

Exams Policy & Procedure

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Party responsible: Examinations Officer with Headteacher

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Purpose

The purpose of this exams policy is:

- to ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interests of candidates;
- to ensure the operation of an efficient exams 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.

Where references are made to the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) regulations/guidelines, further details can be found at www.jcq.org.uk.

Exam responsibilities

The Headteacher:

- has overall responsibility for the school as an exams centre and advises on appeals and re-marks.
- is responsible for reporting all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice - refer to the JCQ document [Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments](#).

Exams Officer:

- manages the administration of internal exams and external exams.
- advises the senior leadership team, subject and class tutors, and other relevant support staff on annual exams timetables and procedures as set by the various awarding bodies.
- oversees the production and distribution, to all centre staff 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 exams timetable that will affect them.
- checks with teaching staff that the necessary coursework and/or controlled 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 entry of candidates for their exams.
- receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts and ensures that scripts are dispatched as per the guidelines.
- with the SENCo, administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration following the regulations described on the [JCQ website](#).
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
- recruits, trains and monitors a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams.
- ensures candidates' coursework / controlled assessment marks are submitted, and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- tracks, dispatches, and stores returned coursework / controlled assessments.
- arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any post-results service requests.

Curriculum Area Leaders (CALs) are responsible for:

- guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exams entries or amendments to entries.
- accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the Exams Officer.

- accurate completion of coursework / controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- decisions on post-results procedures.

Teachers are responsible for:

- supplying information on entries, coursework and controlled assessments as required by the Curriculum Area Leader and/or Exams Officer.

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) is responsible for:

- identifying and testing candidates' requirements for access arrangements and notifying the Exams Officer in a timely fashion to allow exam day arrangements to be put in place.
- processing any necessary applications in order to gain approval (if required).
- working with the Exams Officer to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exams rooms.

Lead invigilator/invigilators are responsible for:

- assisting the Exams Officer in the efficient running of exams according to JCQ regulations.
- 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 ensuring their return to the exams office.

Candidates are responsible for:

- the confirmation and signing of entries.
- understanding coursework / controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.
- ensuring they conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ regulations.

Technical Assistants are responsible for:

- scanning Controlled Assessment work for electronic submission to the exam boards within 3 days of notification being received.

Qualifications offered

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Headteacher.

The types of qualifications offered are GCSEs.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus or similar documents for that year. If there is to be a change of specification for the next year, the exams office must be informed by the July prior to first teaching the specification.

Informing the exams office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the CAL.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by the Headteacher in consultation with the teacher and CAL.

Exam series

Internal exams (mock exams) and assessments are scheduled in the Autumn and Spring terms for Year 11, and in the Summer term for year 10.

External exams and assessments are scheduled in the Summer term.

Internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

The Headteacher decides which exam series are used in the centre.

The centre may offer some assessments on an on-demand basis, at the discretion of the Headteacher.

Exam timetables

Once confirmed, the Exams Officer will circulate the exam timetables for internal and external exams at a specified date before each series begins.

Entries, entry details and late entries

Candidates or parents/carers can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal. Final decisions are at the discretion of the Headteacher.

The centre will accept entries from private candidates, under special circumstances, at the discretion of the Headteacher.

The centre does not act as an exams centre for other organisations.

Entry deadlines are circulated to CALs via email and briefing meetings.

CALs will provide estimated entry information to the Exams Officer to meet JCQ and awarding body deadlines.

Entries and amendments made after an awarding organisation's deadline (i.e. late) require the authorisation, in writing, of the Headteacher.

Exam fees

Candidates or curriculum areas 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.

The Exams Officer will publish the deadline for actions well in advance for each exams series.

GCSE entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the centre unless changed as a result of parental or candidate request.

Fee reimbursements are sought from candidates:

- if they fail to sit an exam
- if they do not meet the necessary coursework requirements without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances

Equality Legislation

All exam 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 candidates in accordance with requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies, and JCQ. This is the responsibility of the Headteacher.

Access arrangements

The SENCo will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs and any special arrangements that individual candidates will need during the course and in any assessments/exams.

A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the SENCo.

Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement is the responsibility of SENCo.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the SENCo.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the SENCo.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the SENCo.

Contingency planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Headteacher.

Contingency plans are available via email and briefing meetings and are in line with the guidance provided by Ofqual, JCQ and awarding organisations.

Estimated grades

Curriculum Area Leaders are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the Exams Officer when requested by the Exams Officer.

Managing invigilators

Invigilators (rather than teaching staff) will be used to invigilate external examinations and internal examination for year 11 students, other than in exceptional circumstances.

Teaching and teaching support staff will be used for invigilating internal exams for years 7 to 10 inclusive.

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the HR dept in consultation with the Exams Officer and Headteacher.

Securing the necessary Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the HR dept.

DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the senior leadership team of the school.

Invigilators are recruited, timetabled, trained, and briefed by the Exams Officer.

Malpractice

The Headteacher, in consultation with the Exams Officer, is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

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 staff is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms, and will be advised of requirements two weeks in advance.

Invigilators will start and finish all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates. Any staff present must be in accordance with the rules defined by JCQ concerning who is allowed in the exam room and what they can do.

In practical exams, subject teachers' availability will be in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

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 CALs in accordance with JCQ recommendations and no later than two hours after candidates have completed them.

After an exam, the Exams Officer will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed examination scripts to awarding bodies, working in conjunction with office staff.

Candidates

The Exams Officer will provide written information to candidates in advance of each exam series. A formal briefing session for candidates may be given by the CALs.

The centre's published rules on acceptable dress and behaviour apply at all times. Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.

In an exam room candidates must not have access to items other than those clearly allowed in the instructions on the question paper, the stationery list, or the specification for that subject. This is particularly true of mobile phones and other electronic communication or storage devices with text or digital facilities. Any precluded items must not be taken into an exam room.

Candidates must place any wristwatches on the table in front of them and may not touch them during the exam.

Candidates may take water into the exam room, provided it is in transparent, colourless plastic bottles, from which all labels have been removed.

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Candidates are expected to stay for the full exam time at the discretion of the Headteacher. Candidates eligible for extra time are not required to stay for the whole of their extra time allowance if they finish early.

Note: candidates who leave an exam room must be accompanied by an appropriate member of staff at all times.

The Exams Officer is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day.

Clash candidates

The Exams Officer will be responsible for identifying clash candidates and informing the Headteacher of the implications of clashes. The Exams Officer is responsible for organising supervision for clashes that can be taken care of during the school day. The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring the supervision of students in a secure venue and arranging overnight stays as appropriate.

Special consideration

Should a candidate be unable to attend an exam because of illness, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be ill or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert

the school to that effect. Reception staff are responsible for passing that information immediately to the exams officer.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim to the appropriate awarding body with appropriate evidence within three days of the exam.

The Exams Officer will make a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

Internal assessment

It is the duty of Curriculum Area Leaders to ensure that all internal assessment is ready for dispatch at the correct time. The Exams Officer will assist by keeping a record of each dispatch, including the recipient details and the date and time sent. Reception staff will log receipt of all securely delivered materials.

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by the Curriculum Area Leaders. The Exams Officer will inform staff of the date when appeals against internal assessments must be made by. Any appeals will be dealt with in accordance with the centre's Internal Appeals Procedure (IAP) document.

Technical staff will scan controlled assessment work and save the files in a secure drive, using the appropriate naming criteria as indicated by the awarding bodies, in time for electronic submission to the exam boards within 3 days of notification being received.

Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days:

- collected and signed for in person at the centre or
- by post to their home address or
- collected and signed for by a parent or carer

The results slip will be in the form of a centre produced document.

Arrangements for the centre to be open on results days are made by the Headteacher.

The provision of the necessary staff on results days is the responsibility of the Headteacher.

Enquiries about Results (EAR)

EARs may be requested by centre staff or the candidate following the release of results. The last date for awarding bodies to receive applications for EARs is approximately one month after the release of results, but may change from year to year; the deadline can be found on the Post-Results service section of the JCQ website. A request for a re-mark or clerical check requires the written consent of the candidate, who will be informed of the possibility that their marks and subject grades may be lowered as a result of a review of

marking. A request for a re-moderation of internally assessed work may be submitted without the consent of the group of candidates.

The cost of EARs will be paid by the centre if requested the centre and paid for by the candidate if requested by the candidate.

All decisions on whether to make an application for an EAR will be made by the Headteacher.

All processing of EARs will be the responsibility of the Exams Officer, following JCQ guidance.

Access to Scripts (ATS)

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of written exam papers within four weeks following the release of results. Subject staff will immediately forward any such request to the Exams Officer to allow time for processing before the deadline.

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

An EAR cannot be applied for once an original hard copy script has been returned as its security has been compromised and therefore it can no longer be subject to an EAR.

The cost of ATS will be paid by the centre if requested the centre and paid for by the candidate if requested by the candidate

Processing of requests for ATS will be the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

Certificates

Candidates will receive their certificates

- in person at the centre at Awards Evening or
- collected and signed for (see below)

Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have written authority from the candidate to do so, and bring suitable identification with them that confirms who they are.

The centre retains certificates for 10 years.

A new certificate will not be issued by an awarding organisation.

Headteacher

Exams Officer

Date

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