

Bethany School

Exams policy

March 2018

Introduction

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 periodically.

The exams policy will be reviewed by the Head Teacher and Examinations 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 (Head Teacher):

- has overall responsibility for the school 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 *external 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.

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

- 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.
- organises the recruitment, training, and monitoring of 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 Head Teacher, any post results service requests.

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

The **Head 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 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 Teacher*

The types of qualifications offered are GCSEs.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found on our website.

Informing the exams office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the subject teacher.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by *subject teacher* in consultation with the Head Teacher.

Exam series

Internal exams and assessments are taken in the Spring Term of year 11.

External exams and assessments are scheduled in May/June of year 11.

Internal exams are not held under external exam conditions.

Exam timetables

Once confirmed, the exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for internal and 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.

The centre does not generally accept entries from private candidates.

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

Entry deadlines are circulated to teachers via the weekly staff meeting.

Teachers will provide estimated entry information to the exams officer to meet JCQ and awarding body deadlines.

GCSE re-sits are not generally allowed.

Re-sit decisions will be made by Head Teacher in consultation with candidate's parents.

Exam fees

Candidates 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.

Exam entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the centre.

Fee reimbursements are 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

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 Teacher.

Access arrangements

The Head teacher 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 Exams officer in consultation with any support workers involved and parents.

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 noticeboard or briefing meetings and are in line with the guidance provided by Ofqual, JCQ and awarding organisations.

Estimated grades

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

Managing invigilators

External staff may be used to invigilate examinations.

These invigilators will be used for external 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 Head Teacher.

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

Malpractice

The head of centre in consultation with 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.

Invigilators will establish the identity of all candidates sitting the examination. Under normal circumstances invigilation will be carried out by internal staff who will be able to identify candidates by sight. In the event of an external invigilator being used, another member of staff will be present at the beginning of the examination to carry out this procedure.

The invigilator 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 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.

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 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 invigilator and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

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 Head teacher or exams officer to that effect.

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

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

Internal assessment

It is the duty of heads of department to ensure that all internal assessment is ready for dispatch at the correct time.

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by the subject teachers. 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 (if requested in advance).
- or, by email (if requested in advance).

Arrangements for the centre to be open on results days are made by 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 centre, unless by agreement with the parents.

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

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 seven 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 centre.

Processing of requests for ATS will be the responsibility of exams officer.

Certificates

Candidates will generally receive their certificates in person at the centre or by post to their home address if arranged in advance with the candidate.

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 two 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.

Adopted by Governors on: June 2018

Review date: June 2021

Appendix A

Emergency evacuation procedure for examinations

The invigilator **must** take the following action in an emergency such as a fire alarm or a bomb alert.

- Stop the candidates from writing.
- Collect the attendance register (**in order to ensure all candidates are present**).
- Evacuate the examination room in line with the instructions given by the appropriate authority.
- Advise candidates to leave all question papers and scripts in the examination room.
- Candidates should leave the room in silence.
- Make sure that the candidates are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room to make sure there is no discussion about the examination.
- Make a note of the time of the interruption and how long it lasted.
- Allow the candidates the full working time set for the examination.
- If there are only a few candidates, consider the possibility of taking the candidates (with question papers and scripts) to another place to finish the examination.
- Make a full report of the incident and of the action taken, and send to the relevant awarding body.

Appendix B

Bethany School

Policy on Internal Assessments for Qualifications with Awarding Bodies

In accordance with the Code of Practice for the conduct of external qualifications produced by the QCA (Code of Practice 2005/6 P 45), Bethany School is committed to ensuring that:

- Staff have the appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills to conduct internal assessments.
- Assessment evidence provided by the candidates is produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the relevant Specifications for each subject.
- Staff responsible for internal standardisation and/or assessment attends any compulsory training sessions.

Appeals

1. A pupil or parent may make appeals to the school regarding procedures used in internal assessment. It should be noted that the actual marks or grades submitted by the school are subject to external moderation by the Awarding Bodies and are not normally made known to the candidate.
2. If a pupil or parent has any concerns about the procedures used in assessing internally marked work for public examinations (e.g. coursework), he/she discuss this firstly with the relevant subject teacher, with guidance from the Examinations Officer where appropriate.
3. If any resulting issues cannot be resolved by discussion between the teacher and candidate concerned, the candidate or parent may appeal to the Examinations Officer in writing, stating the details of the complaint and the reason for the appeal, **by April 30th** of the year in which the written examinations are taken. The Examinations Officer will put into action the agreed appeals process. This will be the final stage in the normal process of considering and resolving disputes. It is expected that it will be used only in exceptional circumstances.
4. The teacher(s) concerned in making the assessment, which is subject to the appeal, will respond to the appeal in writing to the Examinations Officer; a copy of this will be given to the candidate. The Examinations Officer and the Head Teacher will consider whether the procedures used in the internal assessment conformed to the published requirements of the Awarding Body.
5. If the candidate is not happy with the written response they have received, then they can request a personal hearing before an appeals panel.
 - The appeals panel will consist of the Examinations Officer, Head Teacher or Deputy Head teacher and a school Governor
 - The request for a personal hearing must be made within two days of receipt of the written reply to the initial appeal.
 - The candidate and his/her parents will be given at least two days notice of the hearing date.

- A breakdown of the marks awarded, and other relevant documents (e.g. specification mark scheme) will be given to the candidate in advance of the appeal,
- The candidate may bring a parent/guardian to the hearing.
- The teacher(s) involved will also be present at the hearing.

6. The Examinations Officer will convey the outcome of an appeal and the reason for that outcome in writing to the candidate. It should also be noted that:

- the school will maintain a written record of all appeals.
- the school will inform the Awarding Body of any change to an internally assessed mark as a result of an appeal.
- the school will give careful consideration to the dates between which appeals could be heard, taking into account the results date for the relevant examination series.

7. The school is responsible for publishing these procedures and making them available for pupils and parents.

Enquiries about results

There may be rare occasions when a candidate may wish to request a re-mark of an exam paper. Following discussions with the subject teacher and Examinations Officer, the school may wish to support this request, provided all charges are met by the candidate/parent/guardian. However, the school reserves the right to refuse such a request if it feels the original grade given is likely to be correct. In this circumstance, the student has a right of appeal against this decision. The school will use the appeals process described in paragraph 5 above to respond to this appeal and to make the final decision which will be notified to the candidate.