action taken and send to the relevant awarding body
- Restart the exam