

EXAMINATIONS POLICY

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This Policy is due for review in December 2021

1. The Centre Examinations Policy

The purpose of this Examinations 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.

The Examinations Policy will be reviewed every year.

The Policy will be reviewed by the Assistant Headteacher (responsible for exams) and the Examinations Officer.

Where references are made to JCQ regulations/guidelines, further details can be found at www.jcq.org.uk.

Exam Responsibilities

The Head of Centre

The Head of Centre has overall responsibility for the school as an exams centre and advises on appeals and reviews of marking.

The Head of Centre is responsible for reporting all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice - refer to the JCQ document *Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments*.

Examinations Officer¹

- manages the administration of external exams and mock exams;
- advises the Senior Leadership Team, subject and class tutors and other relevant support staff on annual exam 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/carers are informed of and understand those aspects of the exam timetables that will affect them;
- checks with teaching staff that the necessary non-examination assessments are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines;

¹ This is the individual to whom the Head of Centre has delegated responsibility for the administration of examinations in their centre.

- 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;
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes;
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges;
- organises the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exam invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams;
- ensures candidates' non-examination assessment marks and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies are submitted correctly and on schedule;
- tracks, dispatches and stores returned non-examination assessments;
- arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team, any post results service requests.

Heads of Department & Heads of Year

Heads of Department & Heads of Year 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 non-examination assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets.

Teachers

Teachers are responsible for supplying information on entries and non-examination assessments as required by the Head of Department and/or Exams Officer.

The Specialist Teacher/ SENDCo

The Specialist Teacher/ SENDCo is responsible for:

- identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements and notifying the Exams Officer in good time so that they are able to process any necessary applications in order to gain approval (if required);
- working with the Exams Officer to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exam rooms.

Invigilators

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:

Candidates are responsible for:

- checking all details on their statement of entry are correct;
- understanding non-examination assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the work as their own;
- ensuring they conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ regulations.

2. Qualifications Offered

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Senior Leadership Team.

The types of qualifications offered are GCSE, Technical Awards, BTEC Level 1 and Level 2, Cambridge Nationals and Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational Awards.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's Year 8 option booklet for that year. If there is to be a change of specification for the next year, the exams office must be informed by the start of the summer term.

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

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by the Head of Department in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team.

3. Exam Series & Timetables

Exam Series

Internal exams (mock or trial exams) and assessments are scheduled in November, February and June.

External exams and assessments are scheduled in the summer exam series.

Internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

The Head of Centre decides which exam series are used in the centre.

Exam timetables

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

4. Entries, Entry Details and Late Entries

Parents/carers can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal in writing to the Head of Year.

The centre does not accept entries from private candidates.

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

Entry deadlines are circulated to Heads of Department.

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

5. Examination Fees

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.

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

GCSE/Technical Awards/BTEC/Cambridge National/Vocational Award entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

6. 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 candidates in accordance with

requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies, and JCQ. This is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team.

Access arrangements

The SENDCo/Specialist Teacher 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 Specialist Teacher/ SENDCo.

Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement is the responsibility of the Specialist Teacher/ SENDCo.

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

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Exams Officer.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the Specialist Teacher/Exams Officer.

Contingency planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

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

7. Managing Invigilators

Internal and external staff will be used to invigilate examinations.

These invigilators will be used for internal and external exams.

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Business Director, HR Manager and the Exams Officer.

Securing the necessary Disclosing Barring System (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the HR Manager.

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

Invigilators rates of pay are set by the Business Director.

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

8. Malpractice

The Head of Centre in consultation with the Exams Officer is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

9. 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 invigilators.

Site management staff are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms, and will be advised of requirements one month in advance.

The Exams Officer or Senior Leadership Team members will start and finish all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

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

Exam papers must not be read by subject teachers or invigilators or removed from the exam room before the end of a session. Papers will be distributed to Heads of Department in accordance with JCQ's recommendations which state *"for confidentiality purposes question papers must not be released to centre personnel until after the awarding body's published finishing time for the examination, or in the case of a timetable variation, until all candidates within the centre have completed the examination"*.

After an exam, the Exams Officer will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed examination scripts to awarding bodies.

10. 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 Head of Year/Assistant Head.

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,

smart watches and other electronic communication or storage devices with text or digital facilities. Any precluded items must not be taken into an exam room.

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 Senior Leadership Team/Exams Officer.

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 arranging any re-timetabled exams due to clashes and informing the candidates of the timings. The Exams Officer will be responsible for organising exams that need to be taken the following day and ensuring the integrity and security of the exam.

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 centre's Exams Officer to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within five days of the exam.

The Exams Officer will make a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body before the awarding body's deadline.

11. Internal Assessments and Appeals

It is the duty of Heads of Department 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.

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by the Head of Department. 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.

12. Results

Candidates will receive an individual statement of results on results days in person at the centre. Results 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 photographic identification with them that confirms who they are.

The centre does not email results or inform candidates of results by telephone.

The statement of results will be in the form of a centre-produced document on headed paper.

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

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

Reviews of Results (RoRs)

RoRs may be requested by centre staff or the candidate following the release of results. A request for a review of marking or clerical check requires the written consent of the candidate, a request for a re-moderation of internally assessed work may be submitted without the consent of the group of candidates.

All decisions on whether to make an application for a RoRs will be made by the Senior Leadership Team.

If a candidate's request for a RoR is not supported, the candidate may appeal and the centre will respond by following the process in its Internal Appeals Procedure (IAP) document.

All processing of RoRs will be the responsibility of the Exams Officer following the 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 ten days of the receipt of results.

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

Reviews of marking cannot be applied for once an original script has been returned.

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

13. Certificates

Candidates will receive their certificates in person at the centre.

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 photographic identification with them that confirms who they are.

The centre retains certificates for 12 months. After that all enquiries will be dealt with by the awarding body.

This policy was reviewed and approved by the Full Governing Board on Wednesday 21st October 2020.