



Exam Policy

Policy adopted by the Senior
Leadership Team: 9th November 2021

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The purpose of this exam policy is:

- to ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interest of candidates
- to ensure the operation of an efficient exam system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.

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 senior leadership team and the exams officer.

Exam responsibilities

Head of centre / Principal

Overall responsibility for the school/college as an exam centre:

- advises on appeals and review of marking
- the head of centre is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document *Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments*.

Exams Officer

Manages the administration of public and internal exams and analysis of exam results:

- 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
- oversees the production and distribution to staff, governors 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
- ensures that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exam timetable that will affect them
- consults with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework/non-examined assessment is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries
- receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts
- 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*
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges
- line manages the senior exams invigilator in organising the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams
- 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
- submits candidates' coursework/non-examined assessment marks, tracks dispatch and stores returned coursework/non-examined assessment and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule
- arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any appeals/review of marking requests
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.

Vice Principal

- Organisation of teaching and learning.
- External validation of courses followed at key stage 4 / post-16.

Heads of Department

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries.
- Involvement in post-results procedures.
- Accurate completion of coursework/non-examined assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer.

Head of Careers

- Guidance and careers information.

Teachers

- Notification of access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- Submission of candidate names to heads of department / faculty.

Director of SEND

- Administration of access arrangements.
- Identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements.
- 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.

Senior Invigilator/invigilators

- Collection of exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam.
- Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the exams office.

Candidates

- Confirmation and signing of entries.
- Understanding coursework/non-examined assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework/non-examined assessment as their own.

The statutory tests and qualifications offered

The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the head of centre, deputy head and the heads of sixth form.

The statutory tests and qualifications offered are GCSEs, A levels and some BTECs.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus for that year. If there has been a change of syllabus from the previous year, the exams office must be informed at the earliest opportunity.

At Key Stage 4

All candidates will be entitled, and enabled, to achieve an entry for qualifications from an external awarding body.

At post-16

From 2017 all A Level subjects will be 2 year courses.

Exam seasons and timetables

3.1 Exam seasons

Internal exams are scheduled in December and March.

All internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

Which exam series are used in the centre is decided by the heads of subject.

3.2 Timetables

The exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for both external and internal exams once these are confirmed.

Entries, entry details, late entries and retakes

4.1 Entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by their subject teachers.

A candidate or parent/carer may request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal, but this is subject to agreement by teaching staff and Head of Year.

The centre may accept entries from external candidates, these are considered on an individual basis.

4.2 Late entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department via staff pigeonholes and staffroom noticeboard.

Late entries are authorised by heads of departments.

4.3 Retakes

As a general rule, all retakes must be paid for by students although the College is prepared to consider individual cases on request.

Retake decisions will be made in consultation with the candidates, subject teachers and the exams officer.

(See also section 5: Exam fees)

Exam fees

GCSE initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

A2 initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the departments or students.

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.

Reimbursement will be sought from candidates who fail to sit an exam or meet the necessary coursework/non-examined assessment requirements.

This fees reimbursement policy will be communicated in writing to candidates and parents/carers of GCSE and post-16 students.

Retake fees for first and any subsequent retakes are paid by the candidates.

(See also section 4.3: Retakes)

Candidates must pay the fee for an enquiry about a result, should the centre not uphold the enquiry and the candidate insist on pursuing the enquiry.

(See also section 11.2: Results, reviews of marking [ROMs])

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), special needs and access arrangements

6.1 DDA

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 extends the application of the DDA to general qualifications. All exam centre staff must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.

6.2 Special needs

A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the Director of SEND and the Educational Psychologist.

The Director of SEND 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 Director of SEND can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates may be granted during the course and in the exam.

6.3 Access arrangements

Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the Director of SEND and the exams officer.

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 exams officer in consultation with the Director of SEND.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the Director of SEND with the exams officer.

Managing invigilators and exam days

7.1 Managing invigilators

External invigilators will be used for exam supervision.

They will be used for all written exams.

The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the exams office.

Securing the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (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 centre administration.

7.2 Exam days

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 senior 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.

In all practical exams subject teachers will invigilate in case of any technical difficulties.

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 at the end of the exam session after the exam scripts have been checked and packaged.

Emergency arrangements

In the event of a fire alarm or bomb alert during an examination, the Invigilator in charge of the exam must take the following action:

- Stop the candidates from writing, making a note of the exact time
- Collect the attendance register and evacuate the examination room, taking the candidates to a safe place, if possible the top car park
- All question papers and examination scripts must be left in the examination room and candidates must leave the room in silence
- Once it is deemed safe to return, candidates must be allowed the full time for the examination
- The examinations officer will make a full report of the incident and send it to the relevant awarding body for special consideration

Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration

9.1 Candidates

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.

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

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.

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.

9.2 Clash candidates

The exams officer will be responsible as necessary for identifying escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays if and when necessary.

9.3 Special consideration

Should a candidate be too ill to sit an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma or be taken ill during the exam itself, it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, or the exam invigilator, to that effect.

Any special consideration claim must be supported by appropriate evidence within five days of the exam, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor.

The exams officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

Coursework/non-examined assessment and appeals against internal assessments

10.1 Coursework/non-examined assessment

Candidates who have to prepare portfolios should do so by the centre-defined date. Work not submitted by this deadline may not be marked.

Heads of department will ensure all coursework/non-examined assessment is ready for dispatch at the correct time and the exams officer will keep a record of what has been sent, when and to whom.

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by the subject teachers.

10.2 Appeals against Internal and Non-examination Assessments

The Joint Council for Qualifications requires schools to have in place a published appeals procedure relating to internal assessment decisions to help ensure that their appeals procedure contains the essential elements of transparency, right of hearing, independence in the hearing, and a written record of outcomes.

- 10.2.1 The Vice Principal will manage the appeals process. They will be responsible for disseminating information to all candidates and their carer/s about the appeals procedures and for informing the Head of centre about the existence and outcome of all such appeals.

- 10.2.2 All appeals concerning internal assessments should be made in writing stating the details of the complaint and the reasons for the appeal, within five working days of receiving the assessment.
- 10.2.3. The teacher(s) concerned in making the assessment will see a copy of the appeal and respond to this in writing, with a copy sent to the candidate.
- 10.2.4. The candidate will have the opportunity to have a personal hearing if they are not happy with the written response they have received and will be given reasonable notice of the hearing date; they will have sight of all relevant documents (e.g. the marks given, the assessments made) to the case in advance of the hearing. Where the candidate is presenting their own case, they will be allowed to be accompanied by a (single) carer/friend. The teacher(s) and candidate will have the opportunity to hear each other's submission to the panel at the hearing.
- 10.2.5. The appeals panel should comprise at least two individuals who have not previously dealt with the particular case. One of the individuals will be a senior member of staff and the second, a Governor.
- 10.2.6. The centre will maintain a written record of all appeals. This will include the outcome of an appeal and reasons for that outcome. The centre should send a copy to the candidate and, where appropriate, to their carer/s within a specified time limit.
- 10.2.7. The centre will inform the Awarding Body if there is any change to an internally assessed mark as a result of an appeal.

Results, reviews of marking (ROMs) and access to scripts (ATS)

11.1 Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days in person at the centre.

Arrangements for the school to be open on results days are made by the exams officer.

The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the head of centre.

The centre aggregates at the end of year 13 for A2 grades.

11.2 ROMs

ROMs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking.

When the centre does not uphold an ROM, 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.

(See section 5: Exam fees)

11.3 ATS

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of papers within three days' scrutiny of the results.

If a result is queried, the exams officer, teaching staff and head of centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a review of marking at the centre's expense.

Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained.

GCSE review of marking cannot be applied for once a script has been returned.

Certificates

Certificates are presented in person at an awards evening. Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have written authorisation to do so.

The centre retains certificates for at least two years.

GCSE Controlled Assessment

Senior leadership team

- Accountable for the safe and secure conduct of Non-examination Assessments. Ensure assessments comply with JCQ guidelines and awarding bodies' subject-specific instructions.
- At the start of the academic year, begin coordinating with heads of department/subject to schedule Non-examination Assessments. (It is advisable that Non-examination Assessments be spread throughout the academic years of key stage 4).
- Map overall resource management requirements for the year. As part of this resolve:
 - Clashes/problems over the timing or operation of Non-examination Assessments.
 - Issues arising from the need for particular facilities (rooms, IT networks, time out of school etc.)
- Ensure that all staff involved have a calendar of events
- Create, publish and update an internal appeals policy for Non-examination Assessments.

Head of department

- Make recommendations on the awarding body and specification for a particular GCSE.

- Ensure that 100% of overall assessment (controlled and/or external assessment) is taken in the exam series within which the qualification is certificated, to satisfy the terminal assessment requirement in accordance with the awarding body specification.
- Standardise internally the marking of all teachers involved in assessing an internally assessed component.
- Ensure that individual teachers understand their responsibilities with regard to controlled assessment.
- Ensure that individual teachers understand the requirements of the awarding body's specification and are familiar with the relevant teachers' notes, and any other subject specific instructions.
- Where appropriate, develop new assessment tasks or contextualize sample awarding body assessment tasks to meet local circumstances, in line with awarding body specifications and control requirements.

Teaching Staff

- Understand and comply with the general guidelines contained in the JCQ publication *Instructions for Non-examination Assessments*.
- Understand and comply with the awarding body specification for conducting Non-examination Assessments, including any subject-specific instructions, teachers' notes or additional information on the awarding body's website.
- Supply to the exams office details of all unit codes for Non-examination Assessments.
- Obtain confidential material/tasks set by awarding bodies in sufficient time to prepare for the assessment(s) and ensure that such materials are stored securely at all times.
- Supervise assessments (at the specified level of control). Undertake the tasks required under the regulations, only permitting assistance to students as the specification allows.
- Ensure that students and supervising teachers sign authentication forms on completion of an assessment.
- Mark internally assessed components using the mark schemes provided by the awarding body. Submit marks through the exams office to the awarding body when required, keeping a record of the marks awarded.
- Retain candidates' work securely between assessment sessions (if more than one).
- Post-completion, retain candidates' work securely until the closing date for enquiries about results. In the event that an enquiry is submitted, retain candidates work securely until the outcome of the enquiry and any subsequent appeal has been conveyed to the centre.
- Ask the Director of SEND for any assistance required for the administration and management of access arrangements.

Exams office staff

- Enter students for individual units, whether assessed by Non-examination Assessments, external exam or on-screen test, before the deadline for final entries.
- Enter students' 'cash-in' codes for the terminal exam series.

- Where confidential materials are directly received by the exams office, to be responsible for receipt, safe storage and safe transmission, whether in CD or hard copy format.
- Download and distribute marksheets for teaching staff to use, and collect and send marksheets to awarding bodies before deadlines.
- On the few occasions where Non-examination Assessment cannot be conducted in the classroom arrange suitable accommodation where Non-examination Assessments can be carried out, at the direction of the senior leadership team.

Director of SEND/additional learning support

- Ensure access arrangements have been applied for.
- Work with teaching staff to ensure requirements for support staff are met.

Signed:

Principal

S Parsons

Exams Officer

S Walker