



## Exams Policy

### **The purpose of this 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 in line with JCQ and exam board regulations.

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

The exam policy will be reviewed annually.

The exam policy will be reviewed by the Senior Leadership team.

### **Exam responsibilities**

#### Teachers are responsible for:

- Submission of candidates to Heads of Lead Teachers / Head of Centre
- Identification and testing of candidates for access arrangements
- Notification of access arrangements requirements to the Exams Officer (as soon as possible after the start of the course)

#### The Exams Officer is responsible for:

- Administration of entries / submission of marks / results to examination boards and any other administrative requirements
- Administration of access arrangements including liaising with the Head of Centre for provision of additional support - extra time, reader, use of word processor, English for speakers of other languages, IT equipment - to help candidates achieve their course aims.

#### Invigilators are responsible for:

- Collection of exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam as directed by the Head of Centre in the absence of the Exams Officer.
- Ensuring examinations are conducted in accordance with JCQ regulations.
- Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the exams office.

Candidates are responsible for:

- Signature confirmation that school can use limited data to make access arrangements.
- Understanding regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates work as their own.
- Signing examination papers

**Qualifications offered**

The qualifications offered at this Centre are decided by the Senior Leadership team.

The qualifications offered are those set out under the umbrella of Foundation Learning including: Functional Skills, GCSE, Entry Level and PSD qualifications.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year will be registered via the Exams Officer. If there has been a change of specification from the previous year, the Exams Officer must be informed by the end of October.

Informing the Exams Officer of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership team.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken in consultation with the Candidates, Parents/Carers, Subject Teachers, Head of Subject and SLT.

**Exam seasons**

Internal exams and assessments are scheduled as appropriate and will be held under external exam conditions.

External exams and assessments:

- GCSE examinations are taken in the Summer Series.
- On-demand Functional Skills assessments are offered once a year and at other times if required.
- Entry Level assessments are completed throughout KS4. These assessments are submitted in the spring of Year 11

## **Timetable**

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

## **Entries, entry details and late entries**

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Head of Centre, Lead Teacher, Heads of Department and Subject Teachers.

Candidates or parents/carers can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.

The Centre does not accept entries from external candidates.

The Centre does not act as an Exam Centre for other organisations.

Entry deadlines are circulated to Heads of Department via meetings and email.

Late entries are authorised by the Senior Leadership team.

## **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.

Exam fees are paid by the Centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the Centre.

Fee reimbursements are not sought from candidates who decide to sit an exam after the late entry/withdrawal deadline/fail to sit an exam/do not meet the necessary coursework requirements without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances.

Re-sit fees are paid by the Centre.

## **Equality Act 2010**

All Centre staff must ensure that we meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

It is the duty of all staff to make reasonable adjustments to remove barriers for disabled people.

Definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010: 'You're disabled if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities'.

The Centre will meet the disability provisions under the Equality Act 2010 by ensuring that the exams centre is accessible to those with a physical disability and arrange

access arrangements with awarding bodies for those with learning difficulties. This is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership team.

### **Access arrangements**

A candidate's requirement for access arrangements is determined by the Subject Teacher / Lead Teacher / Head of Centre. This will be determined by 'normal' classroom practice, appropriate assessment and professional diagnosis.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the Exams Officer. The Exams Officer will inform staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates can be granted during the course and in the exam.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Head of Centre / Exams Officer.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the Head of Centre / Exams Officer.

### **Contingency planning**

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership team. (See Examination Contingency Plan for further details)

### **Estimated grades**

Subject teachers are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the Exams Officer when requested.

### **Storage**

Upon receipt, assessment materials should be recorded as received using the 'Exam deliveries received log' before being passed to the Exams Officer. If the Officer is not available they should be placed in a secure location until they can be passed on.

When required on the timetabled examination day, assessment materials should be signed out by the member of staff / Exams Officer and the 'Second Pair of Eyes' check form signed. Keys for the secure storage of exam papers are held by the Exams Officer.

Any examination scripts/folders which are not despatched on the day of completion should be placed in the secure storage overnight/until despatched.

### **Managing invigilators**

External staff may be used to invigilate examinations. However, due to the special educational needs of pupils at the school, a familiar adult is generally felt to be preferable.

These Invigilators will be used for Internal and External exams.

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team.

Securing the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Centre administration. DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the Centre.

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Exams Officer.

If recruited, external invigilators rates of pay are set by the Senior Leadership team.

### **Malpractice**

The Senior Leadership team is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

### **Exam days**

The Exams Officer will make the question papers, exam stationery and other materials available for the invigilator.

The Exams Officer is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

The Invigilator will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff may only 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. The people present in the examination room are subject to Appendix 8 of the JCQ Notice to Centres.

In practical exams Subject Teachers 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 Department in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

A relevant Subject Teacher may be available to read out any subject-specific instructions at the start the exam, if required.

### **Candidates**

The Centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and other electronic devices apply at all times in line with JCQ regulations.

Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the Centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.

Disruptive candidates are managed in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Candidates are expected to stay for the full exam time in accordance with JCQ guidelines and at the discretion of the invigilator in accordance with agreement of the Exams Officer / Head of Centre. Note: during the examination, 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.

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

For clash candidates, the supervision of candidates, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight supervision is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

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 Invigilator, to the difficulty.

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.

The Exams Officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

### **Non-examination assessment**

It is the duty of Heads of Department to ensure that all non-examination assessment/results are ready for despatch at the correct time. The Exams Officer will assist by keeping a record of each despatch, including the recipient details and the date and time sent.

### **Marks and appeals**

Marks for all internally assessed work and estimated grades are provided to the Exams Officer by the Subject teachers.

Appeals against internal assessments must be made by the 31 May in the year of the examination.

### **Appeals against internal assessments**

The process for managing appeals against internal assessments is detailed in a separate appeals policy, available on the school's website.

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

Candidates will receive individual result slips, either in person at the Centre or by post to their home addresses. Arrangements for the Centre to be open on results days are made by the Senior Leadership Team.

The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team.

### **EARs**

EARs may be requested by Centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. The candidates' consent is required before any EAR is requested.

If a result is queried, the Exams Officer, teaching staff and Head of Centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark at the Centre's expense.

When the Centre does not support a candidate's or parent's request for 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 the appropriate fee.

## **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 consent of candidates must be obtained.

GCSE re-marks cannot be applied for once a script has been returned.

## **Certificates**

Certificates are presented in person at presentation evening.

Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have been authorised to do so. In exceptional circumstances, the certificates may be posted by a secure method.

The Centre retains certificates for one year.