

Federation Examination Policy and Procedures

THE POLICY PURPOSE

The purpose of this exam policy is:

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

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

The exam policy will be reviewed annually by the exams officer and Headteacher.

EXAM RESPONSIBILITIES

Having overall responsibility for the school as an exam centre, the Headteacher:

- Advises on appeals and re-marks.
- Is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document - suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments.

Exams Officer:

- Manages the administration of public and internal exams,
- Advises the senior leadership team, subject and class tutors and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various awarding bodies.
- Oversees the production and distribution to staff, members of the Management Committee 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 exam timetable that will affect them.
- Consults with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Receives checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts.
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- Submits candidates' coursework marks, tracks despatch and stores returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any appeals/re-mark requests.
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.
- Making applications for special consideration in consultation with SLT.

Teachers are responsible for:

- Submission of candidates' names to Exams Officer.
- Liaising with SENCO to ensure that the Administration of Access Arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special considerations.
- Liaising with SENCO on the identification and testing of candidates, requirements for access arrangements.

The SENCO is responsible for:

- Identification and testing of candidates, requirements for access arrangements.
- Organising testing and administration of access arrangements.

Invigilators are responsible for:

- Collection of exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam.
- Collection of all exam papers and other related paperwork in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the Exams Officer.

Candidates are responsible for:

- Confirmation and signing of entries
- Understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.

QUALIFICATIONS OFFERED

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Headteacher in consultation with SLT and subject leads.

The qualifications offered are Functional Skills, GCSE, BTEC, AQA Awards and Entry Level Certificates. Although this list is not exhaustive.

If there has been a change of specification from the previous year, the Exams Officer must be informed by last day of September of current academic year.

Informing the Exams Officer of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the teachers.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken in consultation with candidates, parents/carers, SENCO and subject teachers.

EXAM SEASONS

- Internal exams and assessments are scheduled on demand.
- External exams and assessments are scheduled in May and June.
- Mock examinations are held under external exam conditions.
- The Headteacher decides which exam series are used in the centre.
- On-demand assessments can be scheduled only in windows agreed with the SLT and the Exams Officer.

TIMETABLE

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

ENTRIES, ENTRY DETAILS AND LATE ENTRIES

- Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the subject in consultation with SLT.
- The Federation of schools does not act as an exam centre for any other organisations.
- Entry deadlines are circulated to lead teachers via e-mail, notice board and briefing meeting.
- Late entries are authorised by the Headteacher.

EXAM FEES

- All exam entry fees are paid by the Federation.
- Fee reimbursements may be sought from candidates who fail to sit an exam without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances.
- Home schools may be cross charged for candidate entries.

DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT

All exam centre staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), extended in 2005, and the Disability Equality Duty (DED), introduced in 2006.

The DDA introduced measures aimed at eliminating the discrimination often faced by disabled people. The main provisions of the Act give protection to disabled people in the areas of employment and education.

'A person has a disability for the purposes of the DDA if s/he has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on her/his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The Federation will meet the disability provisions under the DDA by ensuring that the exams centre is accessible and improving candidate experience. This is the responsibility of the Headteacher.

The Federation has a separate Disability Policy for Exams, which is available on request.

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

- 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.
- A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the SENCO, GP and Educational Psychologist/Specialist teacher.
- Making access arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.
- Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the SENCO and Exams Officer
- Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Exams Officer.
- Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the Exams Officer.

CONTINGENCY PLANNING

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team. The Federation has a separate Examination System Contingency Plan which is available upon request.

MANAGING INVIGILATORS

- Internal staff are used to invigilate examinations.
- These invigilators will be used for internal exams and external exams.
- Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Exams Officer.

MALPRACTICE

The Executive Headteacher is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice across the Federation. The Exams Officer and Headteacher will consult on an investigation and any further action needed.

EXAM DAYS

- The Exams Officer will organise all exam rooms after liaison with other users and make the question papers, other exam stationery and materials available for the invigilator.
- School staff are responsible for the setting up the allocated rooms.
- The invigilators will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- 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 distributed to heads of departments 24 hours after the end of the exam.

CANDIDATES

- The Federation's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and other electronic devices apply at all times.
- Candidates' personal belongings must be handed in, in the usual way to centre staff in Reception e.g. mobile phones, cigarettes, lighters, bags, coats, hats, etc
- Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines. Candidates are expected to stay for the full exam time at the discretion of the Exams Officer or Head of Centre.
Note: for exams longer than one hour candidates may leave the exam early, but no sooner than one hour after the published starting time. They will not be allowed to return.
- The Exams Officer is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day.
- The Federation of schools will encourage all students to sit mock examinations BEFORE actual exams, to enable them to experience all formal exam conditions, rules and regulations.

IDENTIFICATION OF CANDIDATES

- All students are referred to the Federation of schools as a result of being either permanently excluded from or at risk of permanent exclusion, for a variety of reasons, from a mainstream education establishment within the local area.
- As part of the student induction process, full paperwork from the referring school is received and used by the Federation in meeting with the students and parents, where the student's identity is checked and verified.
- All students are known to staff members who act internally as invigilators. No outside invigilators are used.
- As detailed in section 16.1 of JCQ's Instructions for Conducting Examinations for the exam season from 1st September 2019 to 31st August 2020, a senior member of staff, such as the Deputy Head Teacher, will be present at the start of examination to assist with the identification of candidates.

CLASH CANDIDATES

Due to the Federation's curriculum offer it is highly unlikely that there would be a need for special arrangements for clash candidates (e.g. supervising escorts, identifying a secure venue or arranging overnight stays), however should it arise the Headteacher would make all the necessary arrangements.

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 within three days of the exam, for example by providing a letter from the candidate's doctor.
- The Exams Officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

INTERNAL ASSESSMENTS AND APPEALS

- It is the duty of heads of department to ensure that all internal assessment is ready for despatch at the correct time. The Exams Officer will assist by keeping a record of each despatch, including the recipient details and the date and time sent.
- Marks for all internally assessed work are held by the subject teachers.

The Federation has a separate policy document regarding appeals against internally assessed marks – available upon request.

RESULTS

- Candidates will receive individual result letters on results days, in person at the centre or by a phone call from a member of Federation staff.
- Arrangements for the centre to be open on results days are made by the Headteacher.
- The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the Headteacher.

ENQUIRIES ABOUT RESULTS (EARS)

- EARS may be requested by Federation staff or candidates ASAP if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking.
- Students should be made aware that EARS can result in marks/grades being raised, confirmed or lowered. Students must give written consent (signed by a parent/ guardian) to confirm that they understand the consequences of an EAR.
- If a result is queried, the Exams Officer, teaching staff and Headteacher will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark.
- When the Federation supports a candidate's request for an EAR, students will be asked for a 50% contribution towards the cost.
- When the Federation does not support a candidate's or parent's request for 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.
- The Exams Officer will submit requests for appeals in accordance with Exam Board deadlines

ACCESS TO SCRIPTS (ATS)

- After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of papers within three days' scrutiny of the results.
- Federation staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained.
- GCSE re-marks cannot be applied for once a script has been returned.

CERTIFICATES

- Certificates are collected and signed for.
- Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have been authorised to do so in writing by the candidate and ID is provided.
- The centre retains certificates indefinitely.

Other Federation documents linked to this policy:

- Examination System Contingency Plan
- Appeals against internally assessed marks
- Disability Policy for Examinations