

# Examinations Policy

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## Rationale

Public examinations provide vital summative assessment, generally at the end of a key stage. This assessment gives information to students, parents, other education institutions, local authority and government agencies and employers about knowledge, understanding and skills achieved. To this end the school participates willingly in the administration of these examinations in the best interests of the students and the school. In addition other internally set and marked examinations may take place at other stages in a student's progress through the college in order to both prepare for public examinations and check student learning.

## Purposes

To ensure that:

- The exams system in this school combines entitlement with flexibility.
- Students are given the opportunity to demonstrate the highest achievement of which they are capable and competent; administration helps them to achieve their best.
- Students undertake examinations knowing what is expected of them in terms of preparation and behaviour.
- Students are guided in their decisions about whether to withdraw an examination entry and do so with full knowledge of the implications for their careers or further education.
- Staff understand fully their obligations and responsibilities with relation to examinations.
- The school meets the requirements of examination security and is properly equipped to undertake the administration of examinations, including data processing and a results service.
- Community education is provided with an administrative centre for GCSE and A level entries.
- Accurate examination data is available to inform target setting.
- Curriculum planning, target setting and careers links take into account up-to-date information on the current examinations system.
- Candidates are issued with the school's published rules together with JCQ rules and requirements in relation to acceptable dress, behaviour and candidate use of all electronic devices.

## Guidelines

Responsibilities for public examinations:

- **Principal**, overall responsibility for the school as an examinations centre.
- **Assistant Principal**, organisation of teaching and learning and therefore of the opportunities for external validation of courses followed at key stages 4 and post 16.
- **Heads of Department**, submission of candidate detail to exams officer, guidance for students who are unsure about examination entries or where alteration of the initial entry is made, involvement in post-results procedures, submission of estimated grades to the Examinations officer on request.
- **SENCo**, identification and testing of candidates, requirements for access arrangements, organisation for the provision of additional support.
- **Examinations officer**, administration of entries, relevant paperwork, organisation of examination sessions and examination data, circulation of timetable.
- **Careers Advisor**, guidance and careers information.

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- **Administrative Staff**, support for the input of data, communication with the examination boards, posting of examination papers and the post results procedures.

#### **Qualifications offered:**

The Academy Leadership Team together with Heads of Department are responsible for the decision on which qualifications are offered. Qualifications offered include:

- **GCSE/GCE Examinations**
- **Edexcel BTEC and OCR Cambridge National courses**
- **Entry Level qualifications**

#### **At key stage 4 and post-16**

- All students should be entitled to and enabled to achieve an entry for qualifications from an external awarding body.
- If a student's entry in any subject is to be withdrawn there must be an initial concern form completed by the subject teacher in consultation with the subject leader. The student, parents/carers, the progress leaders, the subject leader, subject teacher and if necessary the head of careers should be involved before a final decision is made.
- All students will be monitored carefully throughout their time at the school, and coursework and attitude notified to the head of key stage using concern forms as soon as they arise.
- Any proposed major changes to the examination board, style or timing of examinations, e.g. modular courses, must be discussed and approved by the Senior Management team based on information given by the relevant subject leader.
- Amendment of entries which incur a financial penalty from the examination boards will be charged to subjects if they arise from that subject's error or omission.
- Changes of tier, withdrawals made by the proper procedures and alterations arising from administrative processes within the deadlines will not be charged to subjects.

The school may impose a charge equal to the financial charges levied by examination boards on:

- Students whose entries are withdrawn because of lack of coursework.
- Students who make a decision to sit or not to sit an examination after the late entry/withdrawal deadline.
- Students who fail to attend an examination and do not produce medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances. This will be communicated in writing to students and parents/carers at the start of GCSE and post 16 courses.

#### **At post-16**

- It is expected that AS modules will be completed during year 12.
- Re-sit decisions will be made in consultation with the student, subject teacher and subject leader, head of post-16 and examinations officer.
- After the release of results, subject teachers may request the return of papers or a re-mark at the school's expense. If a student requires this service against the judgment of the subject teacher, he/she will be charged.
- AS certification after one year will be sought as standard practice.

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### Clash Candidates

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

### Access Arrangement and Special Consideration

- The SENCo will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs who are embarking on a course leading to an exam.
- Examination consideration will be given to candidates previously identified by the SENCo where it is the normal working practice of the candidate in lesson.
- Completed access arrangements applications will be submitted to the relevant board by the Specialist Teacher.
- Should a candidate be ill before an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be taken ill during the exam itself or be otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during the exam, then it is the candidates responsibility to alert the centre.
- The candidate must supply any supporting documentation to the exams officer within 3 days of the exam.
- It is the responsibility of the exams officer to forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within 7 days of the exam.

### Invigilation

- External Invigilators are used to invigilate exams.
- Invigilators are timetabled by the Examinations officer and briefed by the exams officer.

### Malpractice

The Principal, as Head of Centre, is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

### Examination appeals procedures

The school is committed to ensuring that whenever staff assess students' work for external qualification; this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the specification for the qualification concerned. Assessments should be conducted by staff that have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills. Students' work should be produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the examination board. Where a set of work is divided between staff, consistency should be assured by internal moderation and standardisation. If students believe that this may not have happened in relation to his/her work, he/she may make use of this appeals procedure. **Note that appeals may only be made against the process that led to the assessment and not against the mark or grade.**

The existence of this procedure is made known to students at the start of examinations courses, and is displayed on the examination notice board and in this examinations policy, which is available for inspection on request.

1. Appeals should be made as soon as possible, and must be made at least two weeks before the end of the last externally assessed paper in the examinations series.

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2. Appeals should be made in writing to the examinations officer who will investigate the appeal. If the examinations officer was directly involved in the assessment in question, he/she will appoint another member of staff of similar or greater seniority to conduct the investigation. Likewise if the examination officer is not able to conduct the investigation for any other reason.
3. The person conducting the investigation will decide whether the process used for the internal assessment conformed with the requirements of the awarding body and examination code of practice of the QCA. This will be done before the end of the series.
4. The result of the appeal will be made known in writing to the parties concerned, together with any correspondence with the awarding body, any changes made to the assessment of the piece of work in question and any changes made for the future.
5. A written record of the appeal will be kept and made available to the awarding body at their request. Should the appeal bring any significant irregularity to light, the awarding body will be informed.

After work has been assessed internally it is moderated by the awarding body to ensure consistency between centres. **Such moderation frequently changes the marks awarded for internally assessed work. That is outside the control of the school and is not covered by this procedure.** Details of the appeals procedure for the relevant awarding body are available from the examination officer.

### **GCSE and A level results service**

- Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days, either in person at the centre or by post to their home address
- When results are published appropriate staff will distribute results, be available to give guidance to students and prepare data for publication and monitoring purposes
- This service will be supported by member(s) of the administrative staff.

### **Certificates**

- Certificates are collected and signed for.
- Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have written permission to do so.
- The centre retains certificates for 1 year.

### **Internal examinations**

- The exact nature of summative assessment in each subject will be determined ultimately by the subject leader within the rationale and purposes of this policy and other related policies
- The examinations officer will co-ordinate end of year written examinations in KS3 to ensure an even distribution of testing across the allotted time span.
- The cost of internal examination papers is the responsibility of subject area.

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*Equality Act 2010*

***All exam centre staff must ensure that meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 (previously Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), extended in 2005, and the Disability Equality Duty (DED), introduced in 2006). The Equality Act introduced measures aimed at eliminating the discrimination often faced by disabled people. The main provisions of the Act give protection to disabled people in the areas of employment and education.' A person has a disability for the purposes of the Act if s/he has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on her/his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The centre will meet the disability provisions under the Equality Act 2010 by ensuring that the exams centre is accessible and improving candidate experience. This is the responsibility of the Principal and Examinations officer.***

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