

# Exams Policy

2022-2023

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The policy is next due for review in August 2023.

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.

The exams policy will be reviewed every Autumn Term.

The exams policy will be reviewed by the Head of Centre and the Exams Officer.

Where references are made to JCQ regulations/guidelines, further details can be found at [www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk).

## **Exam responsibilities**

### **The Head of Centre:**

- has overall responsibility for the school/college as an exams Centre and advises on appeals and re-marks.
- is responsible for reporting all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice in accordance with the JCQ document *Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments*.

### **Exams Officer:**

- manages the administration of external examinations.
- advises the senior leadership team, subject and class teachers, 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 timetable for all exams in which candidates will be involved and communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events following the examination entries.
- 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.
- administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ publication A guide to the special consideration process.
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
- manages the recruitment, training, and monitoring of 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.

Subject Teachers are responsible for:

- 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.
- supplying information on entries, coursework and controlled assessments as required by the Exams Officer.

The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) 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 put in place exam day arrangements
- 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 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:

- 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.

## **Qualifications offered**

The qualifications offered at this Centre are decided by the Head of Centre.

The qualifications offered are A Levels and, in some cases, retakes of 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 June 2018.

Informing the Exams Officer of changes to a specification offered by the college is the responsibility of the subject teachers in consultation with the Head of Centre.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by subject teacher in consultation with the Director of Studies and the Head of Centre.

## **Exam series**

Internal exams (mock exams) and assessments are scheduled in April 2018.

External exams and assessments are scheduled in May and June 2018.

Internal, mock exams are, where practicable, held under external exam conditions.

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

The Centre offers some assessments on an on-demand basis. If offered, on-demand assessments can be scheduled only with the agreement of both the Head of Centre and the Exams Officer.

## **Exam timetables**

Once confirmed, the Exams Officer will circulate the exam timetables for 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. However, entries and amendments made after an awarding organisation's deadline require the authorisation, in writing, of the Exams Officer in conjunction with the Head of Centre.

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 subject teachers via e-mail and the college noticeboard.

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

GCSE re-sits/retakes are allowed.

AS re-sits/retakes are allowed.

A level re-sits/retakes are allowed.

Re-sit decisions will be made by the Head of Centre in consultation with the subject teachers.

## **Exam 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 actions well in advance for each exams series.

GCSE entry exam fees are paid by the candidates.

AS entry exam fees are paid by the candidates.

A Level entry exam fees are paid by the candidates.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by candidates.

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.

Re-sit fees are paid by candidates.

## **Equality Legislation**

All Centre staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of any equality legislation, particularly the Equality Act, 2010.

The Centre will comply with all 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 Head of Centre.

## **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 the Exams Officer and the SENCo.

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

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

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

## **Contingency planning**

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Head of Centre.

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

## **Estimated grades**

Subject teachers are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the Exams Officer when requested by the Exams Officer.

## **Managing invigilators**

External staff will not be used to invigilate examinations.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the Head of Centre.

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

## **Malpractice**

The Head of Centre 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.

The Exams Officer or a designated colleague will start and finish all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject teachers may be present of the exam to assist with identification of candidates. Subject teachers may be present if they are designated as invigilators, but they may not invigilate examinations in their own subject area. Any teacher 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. Papers will be distributed to subject teachers in accordance with JCQ's recommendations and no earlier than the following day.

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

## **Candidates**

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

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. No watches may be worn during the exam.

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 lead invigilator.

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

The Exams Officer and the Head of Centre are responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day.

## **Clash candidates**

The Exams Officer will be responsible as necessary for supervising escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays.

## **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 Exam Officer to that effect.

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

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

## **Internal assessment**

It is the duty of subject teachers 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 subject tutor. 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.

## **Results**

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days,

- in person at the Centre
- by post to their home address
- posted (first class)
- sent via email

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 Head of Centre

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

## **Enquiries about Results (EAR)**

EARs may be requested by Centre staff or the candidate following the release of results. A request for a re-mark 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.

The cost of EARs will be paid by the candidate.

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

If a candidate's request for an EAR 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 EARs 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 seven 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.

An EAR cannot be applied for once an original script has been returned.



The cost of EARs will be paid by the candidate, unless it is for teaching purposes, in which case the Centre will pay.

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

## **Certificates**

Candidates will receive their certificates:

- in person at the Centre
- by post to their home address
- posted (first class)
- DHL in the case of international students, on request
- collected and signed for.

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 at least two years.

A new certificate will not be issued by an awarding organisation. A transcript of results may be issued if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred.

*Reviewed: August 2022 by Seán P Buckley and Michael McGrath*

*Next review: August 2023*