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The purpose of this exam 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.

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 every two years.

This exam policy will be reviewed by the governors, head of centre, assistant principal and the exams officer.

1. Exam responsibilities

Head of centre

Overall responsibility for the school/college as an exam centre:

- advises on appeals and re-marks
- the head of centre is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document *Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments*.

Exams officer

Manages the administration of public and internal exams:

- advises the senior leadership team, subject and class tutors and other relevant support staff on exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various exam boards
- oversees the production and distribution to staff and candidates of timetables of dates 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 coursework is 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
- ensures access arrangements applications are applied for by the SENCO department using the JCQ *Access arrangements regulations*

and *Guidance relating to candidates who are eligible for adjustments in examinations*

- makes applications for special consideration using the *JCO Special Considerations regulations* and *Guidance relating to candidates who are eligible for adjustments in examinations*
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes
- line manages the exam invigilators, organising their recruitment and training
- submits candidates' coursework marks and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies, tracks despatch and ensures returned coursework is stored by Heads of Department/subject correctly.
- arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any appeals/re-mark requests
- involvement in post-results procedures
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams
- support for the input of data
- Posting of exam papers

Vice Principal

- Organisation of teaching and learning

Assistant Principal

- External validation of courses followed at key stage 4 / post-16.

Assistant Principal/Heads of faculty/department/teacher

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries
- Involvement in post-results procedures
- Supporting access arrangements, ensuring they are met/adhered to
- Accurate completion of coursework mark sheets and declaration sheets
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer

Head of Information and Guidance

- Guidance and careers information.

Teachers

- Notification of access arrangements to head of faculty/department (as soon as possible after the start of the course)
- Supporting access arrangements, ensuring they are met/adhered to
- Submission of candidate names to heads of department / faculty

SENCO

- Administration of access arrangements
- Notification of access arrangements to head of faculty/department (as soon as possible after the start of the course)
- 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.

Invigilators

- 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 their return to the exams office.

Candidates/Parents

- Confirmation and signing of entries.
- Understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.

2. The statutory tests and qualifications offered

The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the head of centre.

The statutory tests and qualifications offered are NCTs, GCSE, A levels and Entry Level, Functional Skills, OCR Nationals.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus for that year. If there has been a change of syllabus from the previous year, the exams office must be informed.

At key stage 3

All candidates will continue to take mathematics and science SATs even though these tests are no longer statutory. ICT is taken as a Functional Skills exam. The school will consider the use of intervention or booster strategies in connection with any candidates who are unlikely to attain the minimum level.

Decisions on whether candidates should not take an individual subject or all NCTs will be taken in consultation with the SENCO, subject teachers and the head of key stage.

At key stage 4

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

At post-16

It is expected that AS modules will be completed during year 12.

3. Exam seasons and timetables

3.1 Exam seasons

Internal exams are scheduled in January, March and May.

External exams are scheduled in November, January, March and May/June.

Most internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

Which exam series are used in the centre is decided by the heads of subject and the heads of department.

3.2 Timetables

The exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for both external and internal exams once these are confirmed. These are also placed on the college website for external viewing.

4. Entries, entry details, late entries and retakes

4.1 Entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the heads of subject, heads of department and the subject teachers.

A candidate or parent/carer can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal. Withdrawal must always be discussed with Head of Subject and Assistant Principal.

The centre accepts external entries from former candidates only; these candidates will be informed of all associated costs i.e entry, invigilation etc.

4.2 Late entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department via email, notice board and internal post.

Late entries are authorised by heads of subject, heads of department and subject teachers. Costs may be passed onto departments. If parents request a late entry costs may be passed to them.

4.3 Retakes

Candidates are allowed 1 retake per subject in GCSE which the college will fund.

At AS and A2 candidates will cover the costs of all re-sits. There may be extenuating circumstances when the college/department will fund resits.

Further resits at all levels, will be funded by the candidates. This will include all associated costs i.e invigilation etc.

Retake decisions will be made in consultation with the candidates and the subject teachers.

(See also section 5: Exam fees)

5. Exam fees

GCSE initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

AS initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

A2 initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

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.

Reimbursement will be sought from candidates who fail to sit an exam or meet the necessary 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.

All AS and A2 retake fees are paid for by the candidates.

(See also section 4.3: Retakes)

For Enquiries about results see section 11.2: Enquiries about results [EARs]

6. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), special needs and access arrangements

6.1 DDA

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 extends the application of the DDA to general qualifications. All exam centre staff must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.

6.2 Special needs

A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the SENCO and the educational psychologist / specialist teacher.

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

6.3 Access arrangements

Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the SENCO and the exams officer.

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

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the exams officer with the SENCO.

Invigilation for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the exams officer.

Support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the SENCO.

7. Estimated grades

Estimated grades

The heads of department, heads of faculty and the heads of subject will submit estimated grades to the exams officer when requested by the exams officer.

8. Managing invigilators and exam days

8.1 Managing invigilators

External invigilators will be used for exam supervision. They will be used for external and some internal exams.

The recruitment and training of invigilators is the responsibility of the exams office.

Securing the necessary Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the centre administration.

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

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the exams office.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the centre administration.

8.2 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 is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

On most occasions the Assistant Principal will support the exams officer with the start of exams. This will include entry of candidates into exam venue.

Head of Subject/Department will start their own subject exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates but must not advise on which questions are to be attempted.

In practical exams subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.

Teachers who are not formally invigilating (or responsible for administrating) an exam, are not allowed access to the papers until one hour after the published starting time. Also, no teacher who has seen the paper after that time is allowed contact with any candidate being held in a centre pending a timetable variation. This means that no teacher may look at the papers for any reason, including to 'check for errors' before 10am or 2.30pm unless they are invigilating for the first hour of the exam.

Papers will be distributed to heads of department/faculty at the end of the exam session.

9. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration

9.1 Candidates

The centre's rules on acceptable dress and behaviour apply at all times. These are reiterated in exam documentation issued to candidates and parents on paper and on the college website.

Invigilators will ensure mobile phones, IPODS, MP3 Players. Pagers and any other products with text/digital facilities are collected and removed from the exam venue.

Other personal belongings remain the candidates own responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

For exams longer than one hour, candidates will not be allowed to leave the exam room until at least one hour after the published starting time. They will not be allowed to return.

The college 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.

9.2 Clash candidates

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

The candidates must take some responsibility in identifying clashes of timetable.

9.3 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 exams officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

10. Coursework and appeals against internal assessments

10.1 Coursework

Candidates who have to prepare portfolios should do so by the end of the course or centre-defined date.

Heads of department will ensure all coursework is ready for despatch at the correct time and the exams officer will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom.

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by the subject teachers, heads of subject, heads of department and the heads of faculty.

10.2 Appeals against internal assessments

The centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure on this subject, which is available on the College website.

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 coursework 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 exams officer and recorded for awarding body inspection.

11. Results, enquiries about results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS)

11.1 Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days in person at the centre or by post to their home addresses (candidates to provide sae).

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

head of centre.

The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the head of centre.

The centre aggregates at the end of year 12 for AS grades.

11.2 Enquires about results

EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking.

College may request remarking either for an individual, class or cohort in which case this will be funded by the college.

Departments may decide on remarking for individuals or classes. This will be funded by the college. This may be shared with or wholly funded by departments.

Individual candidates may request remarking, either personally or in liason with college. In either case candidates will pay for this enquiry.

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.

11.3 Access to scripts

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 exams officer, teaching staff and head of centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark 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 re-marks cannot be applied for once a script has been returned.

12. Certificates

Certificates are presented in person, posted (first class) or 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 are not withheld from candidates who owe fees.

The centre retains certificates for one year.

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Head of centre

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Exams officer

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Tuesday 11 November, 2008

Date

The policy is next due for review on 11/11/2010.