

Examinations Policy

1 Exam Responsibilities

Head of centre

Overall responsibility for the school as an exam centre:

- Advises on appeals and re-marks.
- Responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document *suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments*.

Exams Officer

Manages the administration of public and internal exams and analysis of exam results:

- 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 of staff, governors and candidates, of dates 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 and submits data for estimated entries, where needed.
- Receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts.
- 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 expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
- Organises the training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams.
- Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any appeals/re-mark requests.
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.
- Updates SLT and staff on changes to JCQ regulations.

Deputy Head

- Organisation of teaching and learning.
- External validation of courses followed at Key Stage 4/post-16.

Heads of department/school/curriculum

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries.
- Ensures coursework / internal assessments/non examination assessments are carried out in accordance with the latest JCQ regulations.
- 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 officer.
- Involvement in post-results procedures.

Head of careers

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- Guidance and careers information and involvement in post-results support.

Teachers

- Liaise with Assistant Exams Officer regarding the need for specific access arrangements for individual students (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- Submission of candidates' names to heads of department/Exams Officer.
- Responsible for checking and signing that all mark sheets are correct before entry submission.
- Informing the Exams officer before the deadline of entry amendments.

SENCO

- Administration of access arrangements.
- Adhere to and implement current JCQ regulations regarding 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

- Collection of exam papers and other materials from the exams office before the start of the exam.
- Ensuring exams are conducted in accordance with current JCQ regulations and reporting any suspected incidences of malpractice immediately.
- 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 checking of entries.
- Reading and following the JCQ regulations regarding candidates in exams / assessments.
- Understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.

2 The qualifications offered

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the head of centre, heads of department and the senior leadership team.

The qualifications offered are BTEC, GCSE and Entry Level.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus for that year.

Decisions on whether a candidate should not take an individual subject or qualification will be taken in consultation with the candidates, parents/carers, subject teachers and the heads of subject.

At Key Stage 4

All candidates will be entitled, and enabled, to achieve an entry for qualifications from an external awarding body.



3 Exam seasons and timetables

Exam seasons

- Internal exams are scheduled in November/December, February/March and May/June (Year 10).
- External GCSE exams are scheduled in May/June, with other exams possible throughout the year.
- Controlled Assessments may be scheduled for any dates in term time.
- All internal exams are held under external exam conditions (in Year 11 and at the end of Year 10).

The exam series used in the centre is decided by the heads of faculty and heads of subject.

Timetables

Once entries are confirmed, the exams officer will print off and circulate a Statement of entry for each candidate and as soon as possible the exam timetables for external exams.

Subject teachers will notify students of dates and procedures for Controlled Assessments.

4 Entries, entry details and late entries

Entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the heads of department and the subject teachers. Candidates, or parents/carers, can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal after consultation with the appropriate subject teacher. However, fees may be payable (see 5 below).

The centre does not usually accept entries for external candidates.

Late entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department.

Late entries and amendments are authorised by the heads of department and exams officer, and may be charged to the Faculty or parent/carer.

5 Exam fees

The centre will pay all normal exam fees on behalf of candidates.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the Faculty concerned or by the parent/carer requesting a change.

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 constraints allowed by the awarding bodies.

If a student is taking additional exams, or taking GCSEs early, the cost of these is usually paid by the parents / carers. If a candidate is withdrawn after the exam boards withdrawal / amendment deadline date then the exam entry must still be paid. Additional fees may also be payable in respect of some exams.



6 The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 states that the awarding bodies have a duty not to discriminate against individuals in conferring qualifications. They must make reasonable adjustments where a candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 and would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled. The Head of centre, SLT, SENCO and if appropriate, the SEN Governor must familiarise themselves with the contents of the JCQ regulations 'Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties'. These staff and the exams officer, must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law. The SENCO will ensure that Access arrangements are awarded in conjunction with the JCQ regulations and the Disability Act 2010 and that the student has a substantial disability 'beyond the limitations that go beyond the normal differences in ability that exist among people', a long term disability 'that has existed for at least 12 months' and that a substantial history of need and provision can be proven. The Access arrangements must be a candidate's normal way of working with the centre and the centre must provide evidence of need to reflect this. Access arrangements 'cannot suddenly be given to the candidate at the time of his/her provision.'

Special needs

A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the SENCO and educational psychologist/specialist teacher. The Centre ensures that all assessments are carried out by suitably qualified professionals. Copies of the relevant qualifications are kept on file by the Exams officer. The SENCO administers or oversees all testing procedures. The SENCO ensures that all qualifying students receive the appropriate support within the centre and for examinations, tests and assessments and in conjunction with the exams officer that all centre staff are aware of these. Follows JCQ regulations concerning access arrangements. Appropriate testing is used for Readers / scribes/ word processor use/ modified papers / overlays. Medical evidence may be requested at an appropriate level for these. For requests such as small group / separate invigilation, certain access arrangements such as readers / scribes are seated in small groups. Exam anxiety is NOT a sufficient need nor is a Doctor's note sufficient evidence of need. As well as established need, there would need to be a letter from CAMHS, a NHS psychiatrist, a qualified counsellor AND recognisable difficulties identified by the SENCO, form tutor, HOY that the candidates is unable to sit in large groups.

Access arrangements application

Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the SENCO with the assistance of the Exams officer.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the Exams Officer using Form 8 completed by the SENCO.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Exams Officer with other designated staff.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the Exams Officer with other designated staff.

If you wish to appeal against a decision for Access arrangements, please contact in the first instance the SENCO, who will be able to discuss the basis for which the access arrangements were approved / not approved. If you are still not satisfied, please contact the head of Centre who can investigate further. The Centre will record all appeals and respond within a suitable time frame.

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7 Estimated grades

Estimated grades (Key Stage 4) / Teacher Assessments (Key Stage 3)

The heads of department, heads of faculty and the heads of subject will submit estimated grades to the exams officer when requested by the exams officer.

8 Managing invigilators and exam days

Managing invigilators

- External invigilators will be used for the majority of internal exams and all external exams.
- The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of SLT with advice from the Exams officer.
- Securing the necessary DBS clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the centre administration. Without suitable DBS clearance an invigilator will not be approved to invigilate within the Centre. DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre.
- Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the exams office.
- Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the centre administration.

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 lead invigilator will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates but must not advise on which questions are to be attempted or have access to the exam papers.
- Where possible candidate photos will be available to assist invigilators with the identification of students. External candidates are only accepted if they are members of staff / exceptional circumstances (if the awarding body accepts external candidates for that examination) they will be required to present photo ID to the invigilators if requested and to abide by the JCQ regulations.
- In practical exams subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.
- Exam papers must not be removed from the exam room before the end of a session. Papers will not be distributed to heads of department until up to 24 hours after the end of the exam session.
- A relevant subject teacher, at the request of SLT, may be asked to read out any subject-specific instructions and start the exam, if required.

9 Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration

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.
- The exams officer will attempt to contact any candidate, who is not present at the start of an exam, where it is possible to do so, and deal with them in accordance with JCQ guidelines.



Clash candidates

The exams officer will be responsible as necessary for arranging supervision, supervising escorts, identifying a secure venue, arranging overnight stays and ensuring the correct forms are completed.

Special consideration

- Should a candidate be ill before an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be taken ill during the exam itself or otherwise severely 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.
- The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within three days of the exam, for example a letter from the candidates' doctor.
- The exams officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam for their consideration.

10 Coursework & appeals against internal assessments/non-examination assessments

Coursework

- Candidates who have to prepare coursework should do so by the deadlines set by the Faculty concerned.
- Heads of Faculty will ensure all coursework is ready for dispatch at the correct time. The exams officer may request a record of what has been sent when and to whom.
- Marks for all internally assessed work and estimated grades should be provided to the exams office by the subject teachers and the heads of Faculty, if requested.

Appeals against internal assessments

The centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure on this subject, which is available on the college website.

11 Results, enquiries about results (EARS) and access to scripts (ATS)

Results

- Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days either in person at the centre or by post to their home addresses (candidates to provide sae). No results are given by telephone. Results MAY be emailed to the candidate in the afternoon under exceptional circumstances. A candidate may request their results to be picked up by another person, in this case the Exams Officer would need a signed letter or email from the student stating that they give permission and naming the person collecting.
- Arrangements for the school to be open on results days are made by the exams officer.
- The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the exams officer.

EARs (Enquiries about results)

- EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. Only the Centre can submit an appeal.
- If a result is queried, the exams officer, teaching staff and head of centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark. Advice should always be sought before requesting a remark. The cost of remarks varies between each awarding body and the cost of a remark is paid for by the parent / carer. In exceptional circumstances the school may fund the cost of a remark. All remarks



require the written / emailed permission of the student, not the parent/carer. Candidates must be aware that marks and therefore grades can go down, remain the same or improve. This statement of awareness must be given alongside the candidate's written permission.

- The centre usually requests an EAR service 2 (post results review of marking), this is a clerical check of the marks and a check that the agreed mark scheme has been applied correctly. For an additional cost the script can be requested alongside an EAR 2 request. There is a deadline for all EARs to be received. This will be available on the schools website. If the Centre does not agree with a request for a re mark, the candidate may appeal through the Centre provided the relevant payment and candidate permission is received. If after a remark you still disagree with the result of the Examining body, the appeals process is available to centres or external candidates who remain dissatisfied after receiving the outcome of an enquiry about results. The appeal must be lodged within 14 days of the result of the EAR, the request must be in writing to the Head of centre before this deadline, outlining the grounds for an appeal. This does not involve further reviews of the marking. Centres or external candidates should refer to the JCQ publication, a guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes which is available on the JCQ website <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/appeals>. The above-mentioned booklet provides full details of the awarding bodies' appeals processes. Only the Head of a Centre or an external candidate can appeal to the relevant awarding body. Awarding bodies may charge for this.

ATS (Access to scripts)

- After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of papers within three days' scrutiny of the results. There is a fee payable for this service. Please note re-marks cannot be applied for once a script has been returned. Again the written/emailed permission of the student is required.
- Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained.

(See also section: Exam fees)

12 Certificates

- Certificates are presented in person at the Certificate/ Presentation Evening or collected and signed for in person after this date.
- Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so, in writing, the centre informed and the person collecting the certificates named and the person collecting has photo ID on them.
- Replacement certificates are the responsibility of the student, these can be obtained from the relevant awarding body, not through the centre. Awarding bodies usually make a charge for the replacement of lost / damaged certificates.
- The centre retains certificates for at least six years.

