

Exams Policy

Date: September 2016
Renewal Date: September 2017

Exams Policy

The Exams Policy is available from the Exams Office.

The purpose of the Exams Policy is to ensure the operation of an efficient exams system which is in the best interest of candidates with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the exams system to read, understand, and implement the Exams Policy.

The Exams Policy will be reviewed every year.

The Exams Policy is next due for review on 1st September 2017.

The Exams Policy will be reviewed by the Deputy Head Teacher and the Exams Officer. Where references are made to JCQ regulations/guidelines, further details can be found at www.jcq.org.uk.

Exam Responsibilities

Head Teacher:

- has overall responsibility for the Academy as an exams Centre and advises on appeals and re-marks.
- is responsible for reporting all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice - refer to the JCQ document 'Suspected malpractice in exams and assessments'.

Exams Officer:

- manages the administration of internal and external exams.
- advises the senior leadership team, heads of department, and relevant support staff on annual exams timetables and procedures as set by the various awarding bodies.
- oversees the production and distribution to all Centre staff 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 exams timetable that will affect them.
- checks with teaching staff that the necessary coursework and/or controlled assessments are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries.
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.
- receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts and ensures that scripts are dispatched as per the guidelines.
- administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ publications for access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration.
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
- manages the recruitment, training, and monitoring of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams.
- ensures candidates' coursework / controlled assessment marks are submitted, and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- tracks, dispatches, and stores returned coursework / controlled assessments.
- arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any post results service requests.

Heads of Department:

- guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exams entries or amendments to entries.
- accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the Exams Officer.
- accurate completion of coursework / controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- decisions on post-results procedures.

Teachers:

- supplying information on entries, coursework and controlled assessments as required by the Heads of Department and/or Exams Officer.

Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo):

- identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements and notifying the Exams Officer in good time so that they are able to process any necessary applications in order to gain approval (if required).
- working with the Exams Officer to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exams rooms.

Invigilators:

- assisting the Exams Officer in the efficient running of exams according to JCQ regulations.
- collection of exam papers and other material from the Exams Office before the start of the exam.
- collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and ensuring their return to the Exams Office.

Candidates:

- understanding coursework / controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.
- ensuring they conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ regulations.

Qualifications Offered

The qualifications offered at this Centre are decided by the Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher.

The types of qualifications offered are GCSEs and BTECs.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the Centre's published prospectus or similar documents for that year. If there is to be a change of specification for the next year, the Exams Office must be informed by 1st September.

Informing the Exams Office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the Deputy Head Teacher.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by Heads of Department in consultation with the Deputy Head Teacher.

Exam Series

Internal exams and assessments are scheduled in November, January and June.

External exams and assessments are scheduled in May and June.

The Head Teacher and the Deputy Head Teacher decide which exam series are used in the Centre.

The Centre does not offer assessments on an on-demand basis.

Exam Timetables

Once confirmed, the Exams Officer will circulate the exam timetables for internal and external exams at least two weeks before each series begins.

Entries, Entry Details and Late Entries

Candidates or parents/carers cannot request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.

The Centre does not accept entries from private candidates.

The Centre does not act as an exams centre for other organisations.

Entry deadlines are circulated to Heads of Department via email.

Heads of Department will provide estimated entry information to the Exams Officer to meet JCQ and awarding body deadlines.

Entries and amendments made after an awarding organisation's deadline (i.e. late) require the authorisation, in writing, of the Heads of Department.

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 action well in advance for each exams series.

GCSE entry exam fees are paid by the Centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the Centre.

Exam Fees are not sought from candidates:

Equality Legislation

All exam Centre staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of any equality legislation.

The Centre will comply with the legislation, including making reasonable adjustments to the service that they provide candidates in accordance with requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies, and JCQ. This is the responsibility of the Deputy Head Teacher and Exams Officer.

Access Arrangements

The SENCo will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs and any special arrangements that individual candidates will need during the course and in any assessments/exams.

A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the SENCo.

Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement is the responsibility of the SENCO and stored by the Exams Officer.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Exams Officer.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the SENCo and the Exams Officer.

Contingency Planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the School Business Manager.

Contingency plans in the event of bad weather or on the day emergency will be available on the school website and are in line with guidance provided by Ofqual, JCQ and awarding organisations.

Estimated Grades

Heads of Department are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the Exams Officer when requested by the Exams Officer.

Managing Invigilators

External staff will be used to invigilate external Exams.

These invigilators will be used for external exams and internal exams where calendared and published in advance (school calendar published July of previous academic year).

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Deputy Head Teacher and the Exams Officer.

Securing the necessary Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Academy Business Manager and the Exams Officer.

CRB fees for securing such clearance are paid by the Centre.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the Head Teacher and the Deputy Head Teacher.

Invigilators are recruited, timetabled, trained, and briefed by the Deputy Head Teacher and the Exams Officer.

Malpractice

The Head Teacher in consultation with the Deputy Head Teacher is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

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 staff is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms, and will be advised of requirements at least two weeks in advance.

Senior Leadership Team and Exams Office staff will start and finish all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates. Any staff present must be in accordance with the rules defined by JCQ concerning who is allowed and what they can do.

In practical exams, subject teachers' availability will be in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

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 by Exams Office staff only after all scripts have been securely packed and stored away.

After an exam, the Exams Officer will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed Exam scripts to awarding bodies, working in conjunction with Invigilators.

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 Deputy Head Teacher.

The Centre's published rules on acceptable dress and behaviour apply at all times. Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the Centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.

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. This is particularly true of mobile phones and other electronic communication or storage devices with text or digital facilities.

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines. Candidates are expected to stay for the full exam time at the discretion of the Exams Officer.

Note: Candidates who leave an exam room must be accompanied by an appropriate member of staff at all times.

The Exams Officer is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day.

Clash Candidates

The Exams Officer will be responsible to supervise the candidates between exams. In cases of overnight supervision candidates need to complete the appropriate documentation in accordance with JCQ regulations. Supervision overnight may be undertaken by the candidates parent/carer.

Special Consideration

Should a candidate be unable to attend an exam because of illness, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be ill or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the Centre's Exams Officer to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within 5 working days of the exam.

The Exams Officer will make a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body within 7 working days of the exam.

Internal Assessments

It is the duty of Heads of Department to ensure that all internal assessments are 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.

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the Exams Office by the Heads of Department. The Exams Officer will inform staff of the date when appeals against internal assessments must be made by. Any appeals will be dealt with in accordance with the Centre's Internal Appeals Policy.

Results

Candidates will receive individual result slips on results days

- in person at the Centre
- by post to their home address (candidates to provide self-addressed envelopes)

The results slip will be in the form of a Centre produced document.

Arrangements for the Centre to be open on results days are made by the School Business Manager.

The provision of the necessary staff on results days is the responsibility of the Deputy Head Teacher.

Enquiries about Results (EAR)

EARs may be requested by Centre staff or the candidate following the release of results. A request for a re-mark or clerical check requires the written consent of the candidate.

The cost of EARs will be paid by the Centre.

All decisions on whether to make an application for an EAR will be made by the Head Teacher.

If a candidate's request for an EAR is not supported, the candidate may appeal and the Centre will respond by following the process in its Internal Appeals Policy.

All processing of EARs will be the responsibility of the Exams Officer following the JCQ guidance.

Access to Scripts (ATS)

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of written exam papers within 5 working days of the receipt of results.

Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. If scripts are requested for investigation the candidates consent must be obtained.

Re-marks cannot be applied for once an original script has been returned.

The cost of ATSs will be paid by the Centre.

All processing of ATSs will be the responsibility of the Exams Officer following the JCQ guidance.

Certificates

Candidates will receive their certificates

- in person at the Centre
- posted (recorded delivery)
- collected and signed for

Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have written authority from the candidate to do so, and bring suitable identification with them that confirms who they are.

The Centre retains certificates for 3 years.

A new certificate will not be issued by an awarding organisation. A transcript of results may be issued if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred.

Head Teacher

Date

Deputy Head Teacher

Date

Exams Officer

Date
