



Holmer Green Senior School

Exam Policy

March 2020

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Exam Policy

The Centre (the school) is committed to ensuring that the exams management and administration process is run effectively and efficiently and in compliance with the published Joint Council for Qualifications regulations and awarding body requirements.

This exam policy will ensure that:

- all centre staff involved in the exams process clearly understand their roles and responsibilities
- 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.

This Exam Policy will be reviewed bi-annually by the Head of Centre, Deputy Headteacher and the Exams Manager.

EXAM RESPONSIBILITIES

Head of Centre:

Overall responsibility for the school as an exam centre:

- Understands the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications including:
 - General Regulations for Approved Centres (GR)
 - Instructions for Conducting Examinations (ICE)
 - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (AA)
 - Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments (SMEA)
 - Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (NEA) (and the instructions for conducting coursework)
 - A guide to the special consideration process (SC)
- Ensures the centre has appropriate accommodation to support the size of the cohorts being taught including appropriate accommodation for candidates requiring access arrangements for exams and assessments
- Responds to the National Centre Number Register annual update
- Through taking an ethical approach and working proactively to avoid malpractice among students and staff, takes all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any malpractice/maladministration before, during the course of and after examinations have taken place
- Ensures irregularities are investigated and informs the awarding bodies of any cases of alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice or maladministration, involving a candidate or a member of staff, and ensures these are reported to the awarding body immediately
- Ensures risks to the exam process are assessed and appropriate risk management processes/contingency plans are in place (that allow the senior leadership team to act immediately in the event of an emergency or staff absence)

- Ensures the centre has a child protection/safeguarding policy in place, including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance, which satisfies current legislative requirements
- Ensures the centre has a data protection policy in place that complies with General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018 regulations
- Ensures the relevant awarding bodies are informed of any Conflict of Interest
- Ensures procedures are in place for candidates to appeal internal assessment decisions and make requests for reviews of marking
- Ensures that internal tests, mock exams, revision or coaching sessions are not conducted in a room 'designated' as an exam room
- Ensures only authorised centre staff are present in exam rooms
- Ensures results are kept entirely confidential and restricted to key members of staff until the official dates and times of release of results to candidates

Examinations Manager:

- Understands the contents of annually updated JCQ publications including:
 - General Regulations for Approved Centres
 - Instructions for Conducting Examinations
 - Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments
 - Post-results services (PRS)
- 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 met
- Ensure key centre staff are informed of annual exam timetables and all relevant deadlines
- Recruits, trains and deploys a team of internal/external invigilators and keeps a record of the content of training provided to invigilators for the required period
- Works with the SENCo to ensure invigilators supervising access arrangement candidates fully understand the respective role and what is and what is not permissible in the exam room
- Supports the head of centre in ensuring that awarding bodies are informed of any Conflict of Interest declared by members of centre staff and in maintaining records that confirm the measures taken/protocols in place to mitigate any potential risk to the integrity of the qualifications affected before the published deadline for entries
- Informs the head of centre of all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice
- Briefs other relevant centre staff where they may be involved in the receipt and dispatch of confidential exam materials on the requirements for maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of the exam materials
- Signposts relevant centre staff to JCQ publications and awarding body documentation relating to the exams process that have been updated
- As the centre administrator, approves relevant access rights for centre staff to access awarding body secure extranet sites
- Undertakes an annual information gathering exercise in preparation for each new academic year to ensure data about all qualifications being delivered is up to date and correct
- Researches awarding body guidance to identify administrative processes, key tasks, key dates and deadlines for all relevant qualifications
- Provides training for new invigilators on the instructions for conducting exams and an annual update for the existing invigilation team so that they are aware of any changes in a new academic year before they are allocated to invigilate an external exam

- Requests exam entry information from HoDs in a timely manner to ensure awarding body external deadlines for submission can be met
- Provides candidates with statements of entry for checking
- Issues individual exam timetable information to candidates and informs candidates of the contingency day set by awarding bodies
- Prior to exams issues relevant JCQ information for candidates documents
- Submits/ provides instructions for teaching staff to submit marks, endorsement grades and samples to awarding bodies/moderators/monitors to meet the external deadline, keeping a record of what has been sent
- Allocates invigilators to exam rooms according to the required ratios, including a roving invigilator
- Liaises with the SENCo regarding the facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates
- Ensures a procedure is in place to verify candidate identity in exam rooms, including private candidates
- 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)
- Has a process in place to demonstrate the receipt, secure movement and secure storage of confidential exam materials within the centre
- Ensures a log is kept at the initial point of delivery recording confidential materials received and signed for and that appropriate arrangements are in place for confidential materials to be immediately transferred to the secure storage facility
- Will inform the JCQ Centre Inspection Service to timescale by submitting a JCQ *Alternative Site arrangement* notification through CAP of any alternative sites that will be used to conduct timetabled examination components
- Processes applications for *Centre Consortium arrangements* through CAP to the awarding body deadline if applicable
- Ensures that candidates who arrive very late for an exam are reported to the awarding body by submitting a *report on candidate admitted very late to examination room* through CAP
- Ensures exams are conducted according to JCQ and awarding body instructions
- Dispatches scripts as instructed by JCQ and awarding bodies
- In order to avoid potential breaches of security, ensures prior to question paper packets being opened that another member of staff or an invigilator checks the day, date, time, subject, unit/component and tier of entry if appropriate, immediately before a question paper packet is opened
- Ensures this additional/second check is recorded
- Where allowed by the awarding body, only releases exam papers and materials to teaching departments after the published finishing time of the exam, or until any timetable clash candidates have completed the exam
- Processes appropriate requests for special consideration to awarding bodies, gathering any relevant evidence as required
- Works with senior leaders to ensure procedures for managing the main summer results day(s) are in place and informs candidates in advance of when and how results will be released to them for each exam series
- Accesses results from awarding bodies under restricted release of results, where this is provided by the awarding body and issues statements of results to candidates on results date
- Provides summaries of results for relevant centre staff on issue of results date

- Provides information to candidates (including private candidates) and staff on the post results services provided by awarding bodies and the fees charged
- Submits post results requests to awarding bodies to meet the external deadline
- Tracks post results requests to conclusion and informs candidates and relevant centre staff of outcomes, updating centre results information where applicable
- Checks receipt of certificates and puts system in place for students to sign for receipt

Deputy Headteacher:

- Organisation of teaching and learning.
- Ensures all examination courses followed are appropriate to students' needs and future success.

Senior leaders (SLT)

- Are familiar with the contents, refer to and direct relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ
- Ensure teaching staff have the necessary and appropriate knowledge, understanding, skills, and training to set tasks, conduct task taking, and to assess, mark and authenticate candidates' work (including where relevant, private candidates)
- Ensure appropriate internal moderation, standardisation and verification processes are in place
- Ensures senior members of staff are accessible to candidates after the publication of results so that results may be discussed and decisions made on the submission of any requests for post-results services and ensures candidates are informed of the periods during which centre staff will be available so that they may plan accordingly

Heads of Department:

- Ensures teaching staff undertake key tasks, as detailed in this policy, within the exams process and meet internal deadlines set by the EO and SENCo
- Ensures teaching staff keep themselves updated with awarding body subject and teacher-specific information to confirm effective delivery of qualifications
- Ensures teaching staff attend relevant awarding body training and update events
- Support the SENCo in determining and implementing appropriate access arrangements
- Ensures teaching staff delivering any AQA Applied General qualifications, OCR Cambridge Nationals, Entry Level Certificate or Project qualifications follow JCQ Instructions for conducting coursework and the specification provided by the awarding body
- Ensures teaching staff delivering GCE & GCSE specifications (which include components of non-examination assessment) follow JCQ Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments and the specification provided by the awarding body
- For other qualifications, ensures teaching staff follow appropriate instructions issued by the awarding body
- Ensures teaching staff inform candidates of their centre assessed marks as a candidate may request a review of the centre's marking before marks are submitted to the awarding body
- Provides exam entry information requested by the EO to the internal deadline
- Informs the EO immediately, or at the very least prior to the deadlines, of any subsequent changes to final entry information, which includes amendments to or withdrawal of existing entries

- Checks final entry submission information provided by the EO and confirms information is correct
- Informs the EO of any joint teaching arrangements in place and where the centre is acting as the consortium co-ordinator
- Ensures teaching staff keep candidates' work, whether part of the moderation sample or not, secure and for the required period stated by JCQ and awarding bodies
- Ensures work is returned to candidates or disposed of according to the requirements

Headteacher's PA:

- Organises the recruitment of invigilators in liaison with the Exams Manager.

Head of Careers:

- Guidance and careers information.

Teachers:

- Undertake key tasks, as detailed in this policy, within the exams process and meet internal deadlines set by the EO and SENCo
- Keep updated with awarding body subject and teacher-specific information to confirm effective delivery of qualifications
- Attend relevant awarding body training and update events
- Support the SENCo in determining and implementing appropriate access arrangements, including during internal assessments and practical endorsements
- Ensure appropriate instructions for conducting internal assessment are followed, including the assessment and authentication of candidate's work
- Ensure candidates are aware of JCQ and awarding body information for candidates on producing work that is internally assessed (coursework, non-examination assessments, social media) prior to assessments taking place
- Ensure candidates are informed of their centre assessed marks as a candidate may request a review of the centre's marking before marks are submitted to the awarding body

SENCO:

- Understands the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications including:
 - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments
- Leads on the access arrangements and reasonable adjustments process (referred to in this policy as 'access arrangements')
- If not the qualified access arrangements assessor, works with the person appointed, 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
- Assesses candidates (or works with the appropriately qualified assessor as appointed by the head of centre) to identify access arrangements requirements
- Gathers **evidence** to support the need for access arrangements for a candidate

- Liaises with teaching staff to gather evidence of **normal way of working** of an affected candidate
- Determines candidate eligibility for arrangements or adjustments that are centre-delegated
- Gathers signed **Personal data consent, Privacy Notice (AAO) and Data Protection confirmation** forms (candidate personal data consent form) from candidates where required
- Applies for **approval** through **Access arrangements online** (AAO) via the **Centre Admin Portal** (CAP), where required or through the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO
- Keeps a file for each candidate for JCQ inspection purposes containing all the required documentation
- Employs good practice in relation to the Equality Act 2010
- Liaises with the EO regarding exam time arrangements for access arrangement candidates
- Ensures staff appointed to facilitate access arrangements for candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular arrangement(s) and keeps a record of the content of training provided to facilitators for the required period
- Works with the EO to ensure invigilators and those acting as a facilitator fully understand the respective role and what is and what is not permissible in the exam room
- Provides a centre policy on the **use of word processors** in exams and assessments
- Liaises with teaching staff to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates undertaking internal assessments and practical endorsements
- Ensures that information is readily available for inspection at the venue where the candidate is taking the exam(s)

Invigilators:

- Attend/undertake training, update, briefing and review sessions as required
- Conduct exams in every exam room according to JCQ *Instructions for conducting examinations* and/or awarding body requirements and as instructed by the centre in training/update and briefing sessions
- Record any incidents or irregularities on the exam room incident log (for example, late/very late arrival, candidate or centre staff suspected malpractice, candidate illness or needing to leave the exam room temporarily, disruption or disturbance in the exam room, emergency evacuation)

Candidates:

- Authenticate their work as required by the awarding body
- Notify the EO of any discrepancies in exam entries
- Follow the instructions given to them in exam rooms by authorised centre staff and invigilators
- Remain in the exam room for the full duration of the exam
- Provide appropriate evidence to support special consideration requests, where required

Data Manager:

- Prepares and presents reports to the SLT (Senior Leadership Team) showing results achieved in relation to expected grades and comparable data for previous years, indicating where future procedural improvements might be made.
- Liaises with Exams Manager regarding student data for entries.

Administrative Staff:

- Support the EO in the receipt and dispatch of confidential exam materials and follow the requirements for maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of the exam materials

THE STATUTORY TESTS AND QUALIFICATIONS OFFERED

The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Head of Centre.

The statutory tests and qualifications offered are GCSEs, A Levels, BTEC and other externally validated qualifications.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus for that year. If there has been a change of syllabus from the previous year, the exams office must be informed by the beginning of the Autumn term.

EXAM SEASONS AND TIMETABLES

Exam Seasons

The internal predictive exam schedule is decided by the Deputy Headteacher at the beginning of each academic year.

All internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

External exams are scheduled according to course requirements. Typically these take place in November, January and May/June.

Which exam series are used in the centre is decided by the Head of Centre, the heads of department/faculty and Deputy Headteacher.

Exam Timetables

The exams manager will circulate the external exam timetable once confirmed.

The Deputy Headteacher and Exams Manager will liaise with HOD regarding their requirements for internal exams. The internal exam timetable is created at the discretion of the Deputy Headteacher.

ENTRIES, ENTRY DETAILS, LATE ENTRIES AND RETAKES

Entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the heads of subject and faculty. The decision as to whether students are entered for AS exams rests with the Head of Sixth Form in conjunction with HOD.

A parent or carer can request a change of examination tier of entry. Such amendments

are subject to approval by the Deputy Headteacher.

The centre does not accept external entries or entries from former candidates.

Withdrawal of entries must be approved by the Deputy Headteacher.

Late Entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department via email, pigeon hole and notice board.

Late entries are authorised by heads of department.

The Head of Centre must be made aware of late entries where cost is an issue.

Retakes

Retake decisions will be made in consultation with the candidates, parents and the heads of departments. (See also the following Exam Fees section)

EXAM FEES

GCSE / Level 1/2 initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

A level / BTEC initial registration and exam entry fees are paid by the centre.

AS level entries approved by the Head of Sixth Form are paid by the centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the departments.

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.

Students will be entered **once** for their external examinations in the subjects they are studying and the school will meet the cost from its delegated budget.

A charge will be levied in respect of examination entries for students, who are on roll at the school, where the school has not prepared the student for the examination (i.e. it is not part of their taught curriculum). This will principally apply to community language exams.

The school will not enter external students for any exams.

A charge will be levied for students whose entry needs to be removed as a result of failing to meet the requirements of the course (for example, not producing NEA) without a valid reason. In such cases the school will work in partnership with the student's parents / carer.

A charge will be levied for students who fail without good reason to attend a public examination for which the school has entered them.

Decisions regarding withdrawal of entries rests with the Deputy Headteacher.

A charge will be levied for students re-sitting an examination, except in exceptional circumstances at the Deputy or Headteacher's discretion.

This policy will be communicated in writing to candidates and parents during the GCSE and post-16 courses.

Candidates must pay the fee for an enquiry about a result, should the centre not uphold the enquiry and the candidate insist on pursuing the enquiry. (See also Enquiries about Results [EARs] section)

MANAGING INVIGILATORS AND EXAM DAYS

Managing Invigilators

External invigilators will be used for exam supervision. They will be used for all external exams and for GCE/GCSE predictive exams as required.

The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams Manager in liaison with the Headteacher's PA.

Securing the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Headteacher's PA.

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Exams Manager.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the centre administration.

Exam Days

The Exams Manager will liaise with the School Administrator re booking all exam rooms and make the question papers, other exam stationery and materials available for the invigilator.

Site management is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms. The Exams Manager/ invigilator will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Only senior members of staff authorised by the Headteacher and who have not had overall responsibility for teaching the candidates may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates. Staff must not advise on which questions are to be attempted.

Invigilators will place GCSE candidate photo place cards on exam desks to further aid the identification of candidates. Sixth formers bring their own photo ID.

In practical exams subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.

Exam papers must not be read by subject teachers or removed from the exam room. Papers will be made available to heads of department/faculty after the published finish time of an exam.

CANDIDATES, CLASH CANDIDATES AND SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

Candidates

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

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 may leave the exam room for a genuine purpose requiring an immediate return to the exam room, in which case a member of staff, who is not the candidate's subject teacher or a subject expert for the exam in question, must accompany them.

The Exams Manager will attempt to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of an exam and deal with them in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Sixth form students need photographic ID for all exams.

Clash Candidates

The Exams Manager will be responsible as necessary for identifying escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight supervision documentation.

Special Consideration

Should a candidate be too ill to sit an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma or be taken ill during the exam itself, it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, or the exam invigilator, to that effect.

Any special consideration claim must be supported by appropriate evidence within five days of the exam, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor.

The Exams Manager will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within the exam board deadline.

NEA AND APPEALS AGAINST INTERNAL ASSESSMENTS

NEAs

Candidates who have to prepare portfolios / internally assessed work should do so by the end of the course or centre-defined date.

Heads of department will ensure all NEA is ready for dispatch at the correct time and the Exams Manager will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom.

Marks for all internally assessed work are either submitted directly to the awarding body by the HOD/subject teacher or provided to the exams office for submission. ~~by the heads of subject and the heads of department.~~

Appeals against Internal Assessments

The centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure on this subject, which is available from the exams office and on the school's website.

The main points are:

- appeals will only be entertained if they apply to the process leading to an assessment. There is no appeal against the mark or grade awarded
- candidates may appeal if they feel their NEA has been assessed unfairly, inconsistently or not in accordance with the specification for the qualification
- appeals should be made in writing to the Head of Centre (or other nominee) who will decide whether the process used conformed to the necessary Requirements
- the Head of Centre's findings will be notified in writing, copied to the Exams Manager and recorded for awarding body inspection.

RESULTS, ENQUIRIES ABOUT RESULTS (EARs) AND ACCESS TO SCRIPTS (ATS)

Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days in person at the centre, unless informed otherwise. Results not collected on results day will be posted to their home addresses.

Arrangements for the school to be open on results days are made by the Exams Manager.

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

Enquiries about Results (EARs)

EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. Permission must be gained from the student prior to submitting a remark. A candidate consent form will be made available for this purpose.

If a candidate requests re-mark, a fee will be charged. If there is a change in grade and the fee is refunded from the exam board, the original fee will be refunded to the student.

Access to Scripts (ATS)

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of papers within the published deadline.

If a result is queried, the candidate pays the re-mark fee. Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. The consent of candidates must be obtained.

CERTIFICATES

Certificates are collected from reception and signed for. Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have written authorisation to do so.

The centre retains certificates for a minimum of one year, after which they are may be returned to the relevant exam board.

Policy ratified: March 2020

To be reviewed: March 2022