

EXAMINATIONS POLICY

WHY DO WE HAVE THIS POLICY?

- ❖ 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 Head of Centre, Senior Leadership Team and the Examinations Officer.

1. Exam responsibilities

Head of Centre/Principal

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

- ❖ advises on appeals and re-marks;
- ❖ the Head of Centre is responsible for reporting all suspicious or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document *Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments*.

Exams Office Manager/Exams Officer

Manages the administration of public and internal exams:

- ❖ 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 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.

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- ❖ 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 expenditure relating to all exam costs/charges;
- ❖ organises the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exam invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams;
- ❖ prepares and presents reports to the Senior Leadership Team 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 marks, tracks despatch and arranges the storage of returned coursework 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 Senior Leadership Team, any appeals/re-mark requests;
- ❖ maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.

Deputy Headteacher is responsible for;

- ❖ organisation of teaching and learning;
- ❖ external validation of courses followed at Key Stage 4/Post-16.

Data Manager is responsible for;

- ❖ preparation and presentation reports to the Senior Leadership Team showing results achieved in relation to expected grades and comparable data for previous years, indicating where future procedural improvements might be made;

Heads of department are responsible for;

- ❖ 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 mark sheets and declaration sheets;
- ❖ accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams office.

Head of Careers are responsible for;

- ❖ guidance and careers information.

Teaching staff are responsible for;

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- ❖ notification of access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course);
- ❖ submission of candidate names to heads of department/faculty.

SENCO is responsible for;

- ❖ 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.

Lead invigilator/invigilators are responsible for;

- ❖ 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 regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.

Administrative staff

- ❖ Support for the input of data;
- ❖ posting of exam papers.

2. The statutory tests and qualifications offered

The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Head of Centre, Deputy Head, Heads of Curriculum, Heads of Department, Heads of Sixth Form and the Senior Leadership Team.

The statutory tests and qualifications offered are GCSE, A level, BTEC, OCR Nationals/Technicals and NOCN qualifications.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published and online prospectus for that year. If there has been a change of specification from the previous year, the exams officer must be informed.

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The school will consider the use of intervention or booster strategies in connection with any candidates who are unlikely to attain the minimum level.

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 it is expected that AS modules will be completed during Year 12.

3. Exam Seasons and Timetables

3.1 Exam Seasons

Internal exams are scheduled in December and June.

External exams are linear, so will be held at the end of a one or two year course of study, i.e. Summer Series (June). The November examination series will be implemented for GCSE Maths and English resits only.

Vocational External Assessments may be scheduled at various points throughout the academic year. The Head of Department will be responsible for informing the Examinations Officer when to enter pupils and the requirements for conducting the examination under JCQ conditions.

All internal exams are held under external examination conditions.

Which exam series are used in the centre is decided by the Head of Centre, Deputy Headteacher, Head of Department and the Senior Leadership Team.

3.2 Timetables

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

4. Entries, entry details, late entries and retakes

4.1 Entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Heads of Sixth Form, Head of Department, Subject Teachers and the Deputy Headteacher.

A candidate or parent/carer can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.

The centre accepts external entries from former candidates only.

4.2 Late entries

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Entry deadlines are circulated to Heads of Departments via noticeboard/email.

Late entries are authorised by Heads of Sixth Form, Head of Department, Exam Officer and Deputy Headteacher.

4.3 Retakes

Candidates in sixth form are allowed any number of resits in GCSE English and maths to achieve a grade.

Candidates are allowed 2 retakes per subject in AS.

Candidates are allowed 1 retake per subject in A2.

Retake decisions will be made in consultation with the candidates, Subject Teachers, Head of Post-16, Exam Officer, Head of Centre, Deputy Headteacher and Head of Department.

(See also section 5: Exam fees)

5. Exam fees

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

AS 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.

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 may be sought from candidates who fail to sit an exam or meet the necessary coursework requirements.

This fees reimbursement policy will be communicated in writing to candidates and parent/carers at the start of GCSE and post-16 courses.

Retake fees for first and any subsequent retakes are paid by the Centre. (See also section 4.3 retakes).

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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: Enquiries About Results (EARs)).

6. 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 SENCO, doctor and the educational psychologist/specialist teacher.

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 candidates what special arrangements 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 SENCO and the Exams' Officer.

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 with the exams officer.

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

7. Estimated grades

Estimated grades

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The Head of department will submit estimated grades to the exams officer when requested by the exams officer.

8. Managing Invigilators and Exam Days

8.1 Managing invigilators

External invigilators will be used for external examination supervision.

The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams' Officer, in liaison with the Personnel Manager.

Securing the necessary DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) 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' Officer

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

8.2 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 Exams Officer or Assistant Exams Officer will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

In practical exams subject teachers may be on hand 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. One examination paper will be released to the Head of Department when all candidates have completed the exam. All other papers will be released 24 hours after the completion date. (JCQ recommendation).

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9. 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.

9.2 Clash Candidates

The exams officer will be responsible, as necessary, for completing the necessary paper work with parents/carers so that they sign to ensure the candidate maintains the security of the examination conditions until such a time as she/he sits the clash exam.

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 apply for special consideration online to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

10. Coursework and Appeals Against Internal Assessments

10.1 Coursework

Candidates who have to prepare portfolios should do so by the end of the course or centre-defined date.

Heads of department will ensure all coursework is ready for despatch at the correct time and the Exams' Officer will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom.

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Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the Exams' Officer by the Head of Subject and the Heads of Department

10.2 Appeals Against Internal Assessments

The centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure on this subject, which is available from the Exams' Officer.

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 by 30th 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.

11. Results, Enquiries About Results (EARs) and Access To Scripts (ATS)

11.1 Results

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

Arrangements for the school to be open on results days are made by the Head of Centre.

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

The centre aggregates at the end of Year 12 for AS grades.

11.2 EARs

EARs 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 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. (See section 5: Exam fees)

11.3 ATS

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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 re-mark 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.

12. Certificates

Certificates are presented in person and must be signed for.

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so.

Certificates may be withheld from candidates who owe fees. A transcript of results may be issued if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred.

The Centre retains certificates for four years.

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