



EXAMS POLICY

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CONTEXT

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.

POLICY AIMS

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 **annually**.

This exam policy will be reviewed by the Head of Centre, Governors, Senior Leadership Team and the Examinations Officer.

CURRENT POLICY

1. Exam responsibilities

Head of Centre

Overall responsibility for the Academy/college as an exam centre. Also:

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

Examinations Officer

Manages the administration of public and internal exams and exam results:

- advises the senior leadership team, curriculum team leaders, subject teachers and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various awarding bodies
- oversees the production and distribution to staff and candidates of timetables 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
- administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration using the JCQ *Access arrangements and special considerations regulations* and *Guidance relating to candidates who are eligible for adjustments in examinations*
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes
- accounts for expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges
- organises the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams
- submits candidates' coursework and controlled assessment marks, tracks despatch and stores returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule
- arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any appeals/re-mark requests
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.

Assistant Principal

- Liaise with Head of Centre and Line Manager for Data & Examinations Officer.
- External validation of courses followed at key stage 4 / post-16.

Curriculum Team Leaders

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries
- Involvement in post-results procedures
- 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

Careers Advisor

- Guidance and careers information.

Teachers

- Ensures candidates are prepared and taught the entire scope of the examination specification to ensure their best attempt in the examinations.
- Applies access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course) to all internal assessments as advised by the SENCo.

- Submission of candidate names to curriculum team leaders.

Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo)

- Administration of access arrangements.
- 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.

Student Services Team

- Ensure that examination statement of entry and personal timetables are distributed to all candidates in a timely manner.
- Support exams office staff to ensure all candidates are present for their exams or suitable documentation provided to clarify absences.

Lead invigilator/invigilators

- Ensure all examination halls are equipment in line with JCQ Regulations and completes exam room checklist for each session.
- Collection of exam papers and other materials 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

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

Data Management Team

- Prepare and present reports to SLT showing results achieved in relation to expected grades and comparable data for previous years.
- Prepare statistical information for the LA and DfES.
- Prepare statistical information for the press on exam results days.

2. The statutory tests and qualifications offered

The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the heads of curriculum and the senior leadership team.

The statutory tests and qualifications offered are A Levels, GCSE, Key skills and BTEC at both level 2 and level 3. For further information on BTEC qualifications see BTEC Centre Handbook.

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 by the end of the summer term.

At key stage 3

All candidates will take English, Mathematics and Science. The Academy 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 will be taken in consultation with the parents/carers, SENCo and the learning leaders.

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, for subjects not yet reformed only. For reformed subjects, A level exams will be completed in year 13.

3. Exam seasons and timetables

3.1 Exam seasons

A full suite of Internal exams are scheduled in November/December and February/March for GCSE and Post 16, in April MFL oral exams and in June/July for years 7-10 and year 12 (for reformed subjects).

External exams are scheduled in May/June.

Which exam series are used in the centre is decided by the Head of Centre and the Senior Leadership Team.

3.2 Timetables

The exams office will circulate the exam timetables for both external and internal exams once these are confirmed.

TEC external assessment will take place, when deemed appropriate by the CTL and the Exams Officer.

4. Entries, entry details, late entries and retakes

4.1 Entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the curriculum team leader and the subject teachers.

A candidate's parent/carer can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.

The centre accepts entries from external candidates dependent upon the subject area and exam content – this is at the discretion of the examinations office.

Entry deadlines are circulated to curriculum team leaders via email, this includes deadlines for BTEC registration. Please refer to BTEC Registration and Certification timeline.

4.2 Late entries

Late entries are authorised by the relevant member of SLT and Exams Officer.

4.3 Retakes

Candidates are not normally allowed retakes in GCSE, requests will be considered on an individual basis for Maths and English.

Retake decisions will be made in consultation with the candidates, subject teachers and curriculum team leaders.

(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.

A level initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre. Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the departments.

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.

Retake fees for first and any subsequent retakes are paid by the candidates at post-16. (See also section 4.3: Retakes)

Candidates must pay the fee for an enquiry about a result, should the centre not uphold the enquiry and the candidate insist on pursuing the enquiry. (See also section 11.2: Enquiries about results [EARs])

6. The Equality Act, special needs and access arrangements

6.1 The Equality Act

The Equality Act extends the application of equality 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 Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) and the educational psychologist / specialist teachers.

The SENCo will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs who are embarking on a course leading to an 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 and the exams officer.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the exams office.

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

7. Estimated grades

The Curriculum Team Leaders will submit estimated grades to the exams office when requested by the exams officer and in order to meet awarding body deadlines.

8. Managing invigilators and exam days

8.1 Managing invigilators

External invigilators will be used for exam supervision. They will be used for all external exams.

The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams Officer and the HR department.

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

DBS 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 HR 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.

The lead invigilator will start all exams 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 curriculum team leaders 24 hours after the exam has finished.

9. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration

9.1 Candidates

The centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and all 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 may leave the exam room for a genuine purpose requiring an immediate return to the exam room, in which case a member of invigilation staff must accompany them.

Student Services/Pastoral Support Teams are responsible for candidates who are late for their exams, or do not turn up at all and for ensuring the examinations officer is aware.

9.2 Clash candidates

The Exams Office and relevant SLT member will be responsible as necessary for identifying escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays.

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 (or their parent/carer) responsibility to alert the centre exams officer, 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 office 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, Controlled Assessment and BTEC Assessments

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

Curriculum Team Leaders will ensure all sample work is ready for despatch at the correct time and the exams office 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 Curriculum Team Leaders.

Curriculum Team Leaders will ensure that all students' work is kept secure until after the EAR deadline (20th September each year) has passed. Candidates must not make adjustments to their work during this time.

10.2 Appeals against internal assessments

The centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure for appeals against internal assessments, which is available from the exams office and the Academy 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 work has been assessed unfairly, inconsistently or not in accordance with the specification for the qualification
- appeals should be made in writing by 31 May of the year in which the work was assessed to the head of centre 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. Malpractice

'Malpractice' means any act, default or practice which is a breach of the Regulations or which:

- compromises, attempts to compromise or may compromise the process of assessment, the integrity of any qualification or the validity of a result or certificate,
- damages the authority, reputation or credibility of any awarding body or centre or any officer, employee or agent of any awarding body or centre.

A failure by a centre to investigate allegations of suspected malpractice in accordance with the requirements of the Joint Council for Qualifications also constitutes malpractice. The centre will investigate and report to the appropriate awarding body all cases of suspected malpractice in accordance with the Joint Council's policies and procedures.

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

12.1 Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days in person at the centre / by post to their home addresses.

Arrangements for the Academy 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 leader for exams.

12.2 EARs

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

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.

(See section 5: Exam fees)

12.3 ATS

Candidates may request scripts to be returned to them for which a fee will be charged.

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

Re-marks cannot be applied for once a script has been returned, except Pearson.

14. Certificates

Certificates are collected and signed for or sent by recorded post providing the relevant fee has been paid to the centre in advance.

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so.

The centre retains certificates for 12 months from the date of issue and then they are disposed through the Academy's confidential waste process.

Head of centre

Examinations Officer

Date

A signed copy of this document is held within the Examinations Office.

Signature: Principal	 A Warboys
Signature: Chair of Governors	 S Trafford
Date:	October 2017