

STOCKSBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL



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Minerva
Learning Trust

Exam Policy

Responsibility	Exams Officer
Last review date	October 2020
Next review date	October 2021
Approved by	
Approved date	

Exam Policy

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 candidates and parents. It is the responsibility of candidates and parents to read and understand this policy.

Exam responsibilities

The Exams Officer manages the administration of public and internal exams (CAT testing and all Mocks) and:

- 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 awarding bodies are notified before the associated entries are submitted, where a candidate is being taught and prepared for examinations and assessments by a relative or where a relative of exams office staff is being entered for examinations and assessments
- 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 including BTEC
- manages the production of the Exam Policy handbook and updates the school website to include the latest version;
- 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 all necessary NEA/ coursework/ controlled assessment is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ and exam board guidelines;
- receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts;
- administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration in accordance with JCQ guidelines;
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes;
- ensures that candidates' NEA/controlled assessment/coursework marks are entered on time by Subject Leaders, tracks despatch and distributes returned NEA/controlled assessment/coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule;
- arranges for the dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with Subject Leaders, any appeals/review of marking requests;
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.

Head of Centre

- ensures the centre has appropriate accommodation to support the size of the cohorts being taught
- ensures the National Centre Number Register Annual Update (administered on behalf of the JCQ member awarding bodies by OCR) is responded to by the end of October confirming they are both aware of and adhering to the latest version of the JCQ regulations and instructions for conducting examinations and approves the Head of Centre formal declaration
- ensures centre staff are supported and appropriately trained to undertake key tasks within the exams process
- ensures centre staff undertake key tasks within the exams process and meet internal deadlines set by the Examinations Officer
- ensures security within the examination process is managed according to JCQ and awarding body regulations, guidance and instructions including
- the location of the centre's secure storage unit is in an area solely assigned to examinations
- the relevant awarding body is immediately informed if the security of question papers or confidential supporting instructions is put at risk
- that arrangements are in place to check that the correct question paper packets are opened by authorised members of centre staff
- ensures risks to the exam process are assessed and appropriate risk management processes/contingency plans are in place (that allows the Head of Centre 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

Deputy Head

- Oversees teaching and learning;

Subject Leaders are responsible for:

- ensuring teaching staff undertake key tasks, as detailed in this policy, within the exams process (exam cycle) and meet internal deadlines set by the Examinations Officer and SENCo
- ensuring teaching staff keep themselves updated with awarding body teacher-specific information to confirm effective delivery of qualifications
- ensures teaching staff attend relevant awarding body training and update events

The SEN Coordinator (SENCo) is responsible for:

- Identification and testing of candidates, requirements for access arrangements;

- Provision of additional support - with spelling, reading, mathematics, dyslexia or essential skills, hearing impairment, English for speakers of other languages, IT equipment - to help candidates achieve their course aims.
- Is familiar with 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 the administration of the assessment process
- Presents when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor's qualification

Candidates are responsible for:

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

Qualifications

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by Subject Leaders in collaboration with the Assistant Head in charge of curriculum.

The qualifications offered are GCSE, BTEC and Level 1 and 2 qualifications in varying exam boards.

The Awarding Bodies used are:

AQA www.aqa.org.uk

OCR www.ocr.org.uk

Edexcel www.edexcel.com

WJEC/Eduqas www.wjec.co.uk

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus/option choices booklet for that year.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken in consultation with the Candidates, Parents/Carers, Subject Teachers, SENCo and the Deputy Head.

Exam Series and Timetables

Exam seasons

External exams and assessments are scheduled in February, May and June.

Internal exams may be held under external exam conditions.

The Subject Leaders decide which exam series are used in the centre.

Timetable

Once confirmed, the exams officer will place the exam timetable for External exams on the school website.

Entries, entry details and late entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Subject Leaders and SLT.

Candidates or parents/carers can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.

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

Late entries are authorised by Subject Leaders and SLT.

Retake decisions will be made in consultation with Candidates, Subject Teachers and Subject Leaders.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the Exams Department.

Exam Fees

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

First sitting of GCSE entry exam fees are paid for by the Centre. Non-attendance to lessons may result in a student not being entered for an exam.

Where a student would like to sit an exam that is not part of the curriculum the entry fee for this may be paid for by the student depending on the circumstances. The Centre retains the right to not enter a student for an examination if the entry requirements cannot be met by the Centre.

Stocksbridge High School is committed to ensuring equal opportunity and access for all its pupils.

Malpractice

The Exams Officer and a member of the Leadership team are responsible for investigating suspected malpractice in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Any cases of alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice or maladministration before, during or after examinations/assessments (by centre staff, candidates, invigilators) will be investigated and reported to the awarding body immediately, by completing the appropriate documentation.

Malpractice Policy: Candidates

Stocksbridge High School will follow JCQ procedures as laid down in the 'Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessment Policies and Procedures' document for the relevant exam series.

This policy sets out to define the procedures to be followed in the event of any dispute or allegation regarding candidate malpractice in the assessment of internally marked qualifications such as controlled assessment or practical coursework and also regarding examinations marked externally.

Examples of Malpractice

Attempted or actual malpractice activity will not be tolerated. The following are examples of malpractice by candidates with regard to portfolio based qualifications. This list is not exhaustive:

- Plagiarism: the copying and passing off as the candidate's own work the whole or part of another person's work.
- Collusion: working collaboratively with other learners to produce work which is submitted as the candidate's only.
- Failing to abide by the instructions of an assessor: this may refer to the use of resources which the candidates have specifically been told not to use.
- The alteration of any results document.

If a member of staff suspects a candidate of malpractice the candidate will be informed and the allegation will be explained. The candidate will have the opportunity to give their side of the story before any final decision is made. If the candidate accepts that malpractice has occurred, she/he will be given the opportunity to repeat the assignment as long as the candidate has not already signed the authentication form. If found guilty of malpractice following an investigation, the member of staff may decide to re-mark previous assignments and these could also be rejected if similar concerns are identified.

Should the candidate be found guilty of malpractice after having signed the authentication form then the matter is no longer subject to internal school behaviour system and must be reported to the relevant awarding body.

The following are examples of malpractice by candidates with regard to externally assessed **examinations**. This list is not exhaustive:

- Talking during an examination.
- Taking a mobile phone into an examination.
- Taking any item other than those accepted by the Awarding Body into an examination such as electronic devices, books or notes.
- Leaving the examination room without permission.
- Passing notes or papers or accepting notes or papers from another candidate.
- Removing any exam materials from the exam room (e.g. exam papers, inserts)

If a member of staff suspects a candidate of malpractice during an examination, the candidate will be informed and the allegation will be explained. The candidate will have the opportunity to give a statement before any final decision is made. If the candidate is found guilty of malpractice, the Awarding Body will be informed and the candidate will be informed of any penalty to be applied in writing.

If a parent requests access to malpractice information/evidence submitted to the exam board or correspondence from the exam board, this will be allowed if the parent comes into

school to view the documents, and names of centre staff will be redacted. They will not be allowed to take away copies of the documents from school.

Appeals

In the event that a malpractice decision is made which the candidate or school feels is unfair then an appeal can be made on the candidate's behalf by the Head of Centre.

The Equality Act

The Equality Act 2010 strengthens the duty to make reasonable adjustments to general qualifications. All exam centre staff must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.

The centre will meet the requirements of the Act by ensuring that the exams centre is accessible and improves candidate experience. This is the responsibility of the Deputy Head, Exams Officer and SENCo. Reasonable adjustments will be made for students with permanent or temporary disabilities which could include placing students near to exits, ensuring sufficient space between desks for wheelchairs, rooming students into exam rooms at ground level, allowing rest breaks, enlarging scripts, provision of a Word Processor etc. This is in addition to any access arrangements that are made for students. Requests for separate rooming arrangements must be supported by medical evidence detailing a need for this and there must be a history of need supported by the Centre. All requests for exam arrangements must be with the SENCo by the end of February to allow sufficient time for the requests to be processed by the exam boards. Requests received after this date may not be processed.

Access arrangements

The SENCo will inform Subject Teachers of candidates with special educational needs who are embarking on a course leading to an 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.

The SENCO approaches an externally verified assessor to conduct all assessments required to verify Form8 recommendations. The assessor is selected based on recommendation from the city's learning support service and other SENCOs. Prior to the assessments the SENCO meets with the assessor to ensure that they are appropriately trained, qualified and suitable to carry out assessments. All relevant qualifications are checked and copies made and stored with access arrangement documentation in a lockable unit overseen by the SENCO.

A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the SENCO.

Making access arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of 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 Exams Officer.

Invigilation for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the Exams Officer.

Support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the SENCO.

Disability in Exams

The centre has facilities available to aid candidate's during their examinations.

- All of the areas of school are accessible by lift or externally. Candidate's with limited mobility/disabilities doing examinations will usually be placed in smaller rooms, although a removable ramp is available for the main exam room.
- Multiple disabled parking spaces available directly outside the school building, with a ramp up to the front entrance.
- Disabled toilets are nearby on the same level, with a disabled shower on the ground floor.
- Height adjustable desks are available for students who require an alternate level for their exam.
- Wide doors and corridors for access into exam rooms.

Word Processor for Examinations:

Word processors are allocated for examinations at the decision of the SENCO. This is done in line with 'JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments' criteria and may be allocated for the following reasons:

- Where the candidate has a learning difficulty which has a **substantial** and **long term** adverse effect on their ability to write legibly as assessed formally by a person holding an appropriate qualification
- Where there is a short term medical need or condition that will be evidenced by a medical professional in writing
- Where the candidate has a diagnosed physical disability that impacts on their fine motor skills

- Where the candidate has significantly poor handwriting resulting in it being illegible- this will need to be assessed by a person holding an appropriate qualification

A laptop will only be awarded if it is the candidates' normal way of working:

There must be evidence that the candidate has accessed a laptop for assessment, examination and extended writing as a normal way of working over a substantial period of time. A laptop will not be awarded just for examinations and/ or during the examination period.

The SENCO may insist on a formal assessment carried out by an appropriately qualified assessor that confirms illegibility of the candidate writing and a need for a laptop.

Managing Invigilators

External and internal staff are used to invigilate examinations.

Recruitment and training of external invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams Officer. A record of the training provided to invigilators will be kept on file for the required period.

Securing the necessary Disclosures and Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Centre administration.

DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre.

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Exams Officer.

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.

Site management is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

The Exams Officer or 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 before the end of the day. Papers will be distributed to Subject Leaders on the following day.

Candidates

The centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and other 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 are expected to stay for the full exam time. Candidates may only leave the exam room for a genuine purpose and are required to return immediately to the exam room. They must be accompanied by a member of staff at all times.

The Pastoral Team/Phase Leaders are responsible for locating late or absent candidate on exam days. The Exams Officer is responsible for handling late or absent candidate paperwork in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Candidates are verified during the exam briefing prior to the start of the exam. Any absent candidates or “imposters” should be dealt with before they enter the exam room. During the exam, students should place their Student ID Card on their exam desk so they can be identified. This ID card contains their name, a picture and their candidate number.

Metal detector security wands may be used to scan candidates if it is suspected that they have an electronic device/devices in their possession. The wands are used at the invigilators/exams officer/senior leadership team’s discretion.

Clash candidates

The Exams Officer will be responsible as necessary for supervising escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays.

Special consideration

Should a candidate be ill before an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be taken ill during the exam itself or otherwise be disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, 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 Subject Leaders 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 sent.

Appeals against internal and external assessments

The process for managing appeals against internal and external assessments is detailed in a separate appeals policy.

Results and Post Results Services

Candidates will receive individual result slips on results days, either in person at the centre or collected by a named person granted the candidate has given the school advanced notice and a note informing them of this. They may also be posted to the candidate if they provide a signed note and an addressed/stamped envelope prior to the exam results day.

Results can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have been authorised to do so. Candidates should provide a letter to this effect.

Arrangements for the centre to be open on results days are made by the Assistant Head overseeing Exams.

The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership team.

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. The candidates consent is required before any EAR is requested.

Candidates, or parents, can request that an EAR be carried out and they will be charged for this service before a request is made to the awarding body. The Exam Officer will make available to every candidate on results day an up-to-date table showing the fees and deadline dates for the EAR service as set by the awarding bodies. Each candidate will also have a copy of an EAR request form.

If a result is queried by a Subject Leader then the fee will be paid for by the school.

If the centres marks for internal assessment have been accepted by an awarding body without change then it is not possible to request a re-mark of this component.

Access to Scripts (ATS)

After the release of results, candidates may request the return of one or more of their exam papers and they will be charged for this service.

Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. The consent of candidates must be obtained before scripts are accessed. The fee will be paid for by the Exams Department.

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. Candidates should provide a letter to this effect.

The centre retains certificates for a maximum of 8 years after the date of issue. After this time centres are allowed by the awarding bodies to destroy any uncollected certificates.

If a certificate has been destroyed then a transcript of results may be issued by an awarding body if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred, currently around £45 per awarding body.