

## Exams Policy

### Philosophy

The school's motto is to 'Love, Serve, Do the Best Possible.' It is therefore our philosophy that each child achieves their full potential for each child is a 'Gift from God.'

How we manage exams and prepare pupils for them sits within this framework. The expectation is that pupils will sit exams in which staff believe they can do well. Most pupils will sit examinations so that they are able to gain recognition for their learning.

### Internal assessments and examinations:

- Most assessments will take place in the classroom. The conditions should be appropriate to the task.
- Departments should for controlled assessments, adhere to the examinations boards requests and follow the school's controlled assessment policy.
- Internal examinations will take place at a time suitable in the school year in order to help inform pupils' current attainment. These internal examinations will take place in the Sport's Hall to give pupils the opportunity to acclimatise to the school's exam rooms. At present, these are for Years 9 to 13. The timetable for these examinations is published to parents in advance.

### EARLY ENTRIES:

At present, the school wishes to allow the maximum time for learning and we currently have no early entries for GCSE, other than native speaker Modern Foreign Language exams.

### PUBLIC EXAMS:

Most courses are now linear in design. Entry will be in the Summer examination session with the exception of retake GCSE courses.

### SPECIAL NEEDS:

Pupils with special educational or medical needs are identified, tested and supported by the SEN exams officer. These pupils are given the support required by staff in the SEN Base.

## **Exam responsibilities**

### **Head of Centre:**

- has overall responsibility for the school/college 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 examinations and assessments*.

### **Exams officer:**

- manages the administration of internal exams and external exams.
- advises the senior leadership team, subject and class tutors, and other 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 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 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.
- works with the SENCO to ensure we follow JCQ regulations.
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
- line manages the team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams, including training and recruitment.
- 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 Leadership Group, 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 head 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 put in place exam day arrangements
- 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.

**Senior invigilator/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:**

- confirmation of entries.
- 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 of Department. The types of qualifications offered are GCE, GCSE, BTEC, OCR Nationals and Extended Project.

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 10 September.

Informing the exams office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the Head of Department.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by a senior teacher in consultation with the Subject Teacher.

## **Exam series**

Internal exams (mock or trial exams) and assessments are scheduled in December (Years 11 and 13), February (Year 9), April (Year 10) and June (Year 12).

External exams and assessments are scheduled in November (Maths and English resits only), May/June.

Internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

The centre does offer some assessments on an on-demand basis. If offered, on-demand assessments can be scheduled only in windows agreed between the Head of Subject and the Examinations Officer.

We also arrange mock examinations as directed by the Leadership Group if necessary.

## **Exam timetables**

Once confirmed, the exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for internal and external exams at a specified date 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 accepts entries from ex-students in accordance with our 'External Candidate Exam Entry Policy 2016-17'.

Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department/curriculum via email, briefing meetings, school calendar.

Heads of department/curriculum 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 (ie late) require the authorisation, in writing, of Head of Department.

GCSE re-sits/retakes in English and Mathematics are allowed.

AS re-sits/retakes are allowed if available.

A level re-sits/retakes are allowed if available.

Re-sit decisions will be made by Head of Department in consultation with Head of Year.

## **Exam fees**

The exams officer will publish the deadline for actions well in advance for each exams series.

GCE and GCSE entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Re-sit fees are paid by the centre.

## **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 to candidates in accordance with requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies, and JCQ.

## **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 SENCO.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the Special Needs Team.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Special Needs Team.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the Special Needs Team.

## **Contingency planning**

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the head of centre.

Please see our detailed Contingency Policy.

## ***Private candidates***

Managing private candidates is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer.

## **Managing invigilators**

External staff will be used to invigilate examinations.

These invigilators will be used for internal exams and external exams.

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer.

Securing the necessary Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Personnel Department.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the Business Manager.

Invigilators are recruited, timetabled, trained, and briefed by the Examinations Officer.

## **Malpractice**

The head of centre in consultation with Senior Teacher responsible for Exams 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 in advance.

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

Subject staff may not 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 in the exam room 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 in accordance with JCQ's recommendations, 24 hours after the exam has finished, and no later than 48 hours after candidates have completed them.

After an exam, the exams officer will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed examination scripts to awarding bodies, working in conjunction with Parcelforce Worldwide.

## **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 Head of Year.

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. Any precluded items must not be taken into an exam room.

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 Senior Invigilator

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

The Senior Invigilator is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day.

## **Clash candidates**

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

## **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 Examinations Officer to that effect.

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

The exams officer will make a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body within 5 days of the exam.

## **Internal assessment**

It is the duty of heads of department to ensure that all internal assessment is 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 Head 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 Procedure (IAP) document.

## **Results**

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days:

- in person at the centre
- by post to their home address - candidates to provide a self-addressed envelope

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 Head of Centre

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

## **Enquiries about Results (EAR)**

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

The cost of EARs will be paid by the centre/candidate dependent on the enquiry.

All decisions on whether to make an application for an EAR will be made by the Head of Subject or the candidate if they pay for their own enquiry.

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 Procedure (IAP) document.

All processing of EARs will be the responsibility of the Examinations 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 by the exam board deadline after the receipt of results.

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

An EAR cannot be applied for once an original script has been returned.

The cost of EARs will be paid by the centre or by the candidate if the centre thinks that an EAR is not appropriate.

Processing of requests for ATS will be the responsibility of Head of Subject.

If subjects request the return of scripts for teaching and learning, the cost will be paid for by the department.

## **Certificates**

Candidates will receive their certificates:

- in person at the centre
- 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 4 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. This has to be done directly to the awarding body.

**Review: 2020-21 by Leadership Team for presentation to the Governing Body's Curriculum and Teaching Committee.**