

# EXAMS POLICY

Date of Policy	September 2024
Date of Next Review	September 2025
Staff Responsible	Exams Officer/Assistant Headteacher
Reference	Staff shared area/staff development/school policies AC/JNM
Governor/School Policy	School

## **RATIONALE**

An efficiently managed exams process is essential to the smooth running of the school. **The efficient operation of the exams system is not just the responsibility of the exams officer; it is the responsibility of everyone involved in the centre's exam processes. It is therefore essential for all involved to read, understand and implement this policy.**

## **AIMS**

To ensure

- The planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interest of candidates.
- The operation of an efficient exam system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **The Head teacher will**

Hold overall responsibility for the school as an exam centre. They have the final decision on entries, appeals and review of marking. They will also be responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice (full details are available in the JCQ document Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments).

### **The Exams Officer will**

**Manage the administration of public and internal exams and analysis of exam results. The E.O. will:**

- Advise 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 exam boards.
- Oversee the production and distribution to staff and candidates of an annual calendar for all exams in which candidates will be involved and communicate regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events.
- Ensure that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exam timetable that affect them.
- Consult with teaching staff to inform them about deadlines for non-examination / controlled assessments and regulations for completion in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Receive, check and store securely all exam papers and completed scripts.
- Administer access arrangements and make applications for special consideration using the JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments booklet plus A Guide to the Special Considerations Process booklet, relating to candidates who are eligible for adjustments in examinations.
- Identify and manage exam timetable clashes.
- Line manage the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exam invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams.

- Submit candidates' non-examination /controlled assessment marks, track despatch and store returned non-examination / controlled assessments and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- Arrange for the dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forward, in consultation with the SLT, any appeals requests.
- Maintain systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.

### **Assistant Headteacher (responsible for exams)**

**Provide the leadership / support so the Exams Officer can ensure all aspects of the exam process run smoothly. This will include:**

- Organisation of teaching and learning.
- Final decision on suggested changes to entries.
- Final decision on courses to be followed at Key Stage 4.
- Advice on appeals.

### **Subject Leaders will**

- Ensure staff prepare students well for examinations and the completion of non-examination / controlled assessments on time.
- Ensure all staff are aware of the requirements of all examination courses within their subject area and provide the necessary support and guidance to ensure students can be effectively prepared.
- Share all suitable information pertaining to courses / syllabus e.g. mark schemes, examiner reports etc.
- Ensure all teachers make accurate and timely entries via Assessment Manager.
- Ensure all teachers accurately complete all other mark sheets relating to exams and adhere to deadlines as set by the Exams Officer.
- Ensure all teachers accurately complete non-examination / controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- Complete all necessary post-results procedures.
- Provide guidance for candidates who are unsure about exam entries/amendments to entries.
- Remind students of equipment needed.

### **Classroom Teachers will**

- Ensure students are well prepared for examinations and the completion of non-examination / controlled assessments on time.
- Ensure they are aware of the requirements of all examination courses within their subject area.
- Ensure they have read all suitable information pertaining to courses / syllabus e.g. mark schemes, examiner reports etc.
- Make accurate and timely entries via Assessment Manager. All deadline dates MUST be met.
- Liaise with SENCO/Subject Leaders/ Exams Officer regarding access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).

### **Year Team Leaders will**

- Ensure suitable guidance and careers information is provided as part of the Year Team scheme of learning.

### **The SENCO will**

- Be familiar with and implement the rules and regulations regarding Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations.
- Apply for and once approved, implement up to date access arrangements.
- Train Teaching Assistants and invigilators in line with up to date JCQ regulations. These updated regulations must be applied in lessons and examinations.
- Provide timely identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements.
- Manage the provision of allowed additional support — with spelling, reading, mathematics, dyslexia or essential skills, hearing impairment, English for speakers of other languages, IT equipment — to help learners achieve their course aims.
- Liaise with the IT department to ensure that all word-processed exam scripts are securely retained, electronically. Exams boards will accept these scripts where the printed copy has been lost by them. However, the centre will need to demonstrate the secure retention of the script and the Head of centre will have to confirm this in writing to the awarding body.

### **Invigilators will**

- Selected invigilator and the Exams Officer are to check that the correct question paper packets are selected and then removed from secure storage prior to each exam.
- Collect all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and return them to the exams office.
- Ensure that Examination Board regulations and JCQ procedures are followed.

### **Candidates will**

- Confirm and sign all entries.
- Understand non-examination /controlled assessment regulations and sign a declaration that authenticates the non-examination /controlled assessment as their own.
- Be properly equipped for all exams.
- Be familiar with the contents of the Information to Candidates Notices for both written examinations and on-screen tests.

## **LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES**

- **Curriculum Policy** - where subject leaders make changes to the courses offered at Key Stage 4 they must ensure the exams officer is informed.
- **Safeguarding** - DBS (Disclosure Barring Service) requirements for invigilators.
- **Learning Support Policy** - access arrangements.
- **Controlled Assessment Policy**
- **Non-examination Assessment Policy**
- **Contingency Plan**

# MONITORING AND EVALUATING THE EXAM POLICY

Progress and implementation of the Exam Policy will be monitored by the Governors' Curriculum and Achievement Committee.

## APPENDICES

### 1. The statutory tests and qualifications offered

The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher (responsible for exams) and the Subject Leaders. The statutory tests and qualifications currently offered are GCSE, BTEC, Cambridge Nationals and Entry Level. The range of qualifications on offer will change in line with government policies. The Exams Officer will publish a list of the subjects offered for Key Stage 4 qualifications in any academic year. If there has been a change of syllabus from the previous year, the exams office must be informed by mid-July.

Decisions on whether a candidate should not take subjects will be taken in consultation with the candidates, parents/carers, SENCO, subject teachers, Head of Key Stage, Subject Leaders and the Deputy Head. At Key Stage 4 all candidates will be entitled and enabled to achieve an entry for qualifications from an external awarding body.

### 2. Exam seasons and timetables

#### 2.1 Exam seasons

Internal mock exams are scheduled on demand and will be included on the examination calendar in advance. External exams are scheduled in May and June. Internal mock exams are held under external exam conditions. The exam series to be used in the centre is decided by Subject Leaders and Assistant Headteacher (responsible for exams)

#### 2.2 Timetables

Once confirmed, the Exams Officer will circulate the exam timetables for external exams.

### 3. Entries, entry details and late entries

#### 3.1 Entries

Subject Leaders are responsible for ensuring that department teachers have submitted accurate and timely exam entries for approval by SLT. SLT will consider requests from candidates or parents/carers for a change to a subject or level entry.

#### 3.2 Late entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to Subject Leaders and SLT. Requests by Subject Leaders for late entries or changes to entries must be submitted to the Assistant Headteacher (responsible for exams) for authorisation.

## 4. Exam fees

The centre will pay all normal exam fees on behalf of candidates. Where late entry or amendments are recommended by the Assistant Headteacher (responsible for exams), fees are paid by centre.

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.

Requests for entry by parents, which are not supported by the centre, must be paid for by parents. If the candidate passes the exam, fees will be refunded to parents.

If a student fails to attend an examination or fails to submit non examination / controlled assessments and has not provided medical certification to account for this, parents may be charged with the costs of examination entry.

## 5. The Equality Act 2010, special needs and access arrangements

### 5.1 The Equality Act 2010

All centre staff involved with the examination process must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.

### 5.2 Special needs

A candidate's special need requirements are determined by the SENCO and educational psychologist / specialist teacher. The SENCO will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs who are embarking on a course leading to an exam, and the date of that 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.

### 5.3 Access arrangements

**Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the SENCO.**

It is the SENCO who must be up to date with regulation changes and in conjunction with the Exams Officer, ensure that all changes are implemented and all relevant personnel informed. Documentation to support access arrangements **must** be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by the SENCo.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the SENCo. Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the SENCO with the Exams Officer. Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the SENCO with the Exams Officer.

## 6. Managing invigilators and exam days

### 6.1 Managing invigilators

External invigilators will be used for internal exams and external exams, wherever possible. The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams Officer and SLT. The Exams Officer will inform the Headteacher's PA of newly appointed invigilators. Securing the necessary Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Headteacher's PA. DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre. Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Exams Office. Exam papers must not be read by invigilators. Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the centre administration.

## 6.2 Exam days

The Exams Officer will book all exam rooms after liaison with relevant staff and make the question papers, other exam stationery and materials available for the invigilators. Site management is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

The Assistant Headteacher (responsible for exams) will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines. Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates but must not advise on which questions are to be attempted.

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 before the end of a session.

Papers will be distributed to Subject Leaders at the end of the exam session, once all pupils have completed the paper. A relevant subject teacher may be available to read out instructions allowed by the examination board and start the exam, if required. See JCQ regulations (ICE Booklet) for further guidance.

## 6.3 IT Procedures

IT support team to:

- Protect the network and the security of the hardware and software which is used to deliver on-screen tests.
- Hold candidates' responses securely.
- Protect the network from **cyber attacks** and inform exams department immediately should there be a compromise to the exams system and security of candidate's data and entries
  - Exams department to hold paper copies of all exam entries and candidate entry forms in the event of a **cyber attack**

## 6.4 Emergencies

In the event of an emergency please apply the Emergency Procedure.

The following action will be taken in an emergency such as a fire alarm or a bomb alert:

Invigilators will evacuate the examination room in line with the instructions from the Fire Procedure For Exam Sessions document.

Candidates must leave the exam room through the fire exit doors, quickly and quietly. Candidates will assemble at the designated assembly point (which is the Tennis Courts), where an exam register (using the seating plan) will be taken.

All question papers and scripts will be left in the examination room. Pupils must be asked to close their exam papers and scripts.

Candidates will be supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room to make sure there is no discussion about the examination. All pupils will be kept in isolation, away from the rest of the school. No access to mobile phones is permitted.

A note of the time of the interruption and how long it lasted will be taken by a named invigilator.

Candidates will be allowed the full working time set for the examination. Once all pupils are seated allow them 5 minutes to settle and refocus before restarting the exam.

If there are only a few candidates, candidates may be taken (with question papers and scripts) to another place to finish the examination.

A full report of the incident and of the action taken will be sent to the awarding body within 7 days of the incident.

In case of a power cut candidates must remain quietly in their seats until the problem is resolved. Candidates will be allowed the full working time set for the examination.

## **LINKS TO OTHER PROCEDURE**

- **Bomb threat and/or suspicious package** – guidance from

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bomb-threats-guidance/procedures-for-handling-bomb-threats>

## **7. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration**

### **7.1 Candidates**

The centre's published rules on uniform, behaviour, mobile phones and all electronic devices (including watches of any kind) apply at all times. No potential technological/web enabled sources of information are allowed in examinations. Candidates are not permitted to wear wrist watches. 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 must accompany them. The Exams Officer 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.

### **7.2 Clashes**

The Exams Officer in conjunction with the Head of Centre will be responsible for supervising escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays.

### **7.3 Special consideration**

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 exam invigilator, to that effect. The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence (for example a letter from the candidate's doctor) within three days of the exam. Following authorisation from the Assistant Headteacher (responsible for exams), the Exams Officer will then process a completed special consideration on line application to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

## **8. Non examination / Controlled Assessment and appeals against internal assessments**

### **8.1 Non examination / Controlled Assessment**

Candidates who have to prepare non examination / controlled assessment should do so by the required deadline. Teachers will ensure that candidates work will be saved electronically in the Department SharePoint folder, along with a copy saved on the schools computer drive. Where appropriate a paper copy will also be taken and stored securely in a lockable unit/room. Subject Leaders will ensure all non examination / controlled assessment is ready for despatch at the correct time. The Exams Officer will



keep a record of what has been sent, when and to whom. Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by Subject Leaders.

## **8.2 Appeals against internal assessments**

Refer to the 'Pupils right to appeal' which has a separate procedure on this subject, which is available from the exams office.

## **9. Results, enquiries about results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS)**

### **9.1 Results**

Candidates will receive an individual statement of results on results days either in person at the centre or by post to their home addresses (candidates to provide sae). Arrangements for the school to be open on results days are made by the Head teacher. The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the Head teacher.

### **9.2 EARs**

EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in the marking process. If a result is queried, the Exams Officer, teaching staff and head of centre will investigate the advisability of asking for a review of marking at the centre's expense. When the centre does not uphold an EAR, a candidate may apply to have an enquiry carried out. If a candidate requires this against the advice of subject staff, they will be charged.

### **9.3 EARs New Administration Procedure**

Teachers must complete an Enquiry About Results Form and obtain a pupils signature for authorisation to proceed. A request from a teacher via an email to the Exams Officer will not suffice since the completed form is held on file for JCQ Inspection. If teachers are unable to obtain a pupils signature, the completed form will be given to the Exams Officer who will arrange with the Office Manager to contact pupils/parents via emailing and texting services. An emailed consent from the pupil is permitted.

### **9.4 ATS**

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of papers within three days' scrutiny of the results. Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained. A review of marking cannot be applied for once a script has been returned (unless an exam board allows such a request).

## **10. Certificates**

Certificates are presented in person or collected and signed for. Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by parents / carers, if authorised by the student in writing to do so. Replacement certificates are only issued if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred.

The centre retains certificates for one year. After that period, centres may destroy any unclaimed certificates by a secure method (e.g. shredding or incineration); a record of all certificates destroyed should be kept by the centre for a further four years.

## **Joint Contingency Plan** for the Examination System in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

### **Content:**

- 1. Disruption of teaching time – centres are closed for an extended period**
  - 2. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers**
  - 3. Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis - centres remain open**
  - 4. Centres are unable to open as normal during the examination period**
  - 5. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts**
  - 6. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked**
  - 7. Disruption to the scanning process – where completed examination scripts are being scanned in preparation for onscreen marking**
  - 8. Markers unable to mark examination scripts according to marking schedules**
  - 9. Difficulty in meeting planned schedule or unable to issue results**
  - 10. Awarding organisations unable to issue accurate results**
  - 11. Centres are unable to distribute results as normal**
- Summary of responsibilities in the event of disruption to examinations**
- Useful information**

### **1. Disruption of teaching time – centres are closed for an extended period**

Criteria for implementation of the plan centres are closed or candidates are unable to attend for an extended period during normal teaching or study supported time, interrupting the provision of normal teaching and learning.

#### **Recommended actions:**

- Where there is disruption to teaching time and students miss teaching and learning, it remains the responsibility of centres to prepare students, as usual, for examinations.
- In the case of modular courses centres may advise candidates to sit examinations in the next available series, centres should have plans in place to facilitate alternative methods of learning.
- Guidance on emergency planning, with advice on severe weather, is available on the Department for Education website:

### **2. Disruption in the distribution of examination papers**

Criteria for implementation of the plan disruption to the distribution of examination papers to centres in advance of examinations.

#### **Recommended actions:**

- Awarding organisations to source alternative couriers for delivery of hardcopies.
- Awarding organisations to provide centres with electronic access to examination papers via a secure external network.
- Awarding organisations to fax examination papers to centres if electronic transfer is not possible.

- The Examinations Officer would need to ensure that copies are received, made and stored under secure conditions.

### **3. Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis - centres remain open**

Criteria for implementation of the plan candidates are unable to attend examination centres to take examinations as normal.

Recommended actions:

- Centre to liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with the relevant awarding organisations
- Centres to offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series
- Centres to apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements.
- Candidates are only eligible for special consideration if they have been fully prepared and have covered the whole course but are affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control. If a candidate chooses not to sit an examination for other reasons they should be aware that special consideration rules will not apply.

### **4. Centres are unable to open as normal during the examination period**

Criteria for implementation of the plan centres unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations. A centre which is unable to open as normal for examinations must inform each awarding organisation with which examinations are due to be taken as soon as is possible.

As part of their general planning for emergencies, centres should cover the impact on examinations. The responsibility for deciding whether it is safe for a centre to open lies with the head of centre. The head is responsible for taking advice, or following instructions from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether they are able to open.

**Recommended actions:**

- Centres to open for examinations and examination candidates only, if possible
- Centres to use **alternative venues** in agreement with relevant awarding organisations (e.g. share facilities with other centres or use other public buildings such as the **Q Club**.)
- Centres may offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series
- Centres to apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements (see item 3, page 6).

### **5. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts**

Criteria for implementation of the plan delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts.

**Recommended actions:**

- In the first instance centres to seek advice from awarding organisations and normal collection agency regarding collection. Centres are not to make their own arrangements for transportation without approval from awarding organisations.

- Centres to ensure secure storage of completed examination scripts until collection.

#### **6. Assessment evidence is not available to be marked**

Criteria for implementation of the plan large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked

##### **Recommended actions:**

- Awarding organisations to generate candidate marks for affected assessments based on other appropriate evidence of candidate achievement as defined by the awarding organisations in consultation with the regulators.
- Candidates to retake affected assessment at subsequent assessment window.

#### **7. Disruption to the scanning process – where completed examination scripts are being scanned in preparation for onscreen marking**

Criteria for implementation of plan scanning process disrupted resulting in a risk to the delivery of results by scheduled dates.

##### **Recommended actions:**

- Awarding organisations to implement their existing contingency plans for disruption to on-screen marking process
- Awarding organisations to revert to traditional form of marking
- Awarding organisations to recruit, train or re-standardise qualified new markers

#### **8. Markers unable to mark examination scripts according to marking schedules**

Criteria for implementation of plan markers are unable to mark examination scripts resulting in a risk to the delivery of results by scheduled dates.

##### **Recommended actions:**

- Awarding organisations to re-allocate scripts to available markers
- Awarding organisations to recruit, train or re-standardise qualified new markers
- Prioritisation of marking to be based on results dates.

#### **9. Difficulty in meeting planned schedule or unable to issue results**

Criteria for implementation of plan: Inability of awarding organisations (including the case of a single awarding organisation) to either meet planned schedule for issue of results, or to issue results as planned due to a systems failure.

##### **Recommended actions**

If awarding organisation(s) face delay in meeting the planned schedule for issuing results:

- establish priorities for processing results,
- implement existing contingency plans for disruption to the schedule for issuing results.

If awarding organisation(s) face difficulty in issuing results as planned due to a systems failure:

- in consultation with regulators, assess the level of disruption and consider alternative options for issuing results dependent upon the nature of the particular systems failure,

- awarding organisations and regulators to liaise with relevant organisations (i.e. UCAS, CAO) regarding process of candidate progression to further and higher education.

#### **10. Awarding organisations unable to issue accurate results**

Criteria for implementation of plan system error/failure or attack on systems means significant numbers of results cannot be validated as accurate or are issued and found to be inaccurate.

##### **Recommended actions:**

- candidates, centres and stakeholders to be informed of any incorrect results
- re-validation of results
- awarding organisations to re-issue results, via alternative format if necessary

#### **11. Centres are unable to distribute results as normal**

Criteria for implementation of plan: centres are unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post results services.

##### **Recommended actions:**

Centres to contact awarding organisations about alternative options:

- centre to make arrangements to access its results at an alternative site
- centres to make arrangements to coordinate access to post results services from an alternative site
- centres to share facilities with other centres if this is possible.

#### **Summary of responsibilities in the event of disruption to examinations**

Awarding organisations are responsible for:

Examination centres are responsible for:

Preparing plans for any disruption to exams as part of centres' general emergency planning

Ensuring centres receive examination materials for scheduled examinations

Preparing candidates for examinations

Ensuring examinations and assessments are taken under the conditions prescribed by awarding organisations

Ensuring, where relevant, that assessment materials and candidate work are stored under secure conditions

Deciding whether the centre can open for examinations as scheduled and informing relevant awarding organisations if the centre is unable to open

Advising centres on possible alternative examination arrangements and declining/approving proposals for alternative examination arrangements

Exploring the opportunities for alternative arrangements if the centre cannot open for examinations and agreeing such arrangements with the awarding organisations

Evaluating and declining/approving requests for special consideration

Judging whether candidates meet the requirements for special consideration as a result of any disruption and submitting these requests to the relevant awarding organisations

Assessing and liaising with awarding organisations in the event of disruption to the transportation of papers, marking, moderating and grading candidate work, issuing results to centres on scheduled dates and the distribution of examination results to candidates

### Useful information

AQA <http://www.aqa.org.uk/> JCQ [www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk)

CCEA [www.rewardinglearning.org.uk](http://www.rewardinglearning.org.uk) Ofqual [www.ofqual.gov.uk](http://www.ofqual.gov.uk)

City & Guilds [www.cityandguilds.com](http://www.cityandguilds.com) DfE [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk)

Edexcel [www.edexcel.com](http://www.edexcel.com) DfE – Exams

Delivery Support

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/qualifications/examsadmin/a00197093/edsu>

EDI [www.ediplc.com](http://www.ediplc.com) DENI [www.deni.gov.uk](http://www.deni.gov.uk)

OCR [www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk) UCAS [www.ucas.ac.uk](http://www.ucas.ac.uk)

VTCT [www.vtct.org.uk](http://www.vtct.org.uk) Welsh Government <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/?lang=en>

WJEC [www.wjec.co.uk](http://www.wjec.co.uk)

JCQ A guide to the special consideration process <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-specialconsideration/regulations-and-guidance/a-guide-to-the-special-considerationprocess>

JCQ Instructions for conducting examinations [www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations)

DfE guidance on dealing with disruption to teaching and learning

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/emergencyplanning/a0069425/advice-on-severe-weather>

DENI guidance on dealing with disruption to teaching and learning

[http://www.deni.gov.uk/exceptional\\_closures\\_checklist.pdf](http://www.deni.gov.uk/exceptional_closures_checklist.pdf)

[www.deni.gov.uk/index/85-schools/5-school-management/exceptional-closure-ofschools-due-to-adverse-weather.htm](http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/85-schools/5-school-management/exceptional-closure-ofschools-due-to-adverse-weather.htm)

<http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/school-closures>

## Contingency Plan: Absent Exams Officer during Exam Seasons

In the event of the Exams Officer being absent during the exam season the following procedure has been put in place to ensure that the exam process remains efficient and continues to run smoothly.

For the purpose of this procedure the Exams Officer is Jane McDonnell. The Line Manager is Andy Connor. The Operations Manager is Niki Woolway. EAA Exam Coordinator is the SENCo Julie Williamson. Lead invigilator is Anna Whiterod who will delegate on the day to invigilators.

### Procedure

- Exams Officer contacts Line Manager via email and mobile phone to notify him of the situation.
- Line Manager has access to the keys for the secure room and the exams office. As does the Operations Manager
- Line Manager knows the security code for the alarmed secure room. As does the Operations Manager
- Line Manager will contact the Invigilators for the current exam series and notify them of the situation. All parties will agree an action plan
- Areas of responsibility to be maintained at all times: Line Manager has overall control of all logistics, tier changes and on the day eventualities. Line Manager briefs Invigilators per exam and provides them with the correct logistical box. A logistical box consists of the correct amount/tiers of exam papers, seating plans, desk cards, EAA names and access provisions, cover sheets, invigilator signing in and out sheets, any erratum's and details of any last minute changes
- Whilst the Invigilators set up the **main** exam room, the distribution of exam papers in the **main** exam room is the sole responsibility of the Line Manager. However, the sole responsibility for EAA lies with the SENCo
- All pupil absentees will be collated by the Line Manager (for all exam rooms) and parents/pupils contacted accordingly
- Any eventualities during exams will be reported to and actioned by the Line Manager
- Once the exams have finished the Line Manager will oversee the bagging and despatch of exam papers. The Line Manager will need to create a schedule for who/when/how exam papers are bagged and despatched
- In the event of the SENCo being absent, the Line Manager must ensure that all necessary computer access is available. Teaching Assistants assigned to the exams are present and understand their roles. If replacement Teaching Assistants are required the Line Manager must resolve this immediately

Procedure approved: 07.03.2017

Updated: 01.10.2024

Procedure written by: Exams Officer

Approved by: Richard Johnson (Head Teacher), Andy Connor Assistant Headteacher (responsible for exams)

### If the FIRE ALARM sounds during an exam session:

- Inform candidates to stop writing immediately and wait for instructions for evacuation by the Fire Controller
- If evacuating, candidates must leave the exam room through the fire exit doors, quickly and in silence. All coats, bags and mobile phones are to remain in the exam room
- Candidates will be escorted in silence to the designated assembly point (which is the **tennis courts**), where an exam register (using the seating plan) will be taken
- Candidates will be closely supervised to ensure there is no discussion about the exam. All pupils will be kept in isolation, away from the rest of the school
- All question papers and scripts will be left in the exam room. Pupils will be asked to close their exam papers and scripts
- A named invigilator will record the time and duration of when the exam was stopped
- The Fire Controller will inform both the Exams Officer and the Senior Leadership Team if the exam session can continue. The exam board will be notified accordingly of this decision
- Candidates will be allowed the full working time for the exam. Once all pupils are seated, settled and refocused the exam can begin



## Procedure for Identifying Candidates

The following procedure has been put in place to establish the identity of all candidates sitting exams and to enable invigilates to conduct adequate checks.

- All pupils attend tutor bases prior to an exam and attendance registers are completed. Tutors will know the identity of all pupils and their whereabouts, during this process
- Tutors escort pupils to exam rooms, where they are met by a member of the senior leadership team (SLT)
- SLT ensure that pupils sit in their correct seats using the desk cards provided
- Invigilators to communicate with SLT in the exam room, should the identity of a candidate be in question
- KS4 photo identification via the school's MIS system will also enable the identity of candidates. A copy of which is kept in the main exam room
- Where it is not possible for an invigilator to identify a candidate due to **religious clothing** such as a veil, the candidate will be asked to go with a member of staff, of the same gender, to a separate room. The candidate will be asked to remove their veil for identification purposes only and then returned to the exam room. Candidates must be informed of this requirement, prior to the exam season starting
- **Transferred / External Candidates:** The school does not take external candidates, but if they did, the procedure would be the same as identifying transferred candidates. Transferred candidate's exam entries are made by their registered schools. Individual timetables, along with personal details are forwarded to the host centre. Candidates will need to show the Exams Officer photo identification prior to them entering the exam room and being escorted to their desks

Procedure written by: Exams Officer

Procedure approved: 11.10.2024

Procedure approved by SLT: Andy Connor Assistant Headteacher (responsible for exams)

## Contingency plan (Appendix to main Examination Policy)

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### 3 Purpose of the plan

This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the management and administration of the exam process at Severn Vale School. By outlining actions/procedures to be followed in case of disruption it is intended to mitigate the impact these disruptions have on our exam process. Alongside internal processes, this plan is informed by information contained in the Joint contingency plan for the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland where it is stated that “Centres should prepare plans for any disruption to examinations as part of their general emergency planning. It is important to ensure that relevant centre staff are familiar with the plan. Consideration should be given as to how these arrangements will be communicated to candidates, parents and staff should disruption to examinations occur.” Causes of potential disruption to the exam process

#### 3.1. Exam officer extended absence at key points in the exam process (cycle)

Criteria for implementation of the plan Key tasks required in the management and administration of the exam cycle not undertaken including:

- Planning
- Annual data collection exercise not undertaken to collate information on qualifications and awarding body specifications being delivered
- Annual exams plan not produced identifying essential key tasks, key dates and deadlines
- Sufficient invigilators not recruited and trained
- Entries
- Awarding bodies not being informed of early/estimated entries which prompts release of early information required by teaching staff
- Candidates not being entered with awarding bodies for external exams/assessment
- Awarding body entry deadlines missed or late or other penalty fees being incurred

- Pre-exams
- Exam timetabling, rooming allocation; and invigilation schedules not prepared
- Candidates not briefed on exam timetables and awarding body information for candidates
- Exam/assessment materials and candidates' work not stored under required secure conditions
- Internal assessment marks and samples of candidates' work not submitted to awarding bodies/external moderators
- Exam time
- Exams/assessments not taken under the conditions prescribed by awarding bodies
- Required reports/requests not submitted to awarding bodies during exam/assessment periods e.g. very late arrival, suspected malpractice, special consideration
- Candidates' scripts not dispatched as required to awarding bodies
- Results and post-results
- Access to examination results affecting the distribution of results to candidates
- The facilitation of the post-results services

**Centre actions:**

- Head of Centre to appoint member of administrative staff to take over responsibilities should absence of EO have a potential to affect the meeting of deadlines.
- Staff member to work closely with EO to ensure they are up to date with the exam cycle and responsibilities at each point in time.

<p><b>3.2. SENCo extended absence at key points in the exam cycle</b></p>
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Criteria for implementation of the plan Key tasks required in the management and administration of the access arrangements process within the exam cycle not undertaken including:

- Planning
- Candidates not tested/assessed to identify potential access arrangement requirements
- Evidence of need and evidence to support normal way of working not collated
- Pre-exams
- Approval for access arrangements not applied for to the awarding body
- Modified paper requirements not identified in a timely manner to enable ordering to meet external deadline
- Staff providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained
- Exam time
- Access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms

**Centre actions:**

- Head of Centre responsible for ensuring position is filled should absence have the potential to disrupt exam preparation.
- EO to ensure access arrangements are in place by the spring term of Year 10 for all students where possible.

- EO to plan access arrangements for exam days in advance of the summer series, in consultation with SENCo.

### **3.3. Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle**

Criteria for implementation of the plan Key tasks not undertaken including:

- Early/estimated entry information not provided to the exams officer on time; resulting in pre-release information not being received
- Final entry information not provided to the exams officer on time; resulting in:
  - Candidates not being entered for exams/assessments or being entered late
  - Late or other penalty fees being charged by awarding bodies
  - Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet submission deadlines

Centre actions:

- EO responsible for ensuring deadlines are met for estimated entries. Any omissions to be referred to Head of Centre.
- Head of Centre responsible for ensuring the priority for teaching is the examination cohort and staff will be covered in good time, by trained professionals, in all circumstances.

### **3.4. Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence**

Criteria for implementation of the plan:

- Failure to recruit and train sufficient invigilators to conduct exams
- Invigilator shortage on peak exam days
- Invigilator absence on the day of an exam

Centre actions:

- EO responsible for recruitment of invigilators in the Autumn term of the summer series. Advance planning required to ensure enough are available for the sittings.
- Head of Centre to be informed if recruitment is necessary.

### **3.5. Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice**

Criteria for implementation of the plan:

- Exams officer unable to identify sufficient/appropriate rooms during exams timetable planning
- Insufficient rooms available on peak exam days
- Main exam venues unavailable due to an expected incident at exam time

Centre actions:

- EO responsible for ensuring planning of rooms is completed by the end of the Spring term to identify potential rooming issues.

- Alternative venues within the school to be made available by teaching staff in the event of an unexpected incident.
- Head of Centre to liaise with EO to ensure no disruptions due to room shortages.

### **3.6. Failure of IT systems**

Criteria for implementation of the plan

- MIS system failure at final entry deadline
- MIS system failure during exams preparation
- MIS system failure at results release time

Centre actions:

- EO to contact the awarding bodies directly to arrange alternative methods of information exchange.
- Head of Centre to be informed.

### **3.7. \*Disruption of teaching time – centre closed for an extended period**

\*Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Centre closed or candidates are unable to attend for an extended period during normal teaching or study supported time, interrupting the provision of normal teaching and learning.

Centre actions:

- Head of Centre responsible for finding alternative venues/methods of learning.
- Priority given to exam cohort.
- Centre to communicate with parents and students.

### **3.8. \*Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period**

\*Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations.
- \*In the event that the Head of Centre decides the Centre cannot be opened for scheduled examinations, the relevant awarding body must be informed as soon as possible. Awarding bodies will be able to offer advice regarding the alternative arrangements for conducting examinations that may be available and the options for candidates who have not been able to take scheduled examinations.

Centre actions:

- Open for candidates only if possible.
- Use alternative venue (Q Club), in agreement with awarding organisations.
- Offer students the opportunity to sit the next series.

### **3.9. \*Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open**

\*Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Candidates are unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal

Centre actions:

- Procedures for absence outlined to students in examinations booklet information given each year.
- EO to liaise with student and parents to find alternative venue/advise on next opportunity to sit the examination/apply for special considerations if required.

### **3.10. \*Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts**

\*Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts

Centre actions:

- EO to communicate with awarding bodies for approval of alternative delivery arrangements.

### **3.11. \*Assessment evidence is not available to be marked**

\*Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked.

Centre actions:

- EO to communicate with awarding bodies immediately.
- Student marks to be submitted based on appropriate evidence.
- Candidates offered the opportunity to retake in subsequent series.

### **3.12. \*Centre unable to distribute results as normal**

\*Criteria for implementation of the plan

- Centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post-results services.

Centre actions:

- EO and Head of Centre to assess alternative arrangements for issuing results with the regulators.
- Head of Centre to inform transition schools, students and parents about delay as soon as possible.

\*information taken from the Joint contingency plan for the examination system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.