



External Exams Policy

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Description: This policy outlines the School's approach to staging external examinations

OUR SCHOOL AIMS

- ❖ *To be a safe and trusted foundation for our pupils to achieve their individual academic, social and creative potential.*
- ❖ *To cultivate the skills, knowledge, self-awareness and academic credentials our pupils will need to confidently meet the challenges of our rapidly changing world.*
- ❖ *To instil and nurture a strong sense of social responsibility, integrity and environmental awareness so our pupils positively contribute to a sustainable and just society.*
- ❖ *To guide each pupil in the discovery, delight and development of their individual gifts, talents and character.*
- ❖ *To create and sustain an inclusive and contemporary school culture, where diversity, difference and individuality are recognised and celebrated.*
- ❖ *To prioritise physical and emotional wellbeing across every facet of our school community.*

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this exam policy is:

- 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.

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

1.3 The exam policy will be reviewed by the Deputy Head (Academic) and Exams Officer each year.

2.0 EXAM RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 The Head of Centre:

- has overall responsibility for the school as an exam centre and advises on appeals and reviews of marking.



- is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice – refer to the JCQ document *Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments*.

2.2 The Exams Officer:

- manages the administration of public 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 awarding bodies
- oversees the production and distribution to staff, and candidates of an a calendar for each exam session 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
- is a point of reference for Heads of Department in relation to coursework being 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
- administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration using the JCQ publications *Access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration*.
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes
- checks the bills sent by the boards relating to exam costs and charges and pass them to the bursar for payment
- tracks despatches and stores returned coursework and any other material required
- arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any appeals/review of marking requests
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams
- collects exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam
- supervises the start of exams
- organises invigilation
- trains invigilators
- liaises with SENDCO

2.3 Heads of Department are responsible for:

- guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries
- MFL speaking exams
- involvement in post-results procedures
- completion of declaration sheets
- entering NEA marks on boards' secure websites



- accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the Exams Officer
- complying with NEA rules and regulations
- completing the GCE/GCSE specification Information collection form in the summer term.

2.4 Teachers are responsible for:

- notification of access arrangements requirements (as soon as possible after the start of the course)
- submission of candidates' names to Heads of Department/school/curriculum

2.5 The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) is responsible for:

- identification and testing of candidates, requirements for access arrangements
- the collating of evidence from teachers for candidates with special needs.
- the 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.

2.6 Invigilators are responsible for:

- supervising candidates according to JCQ rules
- helping out to set up exam room before exams: green cards/ boards/ checking and distributing papers
- collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the exams office via the school secretary.

2.7 Candidates are responsible for:

- checking their own entries
- understanding NEA regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the NEA as their own.

3.0 QUALIFICATIONS

3.1 The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Head of Centre, Deputy Head, Heads of Department and senior leadership team.

3.2 The qualifications offered are GCE, GCSE, EPQ, FSMQ and BTEC Nationals Level 3.

3.3 The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the Year 9 options booklet and the 6th form booklet that are published each year. If there has been a change of specification from the previous year, the exams office must be informed via the GCE/GCSE specification Information Collection Form before the end of the Summer term.

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

3.5 Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken in consultation with the candidates, parents/carers, SENCo, subject teachers and Head of Department.



4.0 TIMETABLES

Once confirmed, the Exams Officer will circulate the exam timetable for external exams.

5.0 ENTRIES, ENTRY DETAILS AND LATE ENTRIES

- 5.1 Candidates are selected for their exam entries by subject teachers.
- 5.2 Candidates or parents/carers can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.
- 5.3 The centre accepts discretionary entries from external candidates but not as a general rule.
- 5.4 The centre does not act as an exam centre for other organisations.
- 5.5 Entry deadlines are circulated to Heads of Department via email and/or staff trays
- 5.6 Late entries are authorised by Heads of Department.

6.0 EXAM FEES

- 6.1 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.
- 6.2 GCE/GCSE entry exam fees are paid by parents.
- 6.3 Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the departments or the candidates.
- 6.4 Re-sit fees are paid by parents.

7.0 EQUALITY ACT 2010

- 7.1 All exam centre staff must ensure that they meet the disability provisions under the Equality Act 2012 which replaced the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), extended in 2005, and the Disability Equality Duty (DED), introduced in 2006.
- 7.2 The Equality Act introduced measures aimed at eliminating the discrimination often faced by disabled people. The main provisions of the Act give protection to disabled people in the areas of employment and education.
- 7.3 A person has a disability for the purposes of the Equality Act if s/he has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on her/his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
- 7.4 The centre will meet the requirements of the Equality Act by ensuring that the exams centre is accessible and improving candidate experience. This is the responsibility of the Head of Centre, Deputy Head, heads of curriculum, Exams Officer and SENDco.

8.0 ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

- 8.1 The SENDCO 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 SENDCo can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates can be granted during the course and in the exam.



- 8.2 A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the SENDCO.
- 8.3 Making applications online for access arrangements for candidates is done jointly by the Exams Officer and the SENDCO. Gathering evidence to make applications for access arrangements is the responsibility of the SENDCO. Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the SENDCO.
- 8.4 Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Exams Officer.
- 8.5 Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the Exams Officer

9.0 CONTINGENCY PLANNING

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Deputy Head (Academic) and the Exams Officer. See Examination Contingency Plan.

10.0 MANAGING INVIGILATORS

- 10.1 External invigilators are used to invigilate examinations.
- 10.2 New invigilators have to attend a training session run by the Exams Officer.
- 10.3 Recruitment of support staff to be invigilators is the responsibility of the HR manager.
- 10.4 Securing the necessary Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the HR manager.
- 10.5 Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Exams Officer
- 10.6 Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the HR Manager.
- 10.7 Existing invigilators have to attend an update training session every year before the summer exams session.

11.0 MALPRACTICE

The Head of Centre, or his delegate, is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

12.0 EXAM DAYS

- 12.1 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.
- 12.2 The maintenance team is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.
- 12.3 The Exams Officer will supervise the start of all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines. This will on occasions be delegated to an invigilator.
- 12.4 Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates but must not advise on which questions or sections are to be attempted.
- 12.5 In practical exams subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.
- 12.6 Exam papers must not be read by subject teachers or removed from the exam room before the end of a session. Papers will be distributed to Heads of Department once every candidate in the centre has sat the exam.



- 12.7 A relevant subject teacher may be available to read out any subject-specific instructions and start the exam, if required.
- 12.8 IT technicians are responsible for checking and setting up laptops following specific requests from exam officer. They are also responsible for printing off scripts. They assist with BTEC Media exam and MFL listening exams to check that all equipment is working. They assist the Exam Officer with downloading PDFs from boards secure websites and installing them on laptops.

13.0 CANDIDATES

- 13.1 The centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and other electronic devices apply at all times.
- 13.2 Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility, and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.
- 13.3 Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- 13.4 Candidates are expected to stay for the full exam time.
- 13.5 Candidates may only leave the exam room for a genuine purpose and are required to return immediately to the exam room. They must be accompanied by a member of staff at all times.
- 13.6 The Exams Officer is responsible for reporting late or absent candidates on exam day to the Deputy Head (Academic) or the Deputy Head (Pastoral) who will then pursue the matter.
- 13.7 For clash candidates, the supervision of escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight supervision is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.
- 13.8 Should a candidate be ill before an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be taken ill during the exam itself or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, the Exams Officer, or the exam invigilator, to that effect.
- 13.9 The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within three days of the exam, for example, by providing a letter from the candidate's doctor.
- 13.10 The Exams Officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

14.0 INTERNAL ASSESSMENTS AND APPEALS

- 14.1 NEA replaces the largely discontinued term coursework.
- 14.2 It is the duty of Heads of Department to ensure that all NEA 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.
- 14.3 Pupils are informed of their NEA marks (see document – Procedure for Reviews of Marking of Centre Assessed Marks which also explains the process for managing appeals against centre assessed marks)

15.0 RESULTS

- 15.1 Candidates will receive individual result slips on results days in person at the centre. Results which have not been collected are sent by post to pupils.



- 15.2 Arrangements for the centre to be open on results days are made by the Deputy Heads.
- 15.3 The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the senior leadership team.

16.0 POST-RESULTS SERVICES

- 16.1 Parents and candidates are informed about EARs, ATS fees/ services/ deadlines at the end of the summer term by exams officer.
- 16.2 EARs requests from parents are discussed with Heads of Department and parents. Once the unit(s) for review of marking have been agreed, they are forwarded to exams officer who request them. Parents are charged for EARs. The candidate/parent's consent is required before any EAR is requested.
- 16.3 In the case of review of moderation, if JCQ guidelines state (as was still the case for the November 2018 series) that candidates published grades are protected, pupils' consent is not requested. This is reviewed when JCQ Post Results Services (information and guidance to centres) for the relevant session is published.
- 16.4 Parents/ Heads of Department may request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes for which their department will be charged. Pupil's consent is required before a script request. When scripts are requested by parents, they are charged to them.

17.0 CERTIFICATES

- 17.1 GCSE Certificates are handed out during Celebration Assembly (normally timetabled in November). The exam officer attends this assembly and keeps a record of pupils who have collected their certificates. Absent pupil on celebration assembly are handed in their certificate by the Exam officer in form time at next opportunity. A record is made of this.
- 17.2 For candidates who have left the school certificates are posted (recorded delivery). Receipts showing that certificates have been sent to the pupils' addresses are kept. If candidates are sent back to school, the exam officer contacts pupils/parents to arrange alternative delivery method.
- 17.3 On occasions where a pupil does not leave a forwarding address because parents have not paid fees and do not want the school to follow this up, pupils' certificates are destroyed after one year and a record is made by the exam officer.
- 17.4 Certificates cannot be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, unless they have been authorised to do so.

Last reviewed November 2024

Next review due September 2025