

EXAMINATION POLICY

Date effective from:	25 March 2010
Date approved by Governors:	25 March 2010
Date of review:	2011/12
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1 AIMS

The aims of this policy are:

- to ensure the planning and management of examinations is conducted efficiently and in the best interest of candidates; and
- to ensure the operation of an efficient examination system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the centre's examination processes to read, understand and implement this policy. This Examination Policy will be reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team and Examination Officer.

2 EXAMINATION RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 Head of Centre

The Headteacher will act as the Head of Centre for examination purposes and will be responsible for the operation of the school as an Examination Centre.

2.2 Examination Officer

The Examination Officer is responsible for:

- managing the administration of public and internal examinations;
- advising the Senior Leadership Team, subject and class tutors and other relevant support staff on annual examination timetables and application procedures as set by the various awarding bodies;
- overseeing the production and distribution to staff, governors and candidates of an annual calendar for all examinations in which candidates will be involved and communicating regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events;
- ensuring that candidates and their parents are informed of, and understand those aspects of the examination timetable that will affect them;
- consulting with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework is completed on time and in accordance with the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) guidelines;
- providing and confirming detailed data on estimated entries;
- receiving, checking and storing securely all examination papers and completed scripts;
- administering access arrangements and making applications for special consideration using the JCQ publications Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration.
- identifying and managing examination timetable conflicts;
- line managing the Lead Invigilator in organising the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of examination Invigilators responsible for the conduct of examinations;
- submitting candidates' coursework marks, tracking despatch and storing returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule;
- arranging for dissemination of examination results and certificates to candidates and forwards, and in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team any appeals/re-mark requests ; and
- maintaining systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their examinations.

2.3 Teachers

Teachers are responsible for:

- submitting candidates' names to Heads of Department; and
- encouraging timely completion and submission of coursework by pupils.

2.4 SEN Coordinator

The SEN Coordinator is responsible for:

- identifying and testing of candidates, and requirements for access arrangements;
- notifying access arrangement requirements (as soon as possible after the start of the course) to the Examination Officer; and
- the 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.

2.5 Invigilators

Invigilators are responsible for:

- collecting examination papers and other materials from the Examination Office before the start of the examination; and
- collecting all examination papers in the correct order at the end of the examination and returning them to the Examination Office.

2.6 Candidates

Candidates are responsible for:

- confirming their entries; and
- understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.

3 QUALIFICATIONS

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Heads of Department and Senior Leadership Team and are currently:

- Diploma;
- Entry level;
- Functional skills;
- GCSE; and
- OCR Nationals.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the school's published prospectus for that year. If there has been a change of syllabus from the previous year, the Examination Officer must be informed by 1 October so that the estimated entries deadline can be met. Informing the Examination Officer of changes to a syllabus is the responsibility of the Heads of Subject and Heads of Department. Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken in consultation with the Deputy Head (Curriculum).

4 TIMETABLING

4.1 Internal Examinations

Internal Examinations and assessments are scheduled in December, April, and May, or on demand as required. On demand tests are to be scheduled in agreement with the Examination Officer as is the policy for offering on demand testing.

As far as is practicable internal examinations will be held under external examination conditions.

The production and circulation of a detailed timetable for key internal examinations will be the responsibility of the Assistant Headteacher (Assessment).

4.2 External Examinations

External examinations and assessments are scheduled in November, January, March, April, May and June. Heads of Department/Subject decide which examination series are to be used in the centre.

Once confirmed, the Examination Officer will circulate the examination timetable for External examinations.

5 ENTRIES, ENTRY DETAILS AND LATE ENTRIES

The Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA) recommends the use of the examination fees estimator tool and the exemplar case study Reducing Late Exams Entries: Practical Advice from your Examination Office Colleagues and these will be used by the school.

Candidates are selected for their examination entries by Heads of Department and subject teachers. Candidates or parents/carers can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.

The school will only accept entries from external candidates who are members of staff only. It does not act as an examination centre for other organisations.

Entry deadlines are circulated to Heads of Department via internal post/pigeon hole.

Late entries are authorised by Heads of Department.

GCSE retakes are allowed. Retake decisions will be made in consultation with the Examination Officer, Heads of Department and Heads of Subject.

6 EXAMINATION FEES

GCSE and other entry examination fees, late entry fees and amendment fees will be paid for by the school. 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.

However, fee reimbursements are sought from candidates who decide to sit an examination after the late entry/withdrawal deadline, who fail to sit an examination or who do not meet the necessary coursework requirements without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances. Likewise re-sit fees are paid by the candidates unless agreed by the Head of Department.

7 DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT

All examination centre staff must ensure they meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), extended in 2005, and the Disability Equality Duty (DED), introduced in 2006. The DDA introduced measures aimed at eliminating the discrimination often faced by disabled people. The main provisions of the Act give protection to disabled people in the areas of employment and education.

A person has a disability for the purposes of the DDA if s/he has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on her/his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Further information on how an Examination Centre must satisfy the requirements of the DDA is available on the DDA information page on the QCDA website.

The school will meet the requirements of the DDA by ensuring that the examinations centre is accessible and improving candidate experience. This is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team, Examination Officer and SEN Coordinator.

8 ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

The SEN Coordinator will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs who are embarking on a course leading to an examination, and the date of that examination. The SEN Coordinator can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates can be granted during the course and in the examination.

The following responsibilities will be assigned by the school as follows:

- a candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the SEN Coordinator and Educational Psychologist/Specialist Teacher;
- making access arrangements for candidates to take examinations is the responsibility of both the SEN Coordinator and Examination Officer;
- submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the Examination Officer;
- rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the SEN Coordinator with the Examination Officer; and
- invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the SEN Coordinator with the Examination Officer.

9 OVERSEAS STUDENTS

Managing overseas students is the responsibility of the Examination Officer.

10 CONTINGENCY PLANNING

Contingency planning for examinations administration is the responsibility of the Deputy Headteacher (Curriculum).

11 PRIVATE CANDIDATES

Managing private candidates is the responsibility of the Examination Officer.

12 ESTIMATED GRADES

Heads of Department and Heads of Subject are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the Examination Officer, when requested.

13 MANAGING INVIGILATORS

External personnel are used to invigilate examinations. The recruitment of invigilators, including any vetting procedures, such as securing the necessary Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) clearance is the responsibility of the Examination Officer. Any fees incurring in the vetting process will be paid for by the school. Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the Senior Leadership Team.

Invigilators will be used for some internal, and all external examinations. They are timetabled and briefed by the Examination Officer.

14 MALPRACTICE

The Senior Leadership Team together with the Examination Officer are responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

15 EXAMINATION DAY PROCEDURES

The following responsibilities will be applied to ensure the smooth running of examinations:

- the Examination Officer will book all examination rooms, after liaison with other users, and make the question papers, other examination stationery and materials available for the Invigilator;
- the Premises Manager is responsible for ensuring that all allocated rooms are correctly set up;
- the Lead Invigilator will start all examinations in accordance with JCQ guidelines;
- subject teachers may be present at the start of the examination to assist with identification of candidates, but must not advise on which questions or sections are to be attempted;
- subject teachers may be available to read out any subject-specific instructions and start the examination, if required;
- subject teachers may be on hand during practical examinations in case of any technical difficulties; and
- invigilators will ensure that examination papers are not be read by subject teachers or removed from the examination room before the end of a session. Papers will be distributed to Heads of Department at the end of the examination session.

16 CANDIDATES

Candidates will be subject to the following regulations during examinations:

- the school's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and other 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 are expected to stay for the full examination time at the discretion of the Examination Officer or Lead Invigilator; and

- candidates may only leave the examination room for a genuine purpose and are required to return immediately to the examination room. They must be accompanied by a member of staff at all times.

The following procedures will apply to candidates who have exceptional circumstances as follows:

- candidates attending late or absent on examination day will be dealt with either immediately or subsequently by the Examination Officer;
- candidates timetabled with concurrent examinations may require the provision of escorts, the identification of a secure venue and the arrangement of overnight supervision, which will be the responsibility of the Examination Officer;
- candidates who are ill before an examination, suffer bereavement or other trauma, are taken ill during the examination itself or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an examination, are responsible for alerting the centre, the Examination Officer, or the examination invigilator, to that effect; and
- candidates making any special consideration claim must support this with appropriate evidence within three days of the examination, for example by providing a letter from the candidate's doctor. The Examination Officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the examination.

17 INTERNAL ASSESSMENTS AND APPEALS

The term 'Internal Assessment' replaces the largely discontinued term 'Coursework'. It is the duty of Heads of Department to ensure that all Internal Assessments are ready for despatch at the correct time. The Examination Officer will assist by keeping a record of each despatch, including the recipient details and the date and time sent.

Subject teachers and Heads of Department will provide marks for all Internal Assessments and estimated grades to the Examination Officer by the due date.

The process for managing appeals against Internal Assessments is detailed in a separate Appeals Procedure, which is available from the Examination Officer and is also accessible on the school's website.

18 RESULTS

Candidates will receive individual result slips on results days, either in person at the centre or by post to their home addresses (candidates to provide self addressed envelope). The arrangements for the centre to be open and the provision of staff on results days are made by the Head of Centre.

18.1 Enquiries About Results (EAR's)

EAR's may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. The candidate's consent is required before any EAR is requested. If a result is queried, the Examination Officer, teaching staff and Head of Department will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark at the school's expense. When the school 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.

18.2 Access To Scripts (ATS's)

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

19 CERTIFICATES

Certificates are presented in person at the school's annual Presentation Evening, thereafter they can be collected and signed for from the Examination Office. Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have been authorised to do so. The school will retain certificates for five years.