

# Examinations Policy 2024-25



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## Head of Centre

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## Exams Officer

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## Overview

The purpose of this **exams policy** is:

- to ensure that 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 Examinations Officer.

Where references are made to JCQ regulations/guidelines, further details can be found at [www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk).

## Exam Responsibilities

**The Head of Centre** (Head Teacher and Heads of School\*):

- has overall responsibility for the school/site as an exams centre and advises on appeals and reviews.
- is responsible for reporting all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice - refer to the JCQ document *Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments*.

**The Exams Officer<sup>1</sup>:**

- manages the administration of internal and external examinations.
- 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.

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

- 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 publications for Access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration.
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
- together with the Heads of School, line manages exam invigilators 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 is submitted 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.
- Is line managed by the Head of Centre who has a good working knowledge of the exam process.

**Subject Coordinators** 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 / NEA mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- decisions on post-results procedures.

**Teachers** are responsible for:

- supplying information on entries, coursework and NEA as required by the Heads of School/Subject Coordinator/or exams officer.

**The SENCo/Head of School** 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 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:

- completing all required training, both online and face-to-face as requested by the Exams Officer and the appropriate Head of School.
- 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/officer before the start of the exam, if required.

- collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and ensuring their return to the exams office/officer.

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**Candidates** are responsible for:

- confirmation and signing of entries.
- understanding coursework / NEA regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the NEA 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 SLT.

The types of qualifications offered include A-Levels, GCSEs, Vocational Qualifications, Functional Skills, Functional Skills Entry Level and Entry Level qualifications.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's 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 1<sup>st</sup> March each year.

Informing the exams office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the Subject Coordinators/Head of Department.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by Heads of School in consultation with Subject Leaders.

## Exam Series

Internal exams (mock or trial exams) and assessments are scheduled as required.

Evidence of the results of these will be stored securely by Heads of School until after the results for that series have been issued.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-resilience-in-the-exam-system-in-2023#:~:text=Guidance%20for%20schools%2C%20colleges%20and,the%20exam%20system%20in%202023.>

External exams and assessments are scheduled in exam series as appropriate.

Internal exams can and should be held under external exam conditions.

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

The centre offers some assessments on an on-demand basis. When offered, on-demand assessments can be scheduled only in windows agreed between the Head of Centre, the Subject Coordinator/Head of Department, the Head of School and the Exams Officer.

## Exam timetables

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

## Entries, entry details and late entries

Candidates or parents/carers can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal on negotiation with the Head of Centre.

The centre may occasionally accept entries from private candidates. Entries from private candidates must be presented to the exam officer and approved by the Head Teacher. The

corresponding exam fee must be paid before entry and it is not refundable. Private candidates are subject to the same exam rules as pupils on the school roll.

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

Entry deadlines are circulated to subject coordinators and teachers via email.

Subject teachers 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 of the Head of Centre.

GCSE re-sits/retakes are allowed.

Functional skills re-sits/retakes are allowed.

Re-sit decisions will be made by subject teacher in consultation with Head of Centre.

## 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 action well in advance for each exam's series.

A-Levels and GCSE entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Functional skills, Entry Level qualifications and vocational qualifications entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the centre.

Fee reimbursements may be sought from candidates:

- If they fail to sit an exam.
- If they do not meet the necessary coursework requirements without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances. Re-sit fees are paid by the centre.

## 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 candidates in accordance with requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies, and JCQ. This is the responsibility of the Head of Centre.

## Access Arrangements

The SENCo/Deputy Head Teacher and the Examinations Officer will inform subject coordinators and teachers of candidates with special educational needs of 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 SENCo/Deputy Head Teacher and will reflect the candidate's normal way of working.

Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement is the responsibility of SENCo/Head of School.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the SENCo/Head of School with the support of the exam officer. Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Examinations Officer and the Head of School.

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

## Contingency Planning

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

Contingency plans are available from the Examinations Officer and are in line with the guidance provided by Ofqual, JCQ and awarding organisations.

The awarding bodies will designate a "contingency day" and two "Contingency afternoons" for examinations and all candidates will be made aware of the need to be available up to and including this date before the start of the exam series.

## Estimated Grades

Subject teachers are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the exams officer when requested.

## Managing Invigilators

External staff will not be used to invigilate examinations except, in some cases, for Outreach students.

## 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 invigilators.

The Exams Officer is responsible for overseeing the set-up of the allocated rooms [with the Site Supervisor, if required]. The Heads of School are responsible for ensuring that the examination rooms are correctly set up for each exam.

The Heads of School and/or invigilators will start and finish all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff must not 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 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 subject coordinators/Head of Departments/teachers in accordance with JCQ's recommendations and no earlier than 24 hours after being completed by the candidates.

After an exam, the exams officer, working in conjunction with Centre Admin Support Staff, will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed examination scripts to awarding bodies.

## 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 Exams Officer.

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, watches and other electronic communication or storage devices with text or digital facilities. Any precluded items must be given to a staff member and 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 Head of Centre / Examinations Officer.

Note: candidates who leave an exam room must be accompanied by an appropriate member of staff at all times.

The Examinations Officer or Head of School is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam days.

### **Clash candidates**

The Head of Centre 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, it is their responsibility to alert the centre's Exams Officer / Head of Centre / Head of School to that effect and in a timely manner.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within one day of the exam.

The exams officer will make a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body within two days of the exam.

## **Internal Assessment**

It is the duty of Subject Coordinators/Heads of Department to ensure that all internal assessment is ready for dispatch at the correct time. The exams officer/ admin support staff 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 Officer by the Subject Coordinator/Head of Department. The Exams Officer will inform staff of the date by when appeals against internal assessments must be made. Any appeals will be dealt with in accordance with the centre's Internal Appeals Procedure (IAP) document.

## **Results**

Candidates will receive individual result slips on results days by post or email to their home address/school email address. 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 Head of Centre.

The provision of the necessary staff on results days is the responsibility of the Head of Centre.

## **Reviews of Marking**

Reviews of Marking may be requested by centre staff or the candidate following the release of results. A request for a review 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 Reviews of Marking will be paid by the centre.

All decisions on whether to make an application for a Review of Marking will be made by the Head of Centre. If a candidate's request for a Review of Marking 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 Reviews of Marking 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 2 days of the receipt of results.

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

Reviews of Marking cannot be applied for once an original script has been returned.

Any cost incurred by Reviews of Marking or Access to Scripts will be paid by the centre.

Processing of requests for Access to Scripts will be the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

## **Certificates**

Candidates will receive their certificates by post to their home address.

If required, 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 one year. 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.