

Policy Title: Examinations Policy	Effective Date:	September 2023
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Introduction

The purpose of this examinations policy is:

- To ensure the planning and management of examinations is conducted efficiently and in the best interests of candidates.
- To ensure the operation of an efficient examinations system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the centre's examination processes to read, understand, and implement this policy.

The examinations policy will be reviewed on a regular basis.

The examinations policy will be reviewed by the Deputy Head in charge of Examinations.

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

Examination Responsibilities

Head of Centre:

- Has overall responsibility for the school as an exams centre.
- Is responsible for reporting all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice - refer to the JCQ guidance.

Examinations Manager (with the support of the Examinations Assistant as appropriate):

- Manages the administration of internal and external exams.
- Advises the senior management 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 of an annual calendar for all exams in which candidates will be involved and communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events.
- Ensures, with the support of other relevant staff, especially Year Heads, that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exams timetable that will affect them.
- 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 exam board/JCQ guidance.
- Administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ publications for access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration.
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- Accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
- Line manages the recruitment, training, and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams.
- Line manages the Examinations Assistant.
- In conjunction with teaching staff, 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 documents the return of coursework/controlled assessments/NEAs back to the faculties concerned.
- Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SMT, any post results service requests.

Heads of Faculty:

- 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 manager.
- Decisions on post-results procedures.
- Accurate completion of coursework / controlled assessment, mark sheets and declaration sheets.

Teachers:

- Supplying information on entries, coursework and controlled assessments as required by the heads of faculty and/or exams manager.

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) and Specialist Teachers:

- Identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements and notifying the exams manager in good time so that they are able to make appropriate arrangements.
- Processing the necessary applications online to gain approval (if required).
- Working with the exams manager to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exams.

Invigilators:

- Assisting the exams manager 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 and other materials in the correct order at the end of the exam and ensuring their secure return to the exams office.

Candidates:

- Confirmation of entries and alerting the Exams Office of any entry errors.
- 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 and instructions from exams staff.

Qualifications Offered

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Head of Centre and Deputy Head in consultation with Heads of Faculty. The types of qualifications offered are varied, but typically include GCSE, GCE, BTEC, and Cambridge Technicals and Nationals. 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.

Informing the exams office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the Heads of Faculty. Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by subject teachers in consultation with the Heads of Faculty, Heads of Year and the Deputy Head.

Entries for additional qualifications, not delivered via timetabled lessons, is at the discretion of the school, and will be decided on a case-by-case basis, with a final decision lying with the Deputy Head who line manages exams. There may be an requirement for students to pay such additional exams.

Examination Series

External exams and assessments are scheduled as required, but typically fall in November, January, May and June. Formal internal examinations in Years 11, 12 and 13 are necessary in order to help students acquire and improve examination technique, which will stand them in good stead for public examinations. The Senior Management Team decides which exam series are used in the centre and when internal assessments are conducted.

The centre does offer some assessments on an on-demand basis. If offered, on-demand assessments can be scheduled only in windows agreed between the Exams Manager and the Faculty Head.

Examination Calendars and Timetables

Once confirmed, the exams manager will circulate the exam timetables for internal and/or external exams at a specified date before each series begins. An annual Exam Calendar will also be produced by the exams manager.

Entries, Entry Details and Late Entries

Candidates or parents/carers can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal. Teaching staff will make the final decision with regard to entries as outlined above. For the complete withdrawal of a subject entry, this must be approved by the Head of Year and the Deputy Headteacher.

The centre accepts limited entries from private candidates. Acceptance is dependent upon entry requirements and resources being available and is at the discretion of the Exams Manager. Typically these are ex-students taking resits, and not members of the general public. For GCSE resits in November, acceptance of ex-students is dependent upon capacity and previous achievement. For ex-students studying in another educational setting, it is normally expected that they would re-sit exams there. Such resits are chargeable.

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

Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of faculty/curriculum via email.

Heads of Faculty will provide estimated entry/intention to enter information to the Exams Manager to meet JCQ and awarding body deadlines.

Entries and amendments made after an awarding organisation's deadline (i.e. late) require the authorisation of Head of Centre and may be charged back to the Faculty concerned, if they were avoidable.

Re-sit decisions will be made by Heads of Faculty in consultation with the Exams Manager.

Examination Fees

Candidates or faculties 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 Manager will publish the deadline for action well in advance for each exams series.

All exam fees are paid by the centre with the exception of resit fees which are normally paid by the candidate and external (private) entries. Exceptions are made at the discretion of the Exams Manager.

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 Head of Centre.

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 SENDCo/specialist teacher.

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

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the SENDCo/specialist teacher.

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

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the Exams Manager with the support of the SENDCo/specialist teacher/TA Manager.

Contingency Planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Deputy Head responsible for exams.

An Examinations Contingency Plan is available and is in line with the guidance provided by JCQ and awarding organisations.

Private Candidates

Managing private candidates is the responsibility of the Exams Manager and are accepted at the discretion of the Exams Manager. Fees will be decided based upon the resources required. See also the Fees section above.

Managing Invigilators

Our employed invigilation team will be used to invigilate examinations. Some other school staff may also be used i.e. TAs and MDSAs.

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams Manager.

Securing the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Human Resources Advisor.

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

Invigilators are recruited, timetabled, trained, and briefed by the Exams Manager with the support of the Examinations Assistant.

Malpractice

The Headteacher, in consultation with the Deputy Head responsible for examinations, is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

Examination Days

The Exams Manager or Examinations Assistant will book all exam rooms via Cover and make the question papers, other exam stationery, and materials available to the invigilators.

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

The Exams Manager/Assistant/Invigilators will start and finish all exams in accordance with JCQ or other appropriate guidelines.

Subject staff may be present at outside the exam venue at the start of the exam to assist with identification and line-up of candidates. Staff entering the exam venue are only permitted in accordance with JCQ protocols.

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

Exam papers must not be read by teachers or other staff 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 and only after all candidates have completed the paper.

After an exam, the Exams Manager will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed examination scripts to awarding bodies and keep papers in the secure store until dispatch.

Candidates

The Exams Manager will provide written information to candidates in advance of each exam series. 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, 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 but can leave early in accordance with JCQ guidelines at the discretion of the invigilator. Candidates who leave an exam room during an exam must be accompanied by an appropriate member of staff at all times.

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

Clash Candidates

The Exams Manager will be responsible as necessary for supervising escorts, identifying a secure venue and agreeing overnight supervision in accordance with JCQ regulations. Any overnight supervision paperwork will be held in the exams office for JCQ inspection.

Special Consideration

Should a candidate be unable to attend an exam because of illness, suffer bereavement or other trauma or disadvantage or be present but disadvantaged in some way during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre's Exams Manager.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within 7 days of the exam. When appropriate and supported by the necessary evidence and/or staff support, the Exams Manager will make a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body by the appropriate deadline.

Internal Assessment / NEAs / Coursework

It is the duty of Heads of Faculty to ensure that all internal assessments are ready for dispatch at the correct time. The Exams Manager will keep a record of each dispatch, including the recipient details, the date sent and method of delivery. The Exams Manager will also keep a log of when such materials are returned and passed back to the faculty. Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by the Heads of Faculty, or in some instances, submitted online by teaching staff. Any appeals will be dealt with in accordance with the centre's Examinations Internal Appeals Procedure.

Results

Candidates will receive individual statements of results on results days

- in person at the centre or
- via email by prior arrangement or
- by post to their home address (posted on results day by first class post)

The results statement 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.

Post Results Services

These 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.

The cost of post results services will be paid by the centre or candidate **as appropriate**, but normally the candidate. Candidates must be made aware of these services and deadlines.

All processing of post results services will be the responsibility of the Exams Manager 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 by the awarding body deadlines. Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. Consent of candidates *must* be obtained. The cost will be paid by the centre or candidate **as appropriate**. Processing of requests for ATS will be the responsibility of Exams Manager.

Certificates

Certificates will be kept securely at all times. Exams Office staff will maintain a record of the receipt and distribution of all certificates. Candidates will receive their certificates in person at the centre. Certificates not collected may be posted by recorded delivery.

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 will retain unclaimed certificates for a minimum of twelve months from the date of issue. After this time certificates must be destroyed in a confidential manner in line with JCQ regulations.