



EdStart- Specialist Education Ltd.

EXAMS POLICY

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CONTENTS

1.	The centre exams policy
2.	Qualifications
3.	Exam series and timetables
4.	Entries, entry details and late entries
5.	Exam fees
6.	Equality legislation
7.	Estimated grades
8.	Managing invigilators
9.	Candidates
10.	Internal assessments and appeals
11.	Results
12.	Certificates

1. THE CENTRE EXAMS POLICY

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 every year before the summer exams series. The exams policy will be reviewed by the Head of Centre and Board of Governors. Where references are made to JCQ regulations/guidelines, further details can be found at www.jcq.org.uk

Exam responsibilities

The Head of Centre:

- has overall responsibility for the school/college 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 internal exams and/or 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
- 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

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

- 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
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges
- line manages the senior exams invigilator in organising the recruitment, training, and monitoring of a team of exams 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 SLT (Senior Leadership Team), any post results service requests

Heads of school / subject leaders 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.

Teachers are responsible for:

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

The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)/specialist 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 exam's office before the start of the exam.

- collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and ensuring their return to the exam's office.

Candidates are responsible for:

- confirmation and signing 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.

2. QUALIFICATIONS

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Head of Centre and Board of Governors. The types of qualifications offered are GCSE's and short course awards. Informing the exams office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the HOC. Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by Curriculum teachers in consultation with the HOC.

3. EXAM SERIES AND TIMETABLES

Exam Series:

Internal exams (mock or trial exams) and assessments are scheduled in SPRING TERM. External exams and assessments are scheduled in SUMMER TERM. Internal exams are held under external exam conditions. The HOC decides which exam series are used in the centre. The centre does offer some assessments on an on-demand basis. If offered, on-demand assessments can be scheduled only in windows agreed between the HOC and the Governors.

Exam Timetables:

Once confirmed, the Exams Officer will circulate the exam timetables for internal and/or external exams at a specified date before each series begins.

4. ENTRIES, ENTRY DETAILS AND LATE ENTRIES

Candidates or parents/carers can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal. The centre does accept entries from private candidates. The centre does not act as an exam centre for other organisations. Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department/curriculum via email, noticeboard, and briefing meetings. Heads of department/curriculum will provide estimated entry information to the Exams Officer to meet JCQ and awarding body deadlines.

Entries and amendments made after an awarding organisation's deadline (i.e. late) require the authorisation, in writing, of HOC.

5. EXAM FEES

Candidates or departments will not be charged for changes of tier, withdrawals made by the proper procedures or alterations arising from administrative processes provided these are made within the time allowed by the awarding bodies.

The Exams Officer will publish the deadline for actions well in advance for each exam's series. GCSE 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.

Re-sit fees are paid by the centre.

6. 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 of centre (Director/Proprietor), headteacher (examinations officer), SENCo (access arrangements) and Quality Assurance Lead.

Access arrangements:

The SENCo/specialist 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 requirements are determined by the HOC, ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement is the responsibility of HOC. Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the HOC.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the HOC. Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the HOC.

Contingency planning:

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the HOC. Contingency plans are available via email, noticeboard, briefing meetings, and are in line with the guidance provided by Ofqual, JCQ and awarding organisations.

Private candidates (delete whole section if not offered).

Managing private candidates is the responsibility of the HOC – Kevin Buchanan.

7. ESTIMATED GRADES

HOC/Heads of School are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the Exams Officer, when requested by the Exams Officer.

8. MANAGING INVIGILATORS

External staff will not be used to invigilate examinations but may be used to back fill into other day to day school roles to free up known and trained staff. Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the HOC.

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

Invigilators are recruited, timetabled, trained, and briefed by the HOC and Exam Officer.

Malpractice:

The Head of Centre in consultation with the 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.

Head of School staff are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms and will be advised of requirements 7 days in advance.

The HOC or Heads of School 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 School in accordance with JCQ's recommendations and no later than 24 hours after candidates have completed them.

After an exam, the Exams Officer will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed examination scripts to awarding bodies, working in conjunction with HOC.

9. 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 HOC.

The centre's published rules on acceptable dress and behaviour always apply. 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 Head of School or HOC
Note: candidates who leave an exam room must be always accompanied by an appropriate member of staff.

The Head of School or HOC is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day.

Clash candidates:

The exam 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 HOC to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within 7 days of the exam. The Exams Officer will make a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body within 14 days of the exam.

10. INTERNAL ASSESSMENTS AND APPEALS

It is the duty of Heads of School Sites to ensure that all internal assessment is ready for dispatch at the correct time. The Exams Officer will assist by keeping a record of each dispatch, including the recipient details and the date and time sent.

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exam's office by the HOC. 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.

11. RESULTS

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days, in person at the centre.

The results slip will be in the form of a centre produced document.

Arrangements for the centre to be open on results days are made by the HOC.

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

Enquiries about Results (EAR):

EARs (Enquiries About Results) 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 / candidate

All decisions on whether to make an application for an EAR will be made by HOC

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 HOC 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 28 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/candidate.

Processing of requests for ATS will be the responsibility of HOC.

12. CERTIFICATES

Candidates will receive their certificates in person at the centre.

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 2 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.

13. 2024 EXAM ASSESSMENT POLICY UPDATE

See attached JCQ update guidance regarding

1. Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments – Senco April 2024
2. General Regulation for Approved Centres – Jan 2024 Update
3. Examination Contingency Plan
4. Are you ready Checklist needs completed and review Feb 2024
5. Access policy Jan 24

Reference has been paid to ensure staff understanding of assessment routines for 2024 to ensure quality first provision and systems to ensure full compliance with non-malpractice guidance.

- *All staff involved have been made aware of the specific types of malpractice which may affect the Summer 2024 series including:*
- *breaches of internal security;*
- *deception;*
- *improper assistance to students;*
- *failure to appropriately authenticate a student's work;*
- *over direction of students in preparation for common assessments;*
- *allegations that centres submit grades not supported by evidence that they know to be inaccurate;*
- *centres enter students who were not originally intending to certificate a grade in the Summer 2024 series;*
- *failure to engage as requested with awarding organisations during the External Quality Assurance and appeal stages; and*
- *failure to keep appropriate records of decisions made and teacher assessed grades.*

School Standard Operating Procedure and Assessment Schedule adopted February 2021 – updated February 2024.