



**Examinations Policy
2023-2024**

Rationale

The purpose of this exam 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 efficient examination systems with clear guidelines for all relevant stakeholders.
- To ensure the examination centre is run in accordance with JCQ guidance so as to remain compliant.

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

This examination policy will be reviewed annually.

This examination policy will be reviewed by the head of centre, Examinations Officer and the governing body.

1. Exam Responsibilities

Head of centre

Overall responsibility for the school as an exam centre:

- Head of Centre to sign the declaration as part of the National Centre Number Register Annual Update, that all reasonable steps have been or will be taken to ensure that all candidates at the centre have had, or will have, the opportunity to take the Spoken Language Endorsement.
- The head of centre is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document "*Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments.*"
- Advises on appeals and re-marks

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 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 controlled assessments and Non-examination assessments are 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.
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- Accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
- Line manages the exam invigilator, organises the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams.
- Ensures that invigilators are annually briefed on the JCQ 'Ice' booklet regulations.
- Prepares and presents reports to the SLT showing results achieved in relation to expected grades and comparable data for previous years, indicating where future procedural improvements might be made.
- Oversees the submission of candidates' controlled/ non-examination assessment marks, tracks despatch and stores returned controlled assessments and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- Makes applications for special consideration and reasonable adjustment in line with JCQ guidance.
- 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.

Deputy Head / Senior Leadership Team link

- Organisation of teaching and learning.
- External validation of courses followed at key stage 4 / post-16.
- Oversee appeals procedure regarding internal assessments and Post results services.

Heads of subject

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries.
- Involvement in post-results procedures.
- Accurate completion of controlled/ non-examination assessment mark sheets or online input of marks to awarding bodies and declaration sheets.
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer.
- Organisation of internal moderation and standardisation of internal assessments prior to submission.
- Anything else deemed necessary by the Head or exams officer.

Careers lead

- Guidance and careers information.

Teachers

- Notification of access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- Submission of candidates' names and tiers of entry to Heads of subject.
- Responsible for delivery and marking of internal assessments.

SENCO

- Administers access arrangements using the *JCQ Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments regulations*.
- Identification and testing of candidates, requirements for access arrangements.
- Applies for access arrangements for individual students.
- Informs Examinations Officer of the access arrangements awarded to candidates prior to the examinations.
- 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 and complete their examinations.

Lead invigilator/invigilators

- Collection and checking of exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the examination.
- Supervision of candidates whilst entering, during and leaving the examination room(s).
- Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the examination and their return to the exams office.

Candidates

- Confirmation and signing of entries.
- Understanding controlled assessment and non-examination assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the controlled assessment as their own.

2. The Statutory Tests and Qualifications Offered

- The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Head of centre and the Heads of Department.
- The statutory tests and qualifications offered are, GCSE and Entry Level, BTEC first award and Cambridge Nationals.
- The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus for that year. If there has been a change of syllabus from the previous year, the exams office must be informed as soon as possible.
- Decisions on whether a candidate should not take an individual subject or all NCTs will be taken in consultation with the candidates, their parent/guardians, subject teachers and the heads of subject (see entry policy).
- All candidates will be entitled, and enabled to, achieve an entry for qualifications from an external awarding body.

3. Exam Seasons and Timetables

3.1 Exam seasons

- Internal exams are scheduled in November, January, February, March, May & June.
- External exams are scheduled in January, May & June.
- All internal exams are held under external exam conditions.
- Which examination series are used in the centre is decided by the Head of centre and the Heads of subject.

3.2 Timetables

Once confirmed, the exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for internal exams and external exams. This will usually occur in the first week of the September term.

4. Entries, Entry Details and Late Entries

4.1 Entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Heads of subject and the subject teachers (see detailed entry policy). Candidates, or parents/carers, can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal (see detailed entry policy). The centre does not accept entries from external candidates.

4.2 Late entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to Heads of subject via e-mail. Late entries are authorised by the SLT link, Heads of subject and the Examinations Officer.

5. Exam Fees

The centre will pay all normal exam fees on behalf of candidates. However, these fees will be reclaimed in the case of non-attendance without good reason. Late entry or amendment fees may be paid by 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.

6. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), Special Needs and Access Arrangements

6.1 DDA

The Equality Act 2010 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 (see DDA Policy).

6.2 SEND

A candidate's SEND requirements are determined by the SENCO. The SENCO will inform subject teachers of candidates with SEND who are embarking on a course leading to an exam, and the date of that exam. The SENCO can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates can 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 Specialist teacher.
- 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

The Heads of subject will submit estimated grades to the exams officer via the STEP process recording system.

8. Managing invigilators and exam days

8.1 Managing invigilators

- External invigilators will be used for internal exams and external exams.
- The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the exams office.
- Securing the necessary DBS clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the exams office.

- Invigilators are timetabled, trained in accordance with JCQ regulations, and briefed annually by the exams office.
- Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the LA.

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 lead invigilator will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Subject staff/student support 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.
- In practical exams subject teachers/IT technicians 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.
- Papers will be distributed to heads of subject following JCQ guidance.

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 unless the items have been handed in for safe keeping by the invigilators prior to the start of the exam.
- 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 invigilation staff must accompany them.
- Members of the Leadership Team / Head of Year are responsible for interviewing candidates who are late for their exams, or do not turn up at all.

9.2 Clash candidates

The Examinations Officer will be responsible as necessary for supervising escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays.

9.3 Special consideration

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.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within three days of the exam, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor.

The exams officer will then forward a completed on-line special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

10. Controlled Non-examination assessment and Appeals Against Internal Assessments

10.1 Controlled Assessments

- SLT and heads of subject are sent electronic versions of JCQ regulations relating to controlled assessment and non-examined assessments each September. (see attached)
- Staff responsibilities regarding controlled assessments and non-examined assessments are outlined in a policy attached
- Students are informed of JCQ regulations relating to controlled assessments and non-examined assessments via JCQ information to candidates' documents, usually through their English lessons in September (see attached).
- Candidates who have to prepare controlled/ non-examination assessments should do so by the end of the course.
- Heads of subject will ensure all controlled assessments are ready for despatch at the correct time. The Examinations Officer will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom. Marks for all internally assessed work are entered online and a copy provided to the exams office by the heads 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 Examinations Manager / Officer.

The main points are:

- Appeals will only be considered 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 at least 2 weeks before the last external exam in that subject 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 days either in person at the centre or by post to their home addresses (candidates to provide S.A.E.).
- Arrangements for the school to be open on results day are made by the exams officer.
- The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the exams officer.

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.
- If a result is queried, the exams officer, teaching staff and head of centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a review of marking at the centre's expense.
- 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.

11.3 Appeals against decisions taken in relation to EAR's

The centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure on this subject, which is available from the exams office.

The main points are:

- Appeals will only be considered if they apply to the process leading to the decision to support an EAR.
- Candidates may appeal if they think that the criteria used to raise an appeal have not been applied fairly.
- Appeals must be made in time for the appeals procedure to reach a conclusion before the Awarding Body deadlines.

11.3 ATS

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of papers within three days' scrutiny of the results.

Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the written consent of candidates must be obtained.

GCSE reviews of marking cannot be applied for once a script has been returned. (See also section 5: Exam fees)

12. Certificates

- Certificates are presented in person or posted (recorded delivery).
- Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, providing that a signed letter of consent has been provided.
- Replacement certificates are only issued if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred.
- The centre retains certificates for one year after which they are destroyed confidentially.

(ICE 12.3)

Centres must ensure that the testing of invigilators' competence and their understanding of these regulations is rigorous. This must also extend to those facilitating an access arrangement

(ICE 5.1)

If it is subsequently identified following the second pair of eyes check that the wrong question paper packet has been opened, it must be resealed. The incident must be reported to the relevant awarding body's Malpractice Investigation Team immediately

(ICE 5.3b)

the question paper packet must be opened in the secure room and not in the examination room(s). The question paper packet must be re-sealed and placed back into the centre's secure storage facility. Unless the question papers being removed are required for an alternative site (see paragraph 11.3), they must not leave the secure room any earlier than 60 minutes prior to the awarding body's published starting time for the examination;

(ICE 7.1)

Candidates must not be entered for the same subject at the same qualification level with more than one awarding body in the same series. Please see paragraph 5.6(g) of the JCQ publication General Regulations for Approved Centres:

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>

(ICE 13.6)

Where a person is appointed to facilitate an access arrangement, i.e.

- a) a Communication Professional;
- b) a Language Modifier;
- c) a practical assistant;
- d) a prompter;
- e) a reader; or
- f) a scribe;

he/she is responsible to the exams officer and must be acceptable to the head of centre. The person appointed must not normally be the candidate's own subject teacher or teaching assistant. Where the candidate's own subject teacher or teaching assistant is used, a separate invigilator must always be present. The person appointed must not be a relative, friend or peer of the candidate. A private tutor cannot facilitate an access arrangement.

(ICE 19.1)

Candidates are under formal examination conditions from the moment they enter the room in which they will be taking their examination(s) until the point at which they are permitted to leave. Candidates must not talk to, attempt to communicate with or disturb other candidates once they have entered the examination room.

Candidates must not open the question paper until the examination begins.

(ICE 27.1)

Exam office staff, including invigilators, must ensure scripts are handled securely at all times.

(ICE 27.4)

Centres must ensure that scripts are always kept in the secure room until as close to the collection time as possible. Script packages must not be left unattended at the collection area.

(ICE 31.1)

Question papers must not be released to centre personnel until after the awarding body's published finishing time for the examination or, in the case of a timetable variation, until all candidates within the centre have completed the examination. For CCEA examinations, question papers must not be released until 24 hours after the published finishing time for the examination.

Appendices:

Information for candidates: For non-examination assessments

Information for candidates: For written examinations

Information for candidates: For on-screen tests

Warning to candidates

No mobile phones poster

Instructions for conducting controlled assessments

Instructions for conducting controlled assessments (legacy GCSE qualifications)

Exams – Evacuation Procedures

Centre Emergency Evacuation Procedure

Fire Assembly Point Map

School and College responsibility for autumn exams