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Exams Policy

DRAFT

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1. Introduction and aims

Our school is committed to ensuring that exams are managed and administered effectively.

The aim of this policy is to ensure:

- The planning and management of exams is conducted in the best interest of candidates
- Our system of exams administration is efficient and clear, and staff and pupils understand what is required and expected of them
- We comply with requirements and guidance set out by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and awarding bodies

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Everyone

Everyone involved in our exam processes, including staff and pupils, must read, understand and implement this policy.

2.2 Head of centre

The head of centre:

- Has overall responsibility for the school as an exams centre
- Is responsible for ensuring that all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice are reported, in line with the JCQ guidance on [suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments](#)

Our head of centre is Mr Hugh Davies.

2.3 Exams officer

The exams officer is responsible for the administration of exams. They:

- Manage the administration of external exams
- Advise the senior leadership team (SLT), subject and class tutors, and other relevant support staff on annual exams timetables and procedures as set by awarding bodies
- Oversee the production and distribution of an annual calendar for all exams in which candidates will be involved, and communicate regularly with staff about imminent deadlines and events. This calendar must be provided to all staff and candidates
- Ensure that candidates and their parents are informed of, and understand, aspects of the exams timetable that will affect them
- Check with teaching staff that the necessary coursework and/or controlled assessments are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- Provide and confirm detailed data on estimated entries
- Maintain systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams
- Receive, check and securely store all exam papers and completed scripts, and ensure that scripts are dispatched as per the guidelines
- Administer access arrangements and make applications for special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ [guidance on the special consideration process](#)
- Identify and manage exam timetable clashes
- Account for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges
- Line manage the senior exams invigilator in organising the recruitment, training, and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams

- Ensure candidates' coursework/controlled assessment marks are submitted correctly and on schedule, along with any other material required by the awarding bodies
- Track, dispatch and store returned coursework/controlled assessments
- Arrange for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates, and forward, in consultation with the SLT, any post-results service requests
- Report all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice, in line with the JCQ guidance on suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments
- Advise on appeals and re-marks

Our exams officer is Mrs Nicci Morris.

2.4 Learning Managers

Learning Managers are responsible for:

- Advising the exams officer of any changes to syllabus or assessment details for their subjects
- Advising the exams officer of entries for their subjects
- Guidance and pastoral care for candidates who are unsure about exams entries or amendments to entries
- Accurately completing entry and mark sheets, and adhering to deadlines as set by the exams officer
- Accurately completing coursework/controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets
- Decisions on post-results procedures

2.5 Teachers

Teachers are responsible for:

- Supplying information about entries, coursework and controlled assessments as required by the learning manager and/or the exams officer

2.6 Additional learning needs co-ordinator (ALNCO)

The ALNCO is responsible for:

- Identifying and testing candidates' requirements for access arrangements and notifying the exams officer in good time so that they can put exam day arrangements in place
- Processing any necessary applications in order to gain approval (if required)
- Working with the exams officer to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exam rooms

Our ALNCO is Mr Robert Williams.

2.7 Lead invigilator(s)

The lead invigilator(s) are responsible for:

- Assisting the exams officer to run exams efficiently, according to JCQ regulations
- Collecting exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam
- Collecting all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and ensuring they're returned to the exams office

2.8 Candidates

Candidates are responsible for:

- Confirming and signing entries
- Understanding coursework/controlled assessment regulations, and signing a declaration that confirms the coursework to be their own

- Ensuring they conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ regulations

3. Qualifications offered

The headteacher decides the qualifications we offer.

We offer the following types of qualifications:

- GCSE, Level 2 Vocational, Level 3 Applied BTEC L2 & L3, AS level, A level, Prince's Trust Vocational Qualifications, Welsh Baccalaureate

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any school year may be found in the Year 9 Options Booklet and the Sixth Form Prospectus.

If there will be a change to a specification for the next year, the exams office must be informed by July in the current academic year.

Informing the exams office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the learning manager.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by the learning manager and learning leader in consultation with the relevant SLT links and ALNCo.

4. Exam series

Internal exams (mock or trial exams) and assessments are scheduled in the following exam series:

- December - Yr 11, Yr 12 & Yr 13

External exams and assessments are scheduled in the following exam series:

- November - GCSE
- January - GCSE, BTEC
- May/June - GCSE, Level 2, AS & A level, Level 3, BTEC

Internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

The head of centre decides which exam series are used in the centre.

The centre does offer assessments on an on-demand basis (BTEC Sport). If offered, on-demand assessments can be scheduled only in windows agreed between the exams officer and the learning manager.

5. Exam timetables

Once confirmed, the exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for internal and/or external exams at a specified date before each series begins.

6. Entries (including entry details and late entries)

Candidates or parents/carers can request subject entry, change of level or withdrawal but all decisions rest with the head of centre.

We do not accept entries from private candidates.

We do not act as an exams centre for other organisations.

Entry deadlines are circulated to learning managers via email.

Learning Managers will provide estimated entry information to the exams officer to meet JCQ and awarding body deadlines.

6.1 Re-sits

We allow re-sits for the following types of qualifications:

- GCSEs
- AS-levels
- A-levels
- BTECs

Re-sit decisions will be made by learning managers in consultation with the exams officer.

7. 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 actions well in advance of each exams series.

8. Equalities

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

We will comply with the legislation, including making reasonable adjustments to the service that we provide to candidates in accordance with the requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies, and JCQ. This is the responsibility of the head of centre.

9. Access Arrangements

The ALNCO will inform subject teachers of candidates with additional learning 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 ALNCO.

Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement is the responsibility of the ALNCO and teachers.

Room arrangements for candidates using access arrangements will be organised by the exams officer.

Invigilation and support for candidates using access arrangements, as defined in the [JCQ access arrangements regulations](#), will be organised by the exams officer.

10. Contingency planning

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

Contingency plans are available on the school website and are in line with the [guidance provided by Ofqual, JCQ, Quals Wales](#) and awarding organisations.

11. Estimated grades

Learning Managers are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the exams officer when requested.

12. Managing invigilators

External staff will be used to invigilate examinations.

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

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the exams officer.

If invigilators require Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, the Business and Finance Director is responsible for obtaining these.

DBS fees are paid by the centre.

Invigilators rates of pay are set by the local authority.

Invigilators are recruited, timetabled, trained and briefed by the exams officer.

13. Malpractice

The head of centre, in consultation with the exams officer, is responsible for ensuring that suspected malpractice is thoroughly investigated.

14. Exam days

The exams officer will:

- Book all exam rooms (after liaising with other relevant users)
- Make question papers, exam stationary and materials available for the invigilator

Site management staff is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms, and will be advised of requirements 21 days in advance.

The senior invigilator will start and finish all exams in accordance with [JCQ guidelines](#).

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 learning managers in accordance with JCQ's recommendations and no later than 24 hours after candidates have completed them.

After an exam, the exams officer will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed exam scripts to awarding bodies, working in conjunction with the invigilators and school support staff.

15. Candidates

The exams officer will provide written information to candidates in advance of each exam series.

Our published rules on acceptable dress and behaviour apply at all times. Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and we accept 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 stationary list, or the specification for that subject.

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

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

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines. Candidates are expected to stay for the full exam time.

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.

15.1 Clash candidates

The exams officer will be responsible for making arrangements for clash candidates, including:

- Supervising escorts
- Identifying a secure venue
- Arranging overnight stays where necessary

16. Special consideration

If a candidate is unable to attend an exam because of illness, bereavement, or other trauma, or if a candidate becomes ill or otherwise disadvantaged during an exam, they are responsible for alerting the exams officer/learning leader/pastoral guidance worker 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.

17. Internal assessment

It is the duty of learning managers 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 internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by learning managers. The exams officer will inform staff of the deadline date for appeals against internal assessments.

Any appeals will be dealt with in accordance with our internal appeals procedure document.

18. Results and certificates

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days in person at school.

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 exams officer and relevant site staff.

The provision of the necessary staff on results days is the responsibility of the the exams officer and the head of centre.

Dates of results days each year will be published for all candidates through the school website.

18.1 Enquiries about results (EARs)

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. A request for a re-moderation of internally assessed work may be submitted without the consent of a group of candidates.

The cost of EARs will be paid by the candidate in most cases.

The cost of EARs is communicated to candidates with their results slips.

All decisions about whether to support an application for an EAR will be made by the learning manager.

If a candidate's request for an EAR is not supported, the candidate may appeal and we will respond by following the process in our internal appeals procedure document.

All processing of EARs will be the responsibility of the exams officer, following the JCQ guidance.

18.2 Access to scripts (ATS)

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request a copy of written exam papers in line with the awarding bodies deadlines.

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

Applications for EARs cannot be submitted once an original script has been returned.

The exams officer is responsible for processing requests for ATS.

The cost of ATS will be paid by the candidate in most cases.

If the candidate will pay the cost of ATS is detailed in the results slip.

19. Monitoring and review

The head of centre is responsible for ensuring that this policy is reviewed every 3 years.

Policy review will take place annually if there are changes to:

- The exams system
- JCQ guidance
- Your curriculum offer

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