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Exams Policy

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The policy is next due for review on January 2018



The purpose of this exams policy is:

- to ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interests of candidates;
- to ensure the operation of an efficient exams 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.

The exams policy will be reviewed every year.

The exams policy will be reviewed by the Head of Centre & Exams Officer

Where references are made to JCQ regulations/guidelines, further details can be found at www.jcq.org.uk.

Exam responsibilities

The 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 officer¹:

- manages the administration of internal 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.
- administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ publication A guide to the special consideration process.
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.

¹ This is the individual to whom the Head of Centre has delegated responsibility for the administration of exams in their centre.

- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
- line manages the senior exams invigilator in organising the recruitment, training, and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams.
- 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 SLT, any post results service requests.

Lead Tutors/Lecturers are responsible for:

- 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.

Tutors/Lecturers are responsible for:

- supplying information on entries, coursework and controlled assessments as required by the head of department and/or exams officer.

The **approved specialist teacher** is responsible for:

- 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.

Lead invigilator/invigilators are responsible for:

- 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 are responsible for:

- confirmation and signing 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 Centre

The qualifications offered 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 February 2017.

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

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by Lead Tutors in consultation with the Head of Centre

Exam timetables

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

Entries, entry details and late entries

The centre does not accept entries from private candidates.

The centre does not act as an exams centre for other organisations.

Entry deadlines are circulated to Lead Tutors via email.

Lead Tutors 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 (i.e. late) require the authorisation, in writing, of Head of Centre

GCSE re-sits are allowed. Re-sit decisions will be made by Head of Centre in consultation with Lead Tutors.

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 for each exams series.

GCSE entry exam fees are paid by the candidates. HNC assessment fees are included within the course cost.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the candidates.

Re-sit fees are paid by the candidates.

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. This is the responsibility of the Head of Centre & Exams Officer under the direction of the approved specialist assessor.

Access arrangements

The approved specialist assessor 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 approved specialist assessor.

Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement is the responsibility of Exams Officer.

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

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Exams Officer.

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

Contingency planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

Contingency plans are available via email, briefing meetings & centre intranet and are in line with the guidance provided by Ofqual, JCQ and awarding organisations.

Estimated grades

Lead Tutors are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the exams officer when requested by the exams officer.

Managing invigilators

Internal & external staff may be used to invigilate examinations. These invigilators will be used for internal exams.

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

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

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

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the Head of Centre.

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

Malpractice

The Head of Centre in consultation with the Exams Officer 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.

Centre operations staff are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms, and will be advised of requirements 2 weeks in advance.

The Exams Officer will start and finish all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff may 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 Lead Tutors in accordance with JCQ's recommendations and no later than 3 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 centre operations staff.

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 Lead Tutor.

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 Exams Officer.

Note: 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.

Clash candidates

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

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 Exams 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 the sooner of 5 days after the exam and before the deadline for the exam series.

Internal assessment

It is the duty of Lead Tutors 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 Lead Tutor. 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 OR;
- by post to their home address - candidates to provide a self-addressed envelope (**by request**)

The results slip will not 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

The provision of the necessary staff on results days is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

Enquiries about Results (EAR)

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 the group of candidates.

The cost of EARs will be paid by the candidate

All decisions on whether to make an application for an EAR will be made by Head of Centre.

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 Exams 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 within 14 days of 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 candidate.

Processing of requests for ATS will be the responsibility of Exams Officer

Certificates

Candidates will receive their certificates

- by first class post to home address (recorded delivery)

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.

Head of Centre

Date

Exams Officer

Date