

Exams Policy

Policy reviewed by TQEA	February 2022
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This policy links to:	Located:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy• Equalities Policy	TQEA staff T drive

Review Date – February 2023

Key staff involved in the exams policy

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	Neil Harding
Exams officer line manager (Senior Leader)	Peter Ward
Exams officer	Charlotte Swaby
SENCo	Shiv Ressel

Contents

- Responsibilities
- Qualifications
- Exam series and timetables
- Entries, entry details and late entries
- Exam fees
- Access Arrangements
- Contingency Planning
- Private Candidates
- Estimated grades
- Managing invigilators
- Malpractice
- Security of Exam Materials
- Exam Days
- Candidates
- Non-Examined Assessments
- Results
- Access to Scripts, Review of Results and Appeals Procedures
- Certificates
- Archiving

Appendix 1

Information to Candidates

The policy purpose:

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.
- To ensure all exams and assessments are conducted according to JCQ and awarding body regulations, guidance and instructions, thus maintaining the integrity and security of the exam/assessment system at all times

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the Centre's exam processes to read, understand and implement this policy.

The exam policy will be reviewed every year.

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

Exam Responsibilities

Having overall responsibility for the school as an exam centre the Head of Centre:

- Ensures the centre has appropriate accommodation to support the size of the cohorts being taught
 - Understands the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications
 - Ensures the National Centre Number Register Annual Update (administered on behalf of the JCQ member awarding bodies by OCR) is responded to by the end of October confirming they are both aware of and adhering to the latest version of the JCQ regulations and instructions for conducting examinations and approves the Head of Centre formal declaration
 - Ensures a named member of staff acts as the Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCo)
 - Ensures centre staff are supported and appropriately trained to undertake key tasks within the exams process
 - Ensures centre staff undertake key tasks within the exams process and meet internal deadlines set by the Exams Officer
 - Ensures security within the examination process is managed according to JCQ and awarding body regulations, guidance and instructions including
 - the location of the centre's secure storage unit is in an area solely assigned to examinations
 - the relevant awarding body is immediately informed if the security of question papers or confidential supporting instructions is put at risk
 - that arrangements are in place to check that the correct question paper packets are opened by authorised members of centre staff
- The centres Exam Security Procedures are available from the exam's office.
- Is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document - Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments.

- Ensures reasonable steps are taken to prevent the occurrence of any malpractice (including maladministration).
- Ensures the required policies and procedures for the entire exam process are in place.

- The Exam Contingency Plan is located on the T drive and available from the exam's office.
 - The Internal Appeals Procedure is located upon the T drive and on the academy website under the exams section.
 - The Disability Policy (Exams) is located on the T drive.
 - The Exams Access Arrangement Process is documented and available from the exam's office.
 - The Complaints and Appeals Procedure (Exams) is located on the T drive. Students are informed and the procedure is placed on the website under the exams heading.
 - The Safeguarding Policy is located on the T drive.
 - The Data Protection Policy is located on the T drive.
 - The General Data Protection Regulations Policy Exams is located on the T drive.
- Ensures staff are only entered for qualifications through the centre as a last resort where the member of centre staff is unable to find another centre
- Ensures the relevant awarding bodies are informed of any declaration/conflict of interest where a candidate is being taught, prepared, entered or sitting exams where a relevant member of centre staff has a personal connection to the candidate
- Ensures members of centre staff do **not** forward e-mails and letters from awarding body or JCQ personnel without prior consent to third parties or upload such correspondence onto social media sites and applications
- Ensures members of centre staff do **not** advise parents/candidates to contact awarding bodies/JCQ directly

The Exams officer

- Manages the administration of public and internal exams
- Understands the contents of annually updated JCQ publications.
- Is familiar with the contents of annually updated information from awarding bodies on administrative procedures, key tasks, key dates and deadlines
- Ensures key tasks are undertaken and key dates and deadlines are met.
- Advises the senior leadership team, subject and class tutors 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, governors 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 all the relevant JCQ Information for Candidates (an example shown in Appendix 1) and also understand those aspects of the exam timetable that will affect them
- Consults with teaching staff to ensure that necessary assessment is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- Provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries if required
- Receives checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts
- Prompts the responsible HLTA to administer access arrangements and to initiate applications for special consideration using the JCQ publications Access Arrangements Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration.
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes

- Accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges
- Oversees the senior exam invigilator and assists in organizing the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams, maintaining records of the content of training provided to the invigilators for the required period.
- Briefs other relevant centre staff where they might be involved in the receipt and dispatch of confidential exam materials on the requirements for maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of the exam materials.
- Submits candidates' internal assessment marks, tracks dispatch and stores returned assessments 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.

Senior leaders (SLT) are responsible for

- Ensuring they are familiar with the contents, refer to and direct relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications

Teachers are responsible for:

- Notification of access arrangements requirements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- Submission of candidates' names to Curriculum Leaders/school/curriculum.
- Meeting internal deadlines set by the EO and SENCo
- Keeping updated with awarding body subject and teacher-specific information to confirm effective delivery of qualifications
- Attending relevant awarding body training and update events.

The SEN Coordinator (SENCo) is responsible for:

- The 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.
- Being familiar with the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications
- Leading on the access arrangements and reasonable adjustments process
- Working with the appointed qualified access arrangements assessor, on all matters relating to assessing candidates and ensures the correct procedures are followed
- Presents when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor's qualification

Lead invigilator/invigilators are responsible for:

- Assisting the exams officer in the efficient running of exams according to JCQ regulations
- Attending training, update, briefing and review sessions as required
- The receipt of exam papers and other material from the exam's 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 exam's office.

Candidates are responsible for:

- Maintaining proper conduct throughout in accordance the guidelines provided by JCQ.
- Understanding assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the assessment as their own.

Qualifications

Qualifications offered

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Head of centre, Curriculum Leaders and Senior leadership team.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken made by the Head of Centre, in consultation with the Candidates, Parents/Carers, Subject teachers, Head of subject and SLT.

Exam series and timetables

Exam seasons

Internal exams and assessments are scheduled in on demand.

External exams and assessments are scheduled throughout the year.

All Year 10 and 11 internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

The Head of Centre and Curriculum Leaders decide which exam series are used in the centre.

On-demand assessments can be scheduled only in windows agreed between the exams officer and the senior leadership.

Timetabling

Exams officer is responsible for

- Producing a master centre exam timetable for each exam series
- Identifying and resolving candidate exam timetable clashes according to the regulations (only applying overnight supervision arrangements in rare and exceptional circumstances and as a last resort)
- Identifying exam rooms and allocating invigilators according to required ratios
- Ensuring exam rooms are set up according to JCQ and awarding body requirements
- Liaising with the SENCo regarding rooming of access arrangement candidates

SEnCo is responsible for

- Liaising with the EO regarding rooming of access arrangement candidates

- Liaising with other relevant centre staff to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams

Entries, entry details and late entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Curriculum Leaders or Senior Leaders.

Candidates or parents/carers can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.

The centre does not act as an exam centre for other organizations.

Entry deadlines are circulated to Curriculum Leaders via Notice board, Briefing meeting, email and Internal post/pigeon hole as appropriate. The Exam Officer provides clear internal deadline to be met by Curriculum Leaders to minimize the risk of late entries.

The Exams Officer ensures candidates are aware of the JCQ Information for candidates Privacy Notice at the start of a vocational qualification or when entries are being processed for a general qualification.

Late entries, or amendments to entries, are authorized by Head of Centre, SLT member in charge of exams and Exams Officer.

The Statement of Entry is provided to parents & candidates to check for accuracy, by the Exams Officer after final entries are made.

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.

GCSE entry exam fees are paid by the Centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by departments, centre or candidates depending on circumstances.

Fee reimbursements are sought from candidates who fail without good reason to complete the requirements of a public exam where the governing body or local authority originally paid/agreed to pay the fee.

Re-sit fees are paid by the Centre.

Access Arrangements

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 can be granted during the course and in the exam.

A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the SENCo, Doctor and Educational psychologist/Specialist teacher, following the procedure set out in the center's Exams Access Arrangement Process.

Making access arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of both the SENCo/HLTA with responsibility and Exams officer.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the SENCo. via Access Arrangements Online after gathering data protection notices from candidates as required.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the SENCo with the exams officer.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organized by the SENCo and HLTA with responsibility, liaising with the Exams officer.

The SENCo keeps relevant paperwork and evidence on file for JCQ inspection purposes, and meets with the inspector to provide evidence and answer questions as required.

- The Disability Policy (Exams) is located on the T drive.
- The Exams Access Arrangement Process is documented and available from the exam's office.
- The Use of Word Processing for Examinations Guidance and Procedures is available from the exam's office.

Contingency planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the exams officer. The plan is available on request from the exam's office.

Private Candidates

The Centre does not accept private candidates.

Estimated grades

Heads of subject are responsible for submitting estimated grades where requested to the exams officer when necessary.

Managing invigilators

External staff are used to invigilate examinations.

Invigilator recruitment is the responsibility of the Exams officer supported by Senior Leaders.

The Exams Officer collects details from the invigilation team of any current maladministration/malpractice sanctions applied to them.

The Exams Officer provides training for any new invigilators plus an annual event to update the existing team on current JCQ regulations. A record of attendance plus content of the training is located in the exam's office.

An annually reviewed/updated invigilator handbook is provided to each member of the invigilation team.

The deployment of invigilators, including a roving invigilator when required, is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

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

DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre. Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the exam's office. Invigilators rates of pay are set by the centre administration.

Malpractice

The Head of Centre in consultation with the Exams office is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

The Head of Centre ensures any cases of alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice or maladministration before, during or after examinations/assessments (by centre staff, candidates, invigilators) are investigated and reported to the awarding body **immediately**, by completing the appropriate documentation.

The Senior Leaders provide support for the Exams Officer and invigilation when dealing with disruptive candidates within the exam rooms, and instigate internal disciplinary procedures if necessary.

Any incidents or irregularities occurring within the exam rooms are recorded in the incident log by the invigilator, with follow up actions recorded.

Security of Exam Materials

The exams officer has a process in place to demonstrate the receipt, secure movement and secure storage of confidential exam materials within the centre.

A log is kept at the initial point of delivery recording confidential materials received and signed for by authorised staff within the centre, and appropriate arrangements are in place for confidential materials to be placed in the secure storage facility.

The secure storage facility contains only current and live confidential material (including live confidential exam stationery provided by the awarding body for the use of candidates in their assessment).

Exam Security Procedures

The Exam Security Procedure is located within the Exams Office.

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 in conjunction with the exams officer is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

The Exams Officer ensures that there is a procedure in place to verify candidate identity in exam rooms and that invigilators are aware of the procedure

The Candidate Identification Procedure is located within exams office.

The Exams Officer provides seating plans for exam rooms according to JCQ and awarding body requirements (and ensures candidates with access arrangements are identified on the seating plan)

The lead invigilator will start and finish all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Members of the Senior Leadership Team 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.

Food and drink in exam rooms

The centre permits drinks in the exam rooms. All must be within a clear container, free from packaging and with all labels removed.

Arrangements for unauthorised materials taken into the exam room

Any unauthorised materials taken into the exam room are placed in the labelled trays at the front of the room (labelled per row).

An emergency evacuation procedure document is placed in each exam room with arrangements in place for a candidate with a disability who may need assistance if an exam room is evacuated

Emergency evacuation policy

The Emergency evacuation procedure is located within the Exams Office.

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 heads of department in accordance with JCQ's recommendations.

After an exam, the exams officer will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed examination scripts to awarding bodies via the DfE 'yellow label service'.

Candidates

The Centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behavior and candidates' use of mobile phones and other electronic devices apply at all times.

The centre issues exam information to candidates via a Candidate Handbook, plus individual exam timetables with attention drawn to the awarding bodies contingency day.

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 are expected to stay for the full exam time at the discretion of the exams officer or senior invigilator.

For exams longer than one hour, candidates may leave the exam early, but no sooner than one hour after the published starting time. They will not be allowed to return.

Candidates may only leave the exam room for a genuine purpose and are required to return immediately to the exam room. They must be accompanied by a member of the exams team at all times.

The Exams officer is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day or subsequently.

Candidate Absence

At the start of each exam session candidate's attendance is checked. Absences are immediately highlighted to the exams officer and/or exams secretary. Contact with parents and/or candidate is attempted to establish the reasons for the absence and whether their attendance can be facilitated.

Full details with evidence are gathered, if applicable, and the possibility of an application for special consideration is considered by the exams officer with guidance from the Head of Centre. All instances of absence are referred to the Deputy Principal, and the curriculum leader for the exam affected advised.

Candidate late arrival

At the start of each exam session candidate's attendance is checked. Absences are immediately highlighted to the exams officer and/or exams secretary. Contact with parents and/or candidate is attempted to establish the reasons for the absence and arrangement made for the candidate's arrival. The lead invigilator is advised of the outcome and arrangements made to facilitate the candidate sitting the exam for its published duration, wherever possible. Upon arrival the candidate report to the reception office and a member of the exams team escorts them to their exam room. If the candidate arrives very late (defined as an hour after the official start time of the exam) they are advised that the awarding board may not accept their paper and the board is advised of the circumstances via CAP on line system.

If a candidate is persistently late for their exams, referral will be made to the Deputy Principle for further investigation.

For clash candidates, the supervision of candidates, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight supervision is the responsibility of the Exams officer.

Should a candidate be ill before an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be taken ill during the exam itself or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, the exams officer, or the invigilator, to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence. It is the Exams officer's responsibility to process the request for special consideration to awarding bodies after gathering evidence required within the external deadline of the awarding bodies.

Non Examined Assessments

The Head of centre

- Provides fully qualified teachers to mark non-examination assessments
- Ensures an **internal appeals procedure** relating to internal assessment decisions is in place for a candidate to appeal against and request a review of the centre's marking
- Ensures a **non-examination assessment policy** is in place for GCSE qualifications which include components of non-examination assessment

The Non-Examination Assessment Policy is located on the T drive.

The Internal Appeals Procedure is located on the T drive and on the academy website under the exams section.

Results

The Head of Centre ensures that results are kept entirely confidential and restricted to key members of staff until the official dates and times of release.

The Exams officer informs candidates of when and how results will be released to them, accesses the results from the awarding body under the restricted release of results and resolves any missing or incomplete results. Also prepares and issues the statement of results to candidates on results day.

Candidates will receive individual result slips on results days, either in person at the centre or by post to their home addresses, candidates to provide self-addressed envelope.

Arrangements for the centre to be open on results days are made by the Head of Centre and Exams Officer.

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

The Exams officer provides information to candidates and staff on the post result services provided by awarding bodies with fees charged, and ensures internal deadlines are met for requests to achieve external deadlines.

Analysis of results is provided by the Deputy Principal.

Access to Scripts (ATS), Review of Results (RoR) and Appeals Procedures

Candidate Requests for Review of Results Procedure is located within the exam's office.

The Internal Appeals Procedure is located on the T drive and on the academy website under the exams section.

Certificates

Certificates are provided to centres by awarding bodies after results have been confirmed.

Issue of certificates procedure

Certificates are issued to candidates during an evening event in November shown on the school calendar. After that date certificates are available for collection from the exam's office during reception hours. Upon collection the candidate (or person authorised to collect on their behalf) sign to acknowledge receipt. This receipt list is retained for 5 years.

Retention of certificates policy

The centre retains certificates for 5 years, stored within the secure storage room. If they are unclaimed within that time they are destroyed within the confidential waste.

Archiving

The procedure for archiving exam materials including retention periods and disposal methods is located in the Exams Archiving Procedure which is available from the exam's office.

Should you wish a copy of this or any other policies please call 01827 712477

Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed annually.