



# Examinations Policy

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## **1. PURPOSE**

To ensure an efficient examinations system operates with clear guidelines for all users.

## **2. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER POLICIES**

This Examinations Policy operates in conjunction with the following protocols:

- Examinations Contingency Protocol
- NEA Protocol ( which contains the legacy Controlled Assessment Protocol)
- Evacuation Protocol
- Internal Appeals Protocol

This Examinations Policy operates in conjunction with the following policies:

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Equality & Diversity Policy.

## **3. EXAM RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **3.1 THE HEADTEACHER:**

- has the 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 in accordance with the responsibility set out in the Joint Council for Qualifications (**JCQ**) document 'Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments'.

- understands the contents of annually updated JCQ publications including:
  - General regulations for approved centres (GR)
  - Instructions for conducting examinations (ICE)
  - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (AA)
  - Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments (SMEA)
  - Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (NEA) (and the instructions for conducting controlled assessment and coursework)
- has the overall QA role as set out in the NEA protocol, which may be delegated to a member of the SLT as appropriate. This role ensures that the centre's *non-examination assessment protocol* is fit for purpose and that the centre's *internal appeals procedures* clearly detail the procedure to be followed by candidates (or their parents/carers) appealing against internally assessed marks.
- ensures the National Centre Number Register Annual Update (administered on behalf of the JCQ member awarding bodies by OCR) is responded to by the end of October confirming they are both aware of and adhering to the latest version of the JCQ regulations and instructions for conducting examinations and approves the Head of Centre formal declaration

## 3.2 DEPARTMENTS

- One person, usually the Head of Department, should be nominated from each department/subject to take responsibility for exam entries/withdrawals. Each department will have a labelled red wallet that they will use to give and receive information. Each department will sign off their final list of entries to verify the accuracy of the list.
- Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates and allocation of any extra resources. 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.
- If a student's entry into any subject at KS4 is in doubt they must meet the criteria given by the Deputy Head to seek authorisation to withdraw from a particular subject. This decision must also be sanctioned by parents, Head of Department, Head of Year following initial and final approval from the Deputy Head.

### 3.2.1 Heads of Department and Heads of Subject:

- ensure teaching staff delivering legacy GCSE qualifications (which contain elements of controlled assessment) follow *JCQ Instructions for Conducting Controlled Assessments* and the specification provided by the awarding body
- ensure teaching staff delivering legacy GCE unitised AS and A-level qualifications and (which include elements of coursework) Entry Level or Project qualifications follow *JCQ Instructions for conducting coursework* and the specification provided by the awarding body

- ensure teaching staff delivering new GCE & GCSE specifications (which include components of non-examination assessment) follow JCQ *Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments* and the specification provided by the awarding body
- for other qualifications, ensure teaching staff follow appropriate instructions issued by the awarding body
- ensure teaching staff inform candidates of their centre assessed marks as a candidate may request a review of the centre's marking before marks are submitted to the awarding body.

### **3.3 THE EXAMS OFFICER:**

- is responsible for the organisation and conduct of all external exams
- understands the contents of, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to, annually updated JCQ publications
- will liaise with SLT to highlight where support is needed with student movement around the site to support examinations running smoothly
- will count in all exam papers and keep them locked away in the secure storage area
- will check all exam papers in good time before the exam date and ensure they are sealed. They will be organised according to date and session in the secure storage area
- will resolve all exam clashes, ensuring they are taken on the same day as far as possible. Moving to a later day will be a last resort after consultation with the staff and students concerned
- will enforce that no exam papers are removed from the exam room before the end of a session
- will ensure all exams are conducted according to the rules laid down by exam boards and within the start and finish times determined by the board
- will ensure any misconduct or irregularity is reported to them as soon as possible, who will then inform the Headteacher to contact the exam board concerned
- will ensure papers are collected and taken to the front office to be secured by Reception staff if they or their deputy is unavailable at the end of any exam
- should ensure students are not allowed to leave an exam unless their exam paper has been picked up and secured by an invigilator. This should never be before one hour after the official start time of the exam
- will ensure that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exams timetable that will affect them
- will collect, collate and provide detailed data on estimated entries
- will check that Disclosure Barring Service (**DBS**) clearance is in place prior to scheduling invigilators. Securing the necessary DBS clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the school's HR Manager
- is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam days
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams

- will arrange for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), any post results service requests
- ensures awarding bodies are notified before the associated entries are submitted, where a candidate is being taught and prepared for examinations and assessments by a relative or where a relative of exams office staff is being entered for examinations and assessments.

### **3.4 INVIGILATORS**

#### **3.4.1 Conduct of Invigilators**

- The Exams Officer will ensure that each exam session will have a designated Senior Invigilator in charge, whose role will be to deploy invigilators and oversee conduct of each.
- The Senior Invigilator will check attendance according to the seating plan.
- Invigilators must not take any work into the exam room but give full attention to the conduct of the examination.
- Invigilators will start and finish exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Invigilators must not move equipment between one student and another. It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure they have the correct equipment. Therefore, rulers and other equipment must not be borrowed from other candidates during the exam.
- For further details regarding invigilator duties, please refer to the separate Invigilator Training Pack issued to all new invigilators and reviewed and revised annually.
- No information about suspected errors in the questions must be announced or given to candidates.
- Students requiring a scribe or reader will also require an invigilator if outside of the main classroom. The invigilator may act as the reader and/or scribe, in a one to one situation only. The school reserves the right to use a shared reader, at a maximum ratio of 1:3, dependent on the level of need. The SENCO will be consulted in all cases of shared readers. The school may also deploy reader software if appropriate.

### **3.5 SENCO**

The SENCO is responsible for:

- ensuring they are familiar with the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications including: *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*
- 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

- processing any necessary applications in order to gain approval from the JCQ, documenting evidence of the normal way of working and completing a Form 8 for each student with access arrangements
- working with the exams officer to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exam rooms
- keeping the data evidence securely in the Learning Support Office
- gathering evidence to support the need for access arrangements for a candidate
- liaising with teaching staff to gather evidence of normal way of working of an affected candidate.

### **3.6 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 or Exams Officer.
- Candidates should ensure they are outside of their exam room in plenty of time (15 minutes before the official start time).
- The school's published rules on acceptable dress and behaviour apply at all times. Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility.
- 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. Particular emphasis and regard must be had to the presence 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.
- Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines. Candidates are expected to stay for the full exam time.
- Candidates who leave an exam room at the discretion of the Exams Officer and in conjunction with the SLT, must be accompanied by an appropriate member of staff at all times.

### **3.7 SITE STAFF:**

- support the Exams Officer in relevant matters relating to exam rooms and resources.

## **4. ENTRIES**

- All candidates will be entered by the due date set by the Exams Officer. This will be approximately three weeks before the date set by the Exam Boards. It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to ensure that the correct lists are issued to the Exams Officer.
- Candidates or parents/carers cannot request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal without discussing and gaining approval from SLT.

- The school does not accept entries from candidates who are not attending the school, with the exception of students who previously attended the school. Further to this, for students on role at the school it does not act as an exams centre for subjects not taught at the school and for which we have no qualified teaching staff in that particular subject.
- The school does not act as an exams centre for other organisations.
- Heads of Department/Curriculum will provide estimated entry information to the Exams Officer to meet JCQ and awarding body deadlines.
- GCSE re-sits are allowed and should be funded by the candidate to cover entry costs (for Sixth Form exceptions, see below). If additional Invigilators are required, the candidate may be required to subsidise this additional cost.
- GCSE re-sit entry exam fees are paid for Sixth Form students not achieving a grade 4 or above in English Language and/or Mathematics. This may be in the November or June exam series and the exam series will be agreed between the student and the Head of Department. They will join a GCSE English or Maths class as part of their agreed programme of study.
- AS re-sits are allowed and should be funded by the candidate to cover entry costs, using the appropriate re-sit form.
- A level re-sits are allowed and should be funded by the candidate to cover entry costs, using the appropriate re-sit form.
- Re-sit decisions will be made by the candidate in consultation with their Tutor and Subject Teacher.
- The school will fund a re-sit if the candidate was absent due to sickness and produced a medical note.
- Re-sit entries will only be made on receipt of the appropriate fee and upon completion of the appropriate re-sit form.
- Sixth Form students who repeat a year in the same subject will be asked to fund any units they want to re-sit in order to improve their overall grade, following the re-sit process. This will be a condition of their entry onto the same course in the September of the relevant academic year.

## **5. 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 school, for first time entry only. The school reserves the right to charge candidates to sit examinations in Specifications not taught by the school.
- A level entry exam fees are paid by the school in Year 13, for first time entry only.
- AS entry exam fees are paid by the school, for first time entry only, in the following circumstances:

- For old modular courses (yet to be reformed and when the AS grade counts towards the overall A level grade).
- For new reformed specifications where the student decides to drop the subject at the end of Year 12. This decision needs to be made prior to the school deadline of end of January and have the support of the Head of Sixth Form.
- The school will not pay for AS entries for reformed subjects where the student is continuing to study at A level in Year 13.
- The school will not accept student/parent funded requests for AS entries for reformed subjects where the student is continuing to study at A level in Year 13. There may be some exceptions to this (for example, an Oxbridge or Medical Application). In these circumstances, applications will be considered on an individual basis and will require the support of the Head of Sixth Form, prior to the school entry deadline date of end of January.
- Re-sit fees of pupil premium students may be funded by the school subject to approval by the Head of Centre.
- Re-sit fees of bursary students may be paid via the bursary funding process if requested by the student and agreed by Head of Sixth Form.
- Fee reimbursements are sought from candidates:
  - if they fail to sit an exam, or;
  - if they do not meet the necessary coursework requirements without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances.

## **6. AMENDMENTS**

The Exams Officer, up to the date set by the board, will accept withdrawals or changes to entries within reason. However, these will not be accepted once the seating has been finalised (approximately 15th March for summer exams). Any late withdrawals/entries/change of tier will be charged to the Department, except in exceptional circumstances.

## **7. ABSENCES**

Exam fees will be chargeable to the student/parent, should a candidate fail to attend an examination without good reason and without informing the school. Misreading the timetable or family holiday will not be accepted as a satisfactory explanation of absence.

## **8. ATTENDANCE**

If attendance for an A/AS/A2 subject falls below 90% for the period prior to the exam period, without good reason e.g. serious accident/illness, the school reserves the right to charge the student for the examination fees.



## **9. COURSEWORK/CONTROLLED ASSESSMENTS, NON-EXAMINATION ASSESSMENTS AND PRACTICAL ENDORSEMENTS**

- It is the responsibility of each Department to ensure all coursework, controlled assessments, marks, endorsement grades and samples are given to the Exams Officer at the correct time. They will be despatched to meet external deadlines, obtaining proof of posting and a log kept in the Exams Office.
- It is the responsibility of each Department to liaise with the SENCO and the Exams Officer for controlled assessments when special access arrangements or lap tops are required. Sufficient notice must be given in order for all the necessary arrangements to be made.

## **10. EQUALITY LEGISLATION**

- All school staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of equality legislation in the provision of examinations.
- The school will comply with the legislation, including making reasonable adjustments to the service that they provide to candidates in accordance with requirements of legislation, awarding bodies, and the JCQ.

## **11. RESULTS**

- Results will only be available for collection on or after the day notified by the exam boards.
- Exam results may only be collected from the school by the student in person.
- If the student is unable to attend to collect their results:
  - In exceptional circumstances the student may give written permission, prior to the results day, to the Exam Officer for his/her results to be collected by a nominated family member.
  - Students may bring a self-addressed envelope to the Exams Office before the end of term if they wish their results to be posted home.
  - Students may bring their email address to the Exams Office before the end of term if they wish their results to be emailed home.

## **12. POST RESULTS**

Subject leads should check for the possibility of a review of marking/re-grade within a few days of scrutiny of the results. Enquiries about results may be requested by teaching staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there may have been an error in marking. In all situations, the candidate must give their signed consent before an application

is made by the Exams Officer. Requests should be made using the appropriate form and payment made in advance where applicable.

### **12.1 Access to scripts**

- After the release of results, subject teachers or candidates may request the return of papers. Requests should be made using the appropriate form and payment made in advance where applicable. School staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. In all access to script requests, the consent of candidates must be obtained.
- The Exams Officer will process any requests for enquiries about results or access to scripts, only on receipt of payment or authorisation to cross-charge the relevant department.

## **13. SPECIAL CONSIDERATION**

Special consideration is a post-examination adjustment that compensates candidates who were suffering from a temporary illness or condition or who were otherwise disadvantaged at the time of the examination. The Exams Officer should be made aware of any possible cases where students feel they have been disadvantaged in the exam room. Once the appropriate evidence has been received and accepted, the Exams Officer will make the necessary application for special consideration on the student's behalf within the Exam Boards timescales. Any requests will be treated with the strictest confidence.

## **14. CERTIFICATES**

- Certificates are presented in person at the presentation evening; they can also be collected by the candidate and signed for after presentation evening.
- Certificates may be collected and signed for on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so with written consent.
- The school retains certificates until they collected and signed for. The school is required to keep certificates for a year after award.

## **15. CONSULTATION**

This policy was discussed and agreed by the SLT and reviewed on behalf of the Governing Board by the Policy Review Committee.

## **16. MONITORING, REPORTING AND EVALUATION**

The Exams Officer is responsible for the monitoring of this policy, reporting directly to the Deputy Headteacher accountable for examinations. The Exams Officer and Deputy Headteacher will conduct a review after each examination season to assess practice and instigate any necessary changes.