



# Examinations Policy

<b>Start Date:</b>	<b>Autumn 2021</b>
<b>Date of Next Review:</b>	<b>Autumn 2022</b>
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<b>Responsible Committee:</b>	<b>Education Committee</b>

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## **Aims & Preamble**

- To ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interests of candidates.
- To ensure the operation of an efficient exam system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.
- To ensure that JCQ requirements on the Conduct of Exams are adhered to.

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

This Exam Policy will be reviewed annually by the Head of Centre and the Examinations Officer.

## **A. Monitoring & Evaluation**

This Policy will be monitored and evaluated annually by the Governors' Education Committee.

## **B. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Roles and responsibilities of the Head of Centre - Principal**

- It is the responsibility of the Head of centre to ensure that all staff comply with the JCQ Instructions for conducting examinations.
- Advises on appeals process and review of marking of scripts.
- The Head of Centre is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Reference will be made to the JCQ document *Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments*.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of the Examinations Officer**

- Manages the administration of public and internal exams and initial analysis of exam results.
- Manage the Examinations Administrator.
- Advises the Senior Leadership Team, subject teachers, form tutors and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and 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/internal 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.
- Administers access arrangements in conjunction with the SEND department and assists the SENCO in making 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.
- Line manages the team of exams invigilators in organising the recruitment, training and monitoring the conduct of exams.
- Submits candidates' marks, tracks despatch and stores returned assessments and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards any appeals/re-mark requests.
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of the Examinations Administrator**

- To assist with the line management of all examination invigilators, including their induction, training, timesheets and rotas.
- To keep up to date records and procedure for JCQ onsite inspection.
- To ensure that examination papers and documentation are securely stored as per the examination board requirements.
- To liaise with examination boards and relevant staff in relation to internal assessments, examination timetable clashes and special requirements for SEND students.
- To manage conflicts of interest, maintaining clear records for inspection and informing the awarding bodies where necessary
- To set up exam venues as per the examination board requirements.
- To co-ordinate the posting of coursework and examination papers.
- To maintain and update information held on the school database systems relating to assessment and examinations.

- To ensure that statutory returns, which are relevant to the area, are completed accurately and within deadlines.
- To provide training for staff relating to assessment and examination processes and protocols and create instruction manuals to be used by staff.
- To be available immediately prior to and on results days in order to process and issue examination results to staff and students as per examination boards requirements and school policies and procedures.
- To ensure that data protection regulations are complied with and maintained.
- To establish, with the Examinations Officer, contingency plans in case of emergencies, including power cuts, adverse weather conditions, transport strikes.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of the Assistant Principal**

- Providing support and guidance to the Examinations Officer. Ensuring that the integrity and security of examinations and assessments is maintained throughout an examination series.
- Organisation of the curriculum.
- Ensures the external validation of courses followed at key Stage 4 and in the Sixth Form, working alongside Assistant Principals with responsibilities for each Key Stage.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of Subject Leaders, Faculty Leaders and Directors of English, maths and science**

- 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 assessment/coursework mark sheets and declaration sheets where applicable.
- Ensuring assessments and coursework are kept in a safe and secure location such as a locked filing cabinet.
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the Examinations Officer.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of Teachers**

- Notification of access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- Submission of candidate names to Subject Leaders, Faculty Leaders and Directors of English, maths and science.

- Submission of candidate most likely outcomes grades, levels and tiers of entry.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of the SENCO**

- Application of access arrangements with assistance from the Examinations Officer.
- Administration of 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.
- Ensure there is clear delegation of roles and responsibilities to the Deputy SENCO to support access arrangements.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of Invigilators**

- Collection of exam papers and other material from the examinations office or other specified location before the start of the exam.
- Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the examinations office or specified location.
- Ensure the security of the examination materials before, during and after the examination
- Uphold the integrity of the examination/assessment by preventing possible candidate malpractice or administrative failures.

### **Candidates**

- Understand their examination timetable and see the Examinations Officer if they have any queries.
- Confirmation and signing of entries.
- Understanding controlled assessment/coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the controlled assessment/coursework as their own.

### **Administrative staff**

- Log receipt of exam packages in the logbook kept in main reception.
- Support with the input of data.
- Support for the posting of exam papers and other exam related documents.

## **C. Statutory tests and qualifications offered**

The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Head of Centre and the Subject Leaders, Faculty Leaders and Directors of English, maths and science. The statutory tests and qualifications offered are GCSE, A levels, BTEC and OCR Nationals/Technical. The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published Curriculum Options Booklets for that year. If there has been a change of syllabus from the previous year, the examinations office must be informed. Options Booklets can be found on the school website.

### **At Key Stage 4 and 5:**

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

### **Key Stage 5:**

It is expected that AS modules will be completed during year 12 in some subject areas, as decided by the Head of Sixth Form.

## **D. Exam seasons, timetables and Centre Inspections**

### **Exam seasons**

Internal GCE/BTEC/OCR Mock Exams are scheduled where appropriate. External exams are scheduled in November, January, March and May/June. All internal exams are held under external JCQ exam conditions. Which exam series are used in the centre is decided by the Head of Centre.

All additional exam seasons as required due the impact of COVID-19 will adhere to the JCQ Guidelines on exams administration and various exam board entry policies, this will include delayed exams anticipated in July 2020.

## **Examination Timetables**

The Examinations Officer will circulate the exam timetables for both external and internal exams once these are confirmed.

## **Centre Inspections**

Full co-operation will be given to the JCQ Centre Inspection Service, an awarding body or a regulatory authority when subject to an inspection, an investigation or an unannounced visit. All reasonable steps will be taken to comply with requests for information or documentation as soon as is practical. All venues used for examinations and assessments, paperwork and secure storage facilities will be open to inspection. The inspector will be accompanied throughout his/her tour of the premises. Policies, such as this, will be ready for inspection.

## **Secure Storage Facility**

The Secure Storage Facility is contained within a secure room. Only keyholders are permitted access to the room and no other staff can enter the room without supervision of an official key holder. The secure room only contains exam related materials and meets all requirements of JCQ regulations. Keys to the secure room and Secure Storage Facility are only accessible from a key-coded safe or one of the official key holders.

The key holders are:

- Examinations Officer
- Examinations Administrator
- Head of Centre

## **E. Entries, entry details, late entries and retakes**

### **Entries**

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by Subject Leaders, Faculty Leaders and Directors of English, maths and science.

A candidate or parent/carer can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal if the relevant Subject Leader, Faculty Leader and Directors of English, maths and science, and Head of Centre are in agreement. The centre does accept some entries from external candidates depending on the course they are following and approval from the Examinations Officer.

## **Late entries**

Entry deadlines are circulated to Subject Leaders, Faculty Leaders and Directors of English, maths and science. Late entries are authorised by the Assistant Principal. Withdrawals may only be authorised by the Head of Centre.

## **Retakes/Resits**

Candidates are allowed retakes in GCSE English and maths at the discretion of the centre with the first retake entry paid for by the centre if the student has not achieved a grade 4 or above. Subsequent retakes are paid for by the centre if a grade 4 has still not been reached.

A Level retakes will be paid for by the centre should the student repeat the academic year. Retake decisions will be made in consultation with the candidates, Examinations officer, Head of Centre and the Head of Sixth Form.

## **F. Exam fees**

GCE/GCSE/BTEC/OCR Nationals initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the relevant Department/Faculty. Candidates or Departments/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.

Reimbursement will be sought from candidates who fail to sit an exam (unless they are able to produce a medical certificate) or meet the necessary controlled assessment/coursework requirements.

This fees reimbursement policy will be communicated in writing to candidates and parents/carers at the start of GCSE and post-16 courses.

Candidates or Departments/Faculties must pay the fee for an enquiry about a result or review of marking should the Exam Board not uphold the enquiry. (See also section L: Enquiries about results [EARs])

## **G. The Equality Act 2010, Special Needs and Access Arrangements**

It is the responsibility of the Head of Centre, members of SLT and the SENCO within the centre to familiarise themselves with the entire contents of the JCQ



document *'Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties, Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments, General and Vocational Qualifications'*.

## **The Equality Act 2010**

The Equality Act 2010 extends the application of the Equality Act to general qualifications. All exam office staff must ensure that the access arrangements regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.

## **Special Needs**

A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the SENCO. The SENCO will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs who are embarking on a course leading to an exam via the SEND register. The SENCO can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates may be granted during the course and in the exam.

## **Access arrangements**

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

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the SENCO with the assistance of the Examinations Officer.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Examinations Officer with the SENCO's knowledge.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the Examinations Officer with the SENCO's knowledge.

Students who wish for alternative seating arrangements need to produce evidence to support this arrangement.

## **H. Managing invigilators and exam days**

### **Managing invigilators**

External invigilators will be used for internal and external exam supervision. The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer. Securing the necessary DBS clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of

the centre's HR Manager. DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre.

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Examinations Administrator.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set as per the centre's support staff pay structure.

## **Exam days**

The Examinations 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 (caretakers) are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

The Examinations Administrator or Lead Invigilator will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines. Senior members of centre staff approved by the head of centre, who have not taught the subject being examined may be present at the start of the examination. This is to identify and settle candidates and instil discipline. They must not provide advice and guidance on the examination nor comment on the question paper or give advice on which sections of the paper and which questions should be attempted

All Centre-staff must follow the JCQ guidelines on conducting examinations. In practical exams subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties. Exam papers must not be read by subject teachers during the examination or removed from the exam room.

Papers will be distributed to Subject Leaders, Faculty Leaders and Directors of English, maths and science at the end of the exam session.

## **I. 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 Examinations Officer will attempt to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of an exam and deal with them in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

### **Clash candidates**

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

### **Special consideration**

Should a candidate be too ill to sit an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma or be taken ill during the exam itself, it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, or the exam invigilator, to that effect.

Any special consideration claim must be supported by appropriate evidence within five days of the exam, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor. The Examinations Officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

## **J. Appeals against controlled/internal assessments**

### **Controlled/Internal Assessments**

Candidates who have to prepare portfolios should do so by the end of the course or centre-defined date. Arrangements will be in place to co-ordinate and standardise all marking of centre-assessed components and to ensure that candidates' centre-assessed work is produced, authenticated and marked, or assessed and quality assured in accordance with the awarding bodies' instructions. Subject Leaders, Faculty Leaders and Directors of English, maths and science will ensure all controlled assessments are ready for despatch at the correct time and the Examinations Officer will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom. Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the Examinations Officer by the relevant Subject Leader, Faculty Leader or Director of English, maths or science.

## **Appeals against controlled/internal assessments**

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

The main points are:

- Appeals will only be entertained 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 controlled assessment has been assessed unfairly, inconsistently or not in accordance with the specification for the qualification.
- Appeals should be made in writing by 30 June 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 Examinations Officer and recorded for awarding body inspection.

## **K. Results, enquiries about results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS)**

### **Results**

Candidates will receive individual results slips on result days in person at the centre.

If a student is unable to collect their results in person they may be given to a third party providing written permission is shown.

Arrangements for the school to be open on results days are made by the Examinations Officer.

The provision of staff on result days is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer.

### **Enquiries about Results (EARs)**

EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. 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. (See Section F: Exam fees)

## **Access to Scripts (ATS)**

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of papers within three days' scrutiny of the results. If a result is queried, the Examinations Officer, teaching staff and Head of Centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a review of marking at the centre's expense.

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

GCSE review of marking cannot be applied for once a script has been returned.

## **L. Appeals**

The school's internal appeals procedure is published on the school website and is also available from the Examinations Officer. If a parent or student wishes to appeal against a grade or mark they must make the request in writing to the Examinations Officer within 7 days after the results are published.

## **M. Certificates**

Certificates are collected and signed for. Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so. Certificates may be withheld from candidates who owe fees.

A transcript of results may be issued if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred. The Centre retains certificates for at least three years.

## **N. Contingency Plan**

In the event of the Examinations Officer being unavailable to complete the exam entries the following procedures will take place:

- The Assistant Principal will be responsible for exam entries.
- Herts CC will be contacted to see if there is local replacement who can manage the exam entries or advise on alternatives.

In the event of the Examinations Officer being unable to run the examinations the following procedures will take place:

- The Assistant Principal will contact the Examinations Administrator to come in and assist them to manage the examination.

- The Examinations Administrator will run the examinations with the assistance of the Head Invigilator. The Assistant Principal will support them to manage the examinations.

In the event of the Examinations Administrator being absent for key dates/times, the following procedures will take place:

- The Examinations Officer will contact the Head of Centre or a Lead Invigilator to assist them to manage the examination.
- The Examinations Officer will run the examinations with the assistance of the Head of Centre or a Lead Invigilator. The Assistant Principal will support them to manage the examinations.

In the event of the Head of Centre being absent for an examination series the following procedure will take place:

- The Vice Principal will become acting Head of Centre.
- Where possible, the Head of Centre will work remotely to manage examinations. Any documents needing authorisation will be signed off, with the Principal's permission, by the Executive Assistant to the Principal and Vice Principal.
- If both the Principal and Vice Principal are absent, then the duties of the Head of Centre fall to the Assistant Principal with the oversight of examination administration.

In the event of extreme weather, the Examinations Administrator and Head Invigilator, who are within walking distance of the school, will come in to manage the examinations.